

LOCAL TALK

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VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 5 * DECEMBER 1, 2022 - DECEMBER 7, 2022

25¢

“LET’S TALK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COMMUNITIES”

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION
1576 Springfield Avenue • Maplewood, NJ 07040
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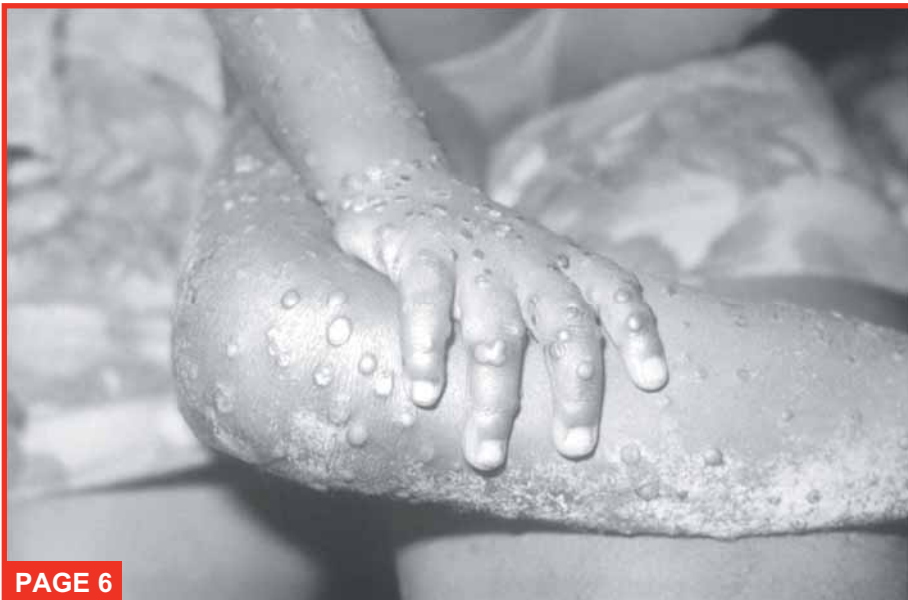
SOUL SNATCHED: WEEQUAHIC BEATS SHABAZZ IN SOUL BOWL

Photo By Mustafa Hooten
D1MediaPro

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A NEW NAME FOR MONKEYPOX



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NEWARK #1 IN VOTER TURNOUT ... BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - Essex County election officials and local Democratic Party leaders are seeking answers to the Nov. 8 General Election results turnout figures before them.

The turnout results, last updated by County Clerk Chris Durkin Nov. 22 and since certified, had only 16.45 percent of participating registered voters sending Vote By Mail Ballots or pressing voting machine buttons before the 8 p.m. Nov. 8 deadline.

Newark's turnout is the lowest among the "Local Talk" territory's 12 towns. The range runs from Irvington's 21.20 percent to Glen Ridge's 53.17 percent ending that Tuesday night.

That range compares to a 31.74 percent turnout from among all 22 Essex County municipalities and with all 565 polling station districts reporting. 180,872 of a countywide pool of 567,688 registered voters had fulfilled their civic duty.

The 31.74 county percentage would place it between Bloomfield's sixth ranking of 34.16 and West Orange's seventh ranking of 40.43.

That 31.74 percent is a decline from a countywide 50.84 percent in the 2018 General Election but a higher figure than 2014's 29.53 percent.

The Nov. 8, 2022 average turnout among the 12 "Local Talk" towns is 33.17 percent - a



figure that would rank it between Belleville's fifth ranking (26.15) and Bloomfield.

The rankings, from least participation to most, are:

1. Newark - 16.45 percent
2. Irvington - 21.20
3. East Orange - 23.27
4. Orange - 23.40
5. Belleville - 26.15
6. Bloomfield - 34.16
7. West Orange - 40.43
8. South Orange - 41.80
9. Nutley - 41.65
10. Montclair - 49.71
11. Maplewood - 49.92
12. Glen Ridge - 53.17

Some observers are asking themselves why the top or least four turnout percentages are from the four municipalities that

(Continued on page 9)



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Turn
To
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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Time flies. It's already December and soon we all will be celebrating the end of year holidays and waiting for a New Year with the hope that it will be better than this one. Still, the scare of Covid is not gone and Flu season is here as well. I wish better health for all of us.

House Democrats picked Nancy Pelosi's successor, Hakeem Jeffries, as leader of the minority Democratic Congress. It is a choice supported by Pelosi. Jeffries ran unopposed and will be the minority leader of the house. Current assistant speaker Massachusetts Rep. Katherine Clark will be the

WHIP and California Rep. Peter Aguilar will be leader of the House Democratic Caucus. As expected, Pelosi will still have a good control of the Democrats in the House and will be controlling things behind the scenes.

Tornadoes ripped through Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, and Louisiana damaging properties. Luckily, no injuries or lives were lost due to these (about 10) tornadoes. Because of the cover of darkness, nighttime tornadoes are more dangerous than daytime tornadoes.

Pro Union President Joseph Biden was not successful in making a deal with the strong railway union. Biden appealed to Congress to intervene and stop a massive strike, as this would cost the US economy \$2 billion a day as estimated. The Union wants better paid sick leave and quality of life issues. They have given the deadline of December 9, and as of now nothing has happened

between the Union and administration.

An African American woman was insulted at Buckingham Palace. According to a CNN report: "An honorary member of Buckingham Palace has resigned and apologized after a Black charity founder said she was questioned about whether she was really British at a royal reception on Tuesday. The guest, Ngozi Fulani, is the CEO of Sistah Space, an organization that provides specialist services to women of African and Caribbean heritage affected by abuse. Fulani was attending a royal function on domestic abuse organized by the Queen Consort on Tuesday evening when she said a member of staff began a line of questioning that the palace called "unacceptable and deeply regrettable. Sistah Space shared a rough transcript of the conversation on Twitter on Wednesday. Fulani said that, after identifying

herself as British-born, the person asked her "where do you really come from;" "where do your people come from;" and "when did you first come here?"

This shows that hatred and racism still exist. All humans should be treated equal, but we have still long way to go.

The Newark Teacher's Union won against the Newark Board of Education, who will have to reimburse about \$1 million to teachers who took time off either using their sick pay or went unpaid for days lost to COVID isolation. The ruling of the arbitrator for about 800 teachers is similar to something that happened in New York recently with its public employees getting reimbursed.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Rain	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Rain	Morning Showers
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CONCERNS GROW OVER HEALTH PRIVACY AMID ROE V. WADE REVERSAL

TRENTON - On Nov. 21 Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin led a multistate coalition expressing concerns regarding reproductive health privacy on Apple's App Store (the "App Store") following the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning Roe v. Wade and urging Apple to take commonsense steps to protect consumers' private reproductive health information.

In a letter sent to Apple CEO Tim Cook, Attorney General Platkin led a group of 10 Attorneys General calling for privacy-enhancing measures.

As the letter explains, Apple has long promoted privacy as one of its "core values" on both the iOS platform and the App Store and has adopted a number of privacy and security measures that are consistent with its stated goals of protecting consumers' privacy. But apps that collect private reproductive health data

from consumers frequently fail to meet these same standards or to implement appropriate protections for this sensitive data, exposing consumers that seek or provide reproductive health care to potential action and harassment by law enforcement, private entities, or individuals.

This gap in Apple's protections threatens the privacy and safety of App Store consumers, and runs directly counter to Apple's publicly expressed commitment to protect user data.

Given the demonstrated risk that location history, search history, and adjacent health data poses to individuals seeking or providing abortions or other reproductive health care, Attorney General Platkin and the other Attorneys General urge Apple to require app developers to either certify to Apple or affirmatively represent in their privacy policies that they will take the following

security measures:

- Delete data not essential for the use of the application, including location history, search history, and any other related data of consumers who may be seeking, accessing, or helping to provide reproductive health care
- Provide clear and conspicuous notices regarding the potential for App Store applications to disclose user data related to reproductive health care, and require that applications do so only when required by a valid subpoena, search warrant, or court order
- Require App Store applications that collect consumers' reproductive health data or that sync with user health data stored on Apple devices to implement at least the same privacy and security standards as Apple with regards to that data.

The proposed measures would safeguard reproductive health information from being wrongfully exploited by those who would use it to harm pregnant people or providers and are consistent with Apple's professed promises of privacy protection on the App Store, the letter explains.

"Protecting reproductive privacy in the wake of the Dobbs decision is paramount. Despite promoting privacy as one of its 'core values' Apple simply has not done enough to ensure that private reproductive health data collected and stored by apps will not be used to track, harass, or criminalize those seeking to exercise their reproductive freedoms," said Attorney General Platkin. "With this letter, we are putting Apple executives on notice that New Jersey is prepared to use all its authority to impel them to protect the privacy of

those accessing or providing legal reproductive health services"

The letter details several reasons why it is necessary for Apple to pursue each of these data-protection measures in the wake of the Dobbs decision.

The letter explains that deleting data related to reproductive health care is the first line of defense to protect consumers who, often unknowingly, leave digital trails of their actions to obtain or provide reproductive health care. At the same time, the letter highlights that what data apps do retain and share is often obscured by vague and unclear privacy policies - making it impossible for consumers to make informed decisions about who to trust with their sensitive reproductive health data. This makes it critical for Apple to ensure that apps provide clear and conspicuous notices regarding third-party access to reproductive health data, the letter explains.

Finally, the letter makes it clear that it's not enough that Apple protects the reproductive health data it collects and stores. Apple's purported commitment to privacy and consumer protection demands that the company require the same vigilance on the part of third-party apps that sync with Apple Health, as well as apps that collect reproductive health data from consumers.

Specifically, the letter urges Apple to implement a clear process to audit third-party apps' compliance with Apple's privacy and security standards. At a minimum, Apple should require apps on the App Store to meet certain threshold security requirements, such as encryption of biometric and other sensitive health data stored on applications, use of end-to-end encryption when transmitting said data, and compliance with Apple's user opt-out controls. Compliance with these

(Continued on page 12)

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SPORTS WRAP

Photos By Mustafa Hooten
D1MediaPro



By William Hathaway, Jr.

This past week saw the traditional Thanksgiving games for New Jersey high school football squads. Among the classic rivalry games is the annual Soul Bowl between Weequahic and Shabazz. The 2022 edition sort of lived up to the name, where Weequahic snatched the soul out of Shabazz in a 68-8 beatdown. (Yes, 68-8.) Leading Weequahic was top running back Rashawn Marshall who tallied 130 yards and led with three touchdowns. Marshall put up over 1,800 yards and 23 TDs for a pretty impressive season. Zakai Armstrong grabbed two

Guard Game dates back to 1879, making it the oldest rivalry game in the state. The Jaguars have won the last 14 OG games in a row.

In college basketball, the Seton Hall men's basketball team took to the road this past week at the ESPN Events International in Orlando, Florida. In an instant classic, SHU defeated Memphis 70-69 thanks to Tyrese Samuel who banked in a three-pointer for the victory. The Hall wasn't as lucky in their game against Oklahoma, losing 77-64. The Pirates followed this up with a surprise loss to Siena 60-55, dropping their record to 4-3 this year.



interceptions in the game that led to Marshall scoring drives. The two picks were among seven turnovers forced in the game

Another game played on Thanksgiving was the annual Old Guard Game in which the East Orange mauled the Barringer Bears 38-0 before a large crowd at Paul Robeson Stadium. Leading East Orange was quarterback Kyree Fisher with 179 yards in the air, along with Irijah Wright's 105 yards on the ground. Wright opened the game with a 63 touchdown run in the first quarter. Fisher himself scored on a 7 yard TD run, while Kasim Cross added a pair of rushing scores. The Old

Meanwhile, the Seton Hall women's basketball team was on the road and took part in the Paradise Jam on Friday in St. Thomas. Senior Lauren Park-Lane had a career high 37 points as the Lady Pirates took down Wisconsin 83-72. Also leading Seton Hall was Jordan Jala with 11 points and Sidney Cooks with 9 points. Seton Hall also scored a win over Georgia 86-80, improving their record to 4-3.

In the NFL, the Jets got a big boost from quarterback Mike White, who threw for 315 yards and 3 TDs in a 31-10 home win over the Bears. White took over the starting job from



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Zach Wilson, and it appears he is not ready to give it back anytime soon. The Giants took a Thanksgiving loss to the Cowboys 28-

20, which does not help in a tight NFC East division that would see all four teams make the playoff if they started today.





A NEW NAME FOR MONKEYPOX

WORLD

In the wake of reports of racist and stigmatizing language surrounding the name of Monkeypox, the disease will be referred to as “mpox” going forward, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Nov 28. The decision follows a series of consultations with global experts. Both terms will be used simultaneously for a year before the monkeypox name is phased out.

“This serves to mitigate the concerns raised by experts about confusion caused by a name change in the midst of a global outbreak,” the UN agency said in a statement.

Mpox is a rare viral disease that primarily occurs in tropical rainforest areas of Central and West Africa, but outbreaks emerged in other parts of the world this year. There have more than 80,000 cases, and 55 deaths, with 110 countries affected.

When the current outbreak expanded, WHO both observed and received reports of racist and stigmatizing language online, in other settings and in some communities.

“In several meetings, public and private, a number of individuals and countries raised concerns and asked WHO to propose a way forward to change the name,” the agency said.

The monkeypox name was given in 1970, some 12 years after the virus that causes the disease was discovered in captive monkeys. This was before WHO first published best practices on naming diseases in 2015.

These guidelines recommend that new disease names should aim to minimize unnecessary negative impacts on trade, travel, tourism or animal welfare. They should also avoid offending any cultural, social, national, regional, professional or ethnic groups.

WHO assigns names to new and, very exceptionally, existing diseases, through a consultative process. Medical and scientific experts, representatives from government authorities from 45 countries, as well as the general public, were invited to submit their suggestions.

Based on the consultations, and further discussions with WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the agency has recommended adoption of the mpox synonym.

Considerations included rationale, scientific appropriateness, extent of current usage, pronounceability, usability in different languages, absence of geographical or zoological references, and the ease of retrieval of historical scientific information.

WHO will adopt the term mpox in its communications, and encourages others to follow suit.

HOPE FOR JACKSON, MISS. RESIDENTS

UNITED STATES

On Nov. 29, the United States filed a proposal in federal court that - if approved by the court - would appoint an Interim Third Party Manager to stabilize the city of Jackson, Mississippi’s public drinking water system, and build confidence in the system’s ability to supply safe drinking water to the system’s customers.

The city and the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) have signed this order and agreed to its terms. At the same time, the Justice Department, on behalf of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), filed a complaint against the city alleging that the city has failed to provide drinking water that is reliably compliant with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) to the system’s customers.

The proposal, which was called a “proposed stipulated order” in court filings, is meant to serve as an interim measure while the United States, the city, and MSDH attempt to negotiate a judicially enforceable consent decree to achieve long-term sustainability of the system and the city’s compliance with the SDWA and other relevant laws.

“Today the Justice Depart-

ment is taking action in federal court to address long-standing failures in the city of Jackson’s public drinking water system,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. “The Department of Justice takes seriously its responsibility to keep the American people safe and to protect their civil rights. Together with our partners at EPA, we will continue to seek justice for the residents of Jackson, Mississippi. And we will continue to prioritize cases in the communities most burdened by environmental harm.”

“Every American - regardless of where they live, their income, or the color of their skin - deserves access to safe, reliable drinking water,” said Assistant Attorney General Todd Kim of the Justice Department’s Environment and Natural Resources Division. “For many years now, the people of Jackson have lived in uncertainty - uncertainty about whether, on any given day, the water that flows from their taps will be safe to drink. With our court filings today, we have taken an important step towards finally giving the people of Jackson the relief they so desperately deserve.”

The proposal seeks the court’s appointment of an Interim Third Party Manager that would have the authority to, among other things:

Operate and maintain the city’s public drinking water system in compliance with SDWA, the Mississippi Safe Drinking Water Act, and related regulations;

Take charge of the Water Sewer Business Administration, the arm of the city responsible for billing water users;

Implement capital improvements to the city’s public drinking water system, in particular, a set of priority projects meant to improve the system’s near-term stability, including a winterization project meant to make the system less vulnerable to winter storms; and

Correct conditions within the city’s public drinking water system that present, or may present, an imminent and substantial endangerment to the health of the city’s residents.

This court filing marks the latest efforts to address Jack-

son’s drinking water crisis, but there is much work still to be done to solve the myriad problems plaguing Jackson’s public drinking water system.

On July 29, MSDH issued a boil-water notice for Jackson’s public drinking water system. The next month, the city proclaimed an emergency after excessive rainfall and extreme flooding prevented the system from delivering any water to the approximately 160,000 persons living within the city and in certain areas of nearby Hinds County who rely on the system. That meant that many of those residents had no running water to drink, or to use for basic hygiene and safety purposes like washing hands, showering, flushing toilets, fighting fires, or washing dishes.

The water pressure was not restored until Sept. 6, and the boil-water notice remained in effect until Sept. 15.

A QUEST FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

EUROPE

UK Business and Energy Secretary Grant Shapps has launched a landmark package to invest now to help secure Britain’s energy independence.

Today the government is driving forward plans to build a secure energy future, creating cheaper, cleaner energy from British sources, for Britain. This includes continuing the revitalization of the UK nuclear industry by confirming the first state backing of a nuclear project in over 30 years, part of the UK’s biggest step yet in the journey to energy freedom.

The government’s historic £700 million stake in Sizewell C is positioned at the heart of the new blueprint to Britain’s energy sovereignty, as plans to develop the new plant are approved today. This is expected to create 10,000 highly skilled jobs and provide reliable, low-carbon, power to the equivalent of 6 million homes for over 50 years.

The Nov. 28 approval comes alongside the government’s continued commitment to develop a pipeline of new nuclear projects, beyond Sizewell C. To support this, the UK is working at pace to set up Great British Nuclear,

(Continued on page 11)

LEADER OF OATH KEEPERS FOUND GUILTY IN CHARGES RELATED TO U.S. CAPITOL RIOT

WASHINGTON - Elmer Stewart Rhodes III, the founder and leader of the Oath Keepers, and Kelly Meggs, the leader of the Florida chapter of the organization, were found guilty by a jury today of seditious conspiracy and other charges for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Their actions disrupted a joint session of the U.S. Congress that was in the process of ascertaining and counting the electoral votes related to the presidential election.

Three additional defendants, who were leaders and associates of the organization - Kenneth Harrelson, Jessica Watkins, and Thomas Caldwell - were found guilty of related felony charges. The verdict followed an eight-week trial and three days of deliberations. No sentencing date was set.

“Today the jury returned a verdict convicting all defendants of criminal conduct, including two Oath Keepers leaders for seditious conspiracy against the United States,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. “The Justice Department is committed to holding accountable those criminally responsible for the assault on our democracy on January 6, 2021. The prosecutors and agents on this case worked tirelessly, with extraordinary skill, and in the best traditions of the Department of Justice.”

Rhodes, 57, of Granbury, Texas, also was found guilty of obstruction of an official proceeding and tampering with documents and proceedings. Meggs, 53, of Dunnellon, Florida, also was found guilty of conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding, obstruction of an official proceeding, conspiracy to prevent an officer from discharging duties, and tampering with documents or proceedings.

While certain Oath Keepers members and affiliates breached the Capitol grounds and build-

ing, others remained stationed just outside of the city in quick reaction force (QRF) teams. According to the government’s evidence, the QRF teams were prepared to rapidly transport firearms and other weapons into Washington, D.C., in support of operations aimed at using force to stop the lawful transfer of presidential power.

Rhodes was arrested on Jan. 13, 2022, in Texas. Meggs was arrested on Feb. 17, 2021, in Florida. Harrelson was arrested on March 10, 2021, in Florida. Watkins was arrested on Jan. 18, 2021, in Ohio. Caldwell was arrested on Jan. 19, 2021, in Virginia.

The charges of seditious conspiracy, conspiracy to obstruct an official proceeding, obstruction of an official proceeding, and tampering with documents or proceedings each carry a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. The charge of conspiracy to prevent an officer from discharging duties carries a statutory maximum of six years in prison. The charge of interfering with law enforcement officers during a civil disorder carries a statutory maximum of five years in prison. All of the charges also carry potential financial penalties. Each defendant was convicted of at least one offense that carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. The Court will determine any sentence after considering the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

In the 22 months since Jan. 6, 2021, over 900 individuals have been arrested in nearly all 50 states for crimes related to the breach of the U.S. Capitol, including over 275 individuals charged with assaulting or impeding law enforcement. The investigation remains ongoing.

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Bloomfield	14,768	168	14,851	168
Caldwell	2,018	18	2,029	18
Cedar Grove	4,752	141	4,787	141
City of Orange	9,778	176	9,832	176
East Orange	20,236	390	20,329	392
Essex Fells	608	2	608	2
Fairfield	2,406	40	2,415	40
Glen Ridge	1,564	19	1,569	19
Irvington	13,838	283	13,893	283
Livingston	8,311	109	8,343	109
Maplewood	6,455	49	6,473	49
Millburn	4,569	18	4,579	18
Montclair	8,685	91	8,731	91
Newark	92,927	1,277	93,255	1,278
North Caldwell	1,785	10	1,795	10
Nutley	7,957	90	8,000	90
Roseland	1,725	26	1,734	26
South Orange	4,297	22	4,320	23
Verona	4,065	25	4,096	25
West Caldwell	3,339	67	3,339	67
West Orange	16,136	271	16,229	273
Total	243,485	3,449	244,552	3,455

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of November 30, 2022)

NJ: 2,405,064 cases / 32,013 deaths (Plus 3,116 probable)

United States (approx.): 98.697 Million / 1.080 Million deaths

Worldwide (approx.): 642.957 Million / 6.634 Million deaths

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NEWARK #1 IN VOTER TURNOUT... BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY

(Continued from page 1)

have the highest percentage of "minority-majority" populations. Newark, Irvington, East Orange and Orange have the highest percentages of African American and Latin people by overall population as per the 2020 U.S. Census.

There are some other observers who may say that the relatively low turnout may be among the "safest" Democratic Party municipalities in New Jersey.

The 11th Congressional District, for example, had been recently called "the bluest of N.J.'s blue districts. It was redrawn, based on the 2020 Census findings, to add Newark's East Ward from the Eighth CD but lost South Orange and Maplewood and part of Montclair to the 11th district. The district now has the bulk of Newark, Irvington, East Orange, Orange, Montclair's Fourth Ward, three "West Essex" towns and eight Union

County towns whole or in part.

Participating Essex County voters returned incumbent Cong. Donald M. Payne, Jr. (D-Newark) by an eight-to-one ratio over the challenging David H. Pinckney (Republican-Irvington.)

"Local Talk" voters - depending on where they were on the Eighth, 10 and 11th CD maps, had House of Representative candidates to choose.

In the Eighth CD, Robert "Bob" Menendez, Jr. (D-Englewood) was elected to succeed the retiring Albio Sires (D-W. New York) by three-to-one over Marcus Arroyo (R-W. New York.) The "New Eighth" has Newark's East and North Wards, Union County's Elizabeth and 10 Hudson County towns whole or in part.

In the 11th CD, Essex County voters re-elected Mikie Sherrill (D-Montclair) over challenger Paul DeGroot (R-Montville?) by a three-to-one ratio. The "New 11th" includes South Orange, Maplewood and the rest of Montclair plus seven "West Essex," four "Southwestern Passaic County" and 25 Morris County

towns whole or in part.

Incumbent Joseph DiVincenzo (D-Roseland) was returned as Essex County Executive over challenger Adam Kraemer (R-West Orange) by four-to-one. It was Nov. 8's only countywide contest on the ballot.

Another turnout theory being floated among the sole State Senate, municipal and board of education has to do with voters being attracted to candidates and races "closer to home."

The special State Senate 28th Legislative District Election, set on the ballot among five "Local Talk" towns whole or in part, determined who would succeed the retiring Ronald C. Rice (D-Newark).

A majority of participating 28th LD voters chose incumbent appointee Renee C. Burgess (D-Irvington) over challenger Joy B. Freeman (R-Newark) by just over three-to-one. That election was the last for the "Old 28th:" Irvington, Bloomfield, Glen Ridge, Nutley and parts of Newark's West, North and South wards.

Fourth-ranked Orange, fifth-ranked Belleville, eighth-ranked

South Orange, ninth-ranked Nutley and 10th-ranked Montclair only had board of education races on their municipal level.

Montclair was holding its first-ever election for three full-term BOE seats and a school construction bond issue public question. The township is undergoing a three-year transition from a mayor-appointed to a voter-elected public school board.

Sixth-ranked Bloomfield, seventh-ranked West Orange, 11th-ranked Maplewood and 12th-ranked (or highest-percentages) Glen Ridge held municipal and board of education contests.

An advisor to Mayor Ras Baraka had responded with an editorial posted to the NewJerseyGlobe.com website on Nov. 23. Lawrence Hamm, better known as leader of the People's Organization for Progress, called out what he sees as "cherry picking" by comparing Newark's 16.45 percent turnout to South Orange's 41.80 and Maplewood's 49.42.

"Critics... conveniently
(Continued on page 14)

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 - One of Newark's higher-profile developers and his Newark-practicing attorney, on Nov. 23, have pleaded to one count each of conspiring to commit bank fraud in a 2007-08 mortgage scheme that cost the federal Fannie Mae fund \$3.5 million.

Victor Santos, 63, of Watchung, and Fausto Simoes, Esq., 69, of Millington, now face up to 30 years' imprisonment and \$1 million each when U.S. District Judge Michael A Shipp sentences them April 12-13. Santos and Simoes had pleaded before Shipp's Trenton bench via teleconference.

Santos may be best known for being the private half of the private-public partnership with the City of Newark that built the new DPW garage and headquarters at 52 Amsterdam St. in 2016. Santos' 52 Amsterdam Newark LLC is in the midst of receiving \$151 million in rent from the city as part of their 25-year lease.

Santos and Simoes confessed to defrauding Fannie Mae by applying phony mortgage applications through a shell corporation and 10 straw buyers on 12 Newark properties from September 2007 through November 2008.

The straw buyers lent their legitimate personal and financial information to Santos' shell company. Santos, through that third party, paid the buyers \$5,000 each, supplied tenants and covered their properties' expenses.

Santos, once the federal mortgage loans were approved and received, broke his promise to the straw buyers to cover expenses. The 10 buyers defaulted, costing Fannie Mae and federal taxpayers \$3.5 million.

Arsenio Santos - home builder and Victor's cousin - and home mortgage consultant Raquel Casalinho were also named and indicted as co-conspirators in 2018. A. Santos, 64, of Millington, and Casalinho, 37, of Union, have meanwhile pleaded guilty; their sentencing is still pending.

IRVINGTON - Authorities have not identified the man, as of press time, who was struck and killed along the 1110 block of Springfield Avenue Nov. 27.

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II and Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers said that township police members and local EMS medics converged on Springfield Avenue and Lincoln Street at about 6 p.m. Sunday.

Responders found a man who had been injured while trying to cross Springfield Avenue. The man was pronounced dead at the scene. Local traffic, including buses on NJTransit's No. 25 and 70 bus routes, were detoured during the field investigation.

The driver whose car struck the victim remained at the scene. No charges against the motorist have been lodged as of press time.

The incident happened by 1111 Springfield Ave., which has been the Taco Bell's address since 2018. It had been the address of a 250-year-old house last used as the Irvington Servicemen's Club House 1921-2014. The Colonial era house was replaced by the fast food eatery.

EAST ORANGE - County and city law enforcers are looking for at least two suspects who injured three people in a Park Avenue drive-by shooting here Nov. 22.

Stephens and East Orange Police Chief Phyllis Bindi said that city officers had responded to a gunfire report by 455 Park Ave., across from Paul Robeson Stadium, at 3:05 p.m. that Tuesday. They found two men and a female suffering non-life-threatening gunshot wounds.

The three victims, who were taken to Newark's University Hospital for treatment, said that a vehicle had pulled up to them and one of its occupants began firing. The vehicle then fled on

Park Avenue.

There were no reports of NJTransit's No. 41 buses, or other traffic, being substantially detoured during the ECPO Homicide/Major Crimes task Force-EOPD field investigation. The shooting happened minutes after five public schools had dismissed their students for the day.

ORANGE - That 30-second siren sounding some had heard from the Martin DeMaio Memorial Fire Headquarters here Noon Nov. 26 was for an individual reason.

The siren blast was the city and Orange Fire Department's final tribute to firefighter and Interim Fire Director Rudolph Scott Thomas. Thomas, 82, was the first minority and African American firefighter to retire from "Orange's Bravest."

Thomas - who was born in a taxi on way to St. Mary's Hospital Feb. 19, 1941 - had already been a housing inspector and gasoline station attendant for the city when he took the N.J. Civil Service Exam for firefighter in 1973. He would serve for 20 years before retiring on Aug. 1, 1994.

Then-Mayor Joel Sain commissioned Thomas to recruit, prepare, mentor and counsel other minority firefighters who followed him. The late Mayor Carmine Capone named Thomas Interim Fire Chief in 1981.

Thomas, a city resident most of his life, was an Orange Tornadoes three-letter scholar-athlete and Class of 1960 graduate. "Fella" ran his own shoeshine business at age 12 and, at 17, owned and operated his grandfather's moving and hauling company.

Councilwoman Adrienne Wootton, who sponsored Thomas' Sept. 20 honorary resolution, and Mayor Dwayne D. Warren organized Saturday's siren call for Thomas.

WEST ORANGE - Family and friends are preparing D'Andre Hull's last rites as of press time while NYPD detectives investigate his fatal Nov. 28 car crash.

Hull, 24, was identified as the driver of a gray 2014 Nissan Altima that had "struck a utility pole at Canal Street and Broadway and rotated to the curbline" at 1:42 a.m. Monday. NYPD's Highway District Collision In-

vestigation Squad had determined that Hull had been going west on Canal from the Manhattan Bridge "failed to properly navigate the roadway and struck the pole."

EMS rushed the unconscious and unresponsive Hull to NYC Health and Hospitals/Bellevue where he later died. Hull, West Orange Class of 2016, played as a wide receiver and a defensive back for the Mounties football team 2014-16.

WOHS Principal "Clapped Out"

Members of the WOHS community lined the halls Nov. 18 to applaud Principal Hayden Moore as he left his office for the last time. The sendoff included members of the school's orchestra and choir performing when he stopped at the band room.

Moore, after 21 years, left his office keys behind for the incoming Oscar Guerrero. Moore will visit WOHS as the public school district's Assistant Superintendent of Schools for the remainder of the 2022-23 school year. He will succeed Dr. Lauren Schoen as WOPS Superintendent July 1.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - An internal report on how a South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education member allegedly misused confidential material in his presentation last summer has been completed, filed - and remains internal.

Board President Thair Joshua said, at the school district's Nov. 17 meeting, that the report and its findings will be confidential. Only fellow board members and the panel's attorney have access to it.

The investigative report came in the wake of Board Member Dr. Qawi Teleford's July 18 presentation on floor plan options for Columbia High School's indoor pool. Teleford, who is also the board's Safety and Security Committee Chairman, was said to use material that was not vetted for public consumption.

Board 2nd Vice President Kaitlin Wittleder had introduced a motion at their Aug. 1 meeting "to admonish Teleford's actions." Board member Erin Siders, however, countered that motion with

(Continued on page 15)

WORLD NEWS FLASH

(Continued from page 6)

the vehicle tasked with developing a resilient pipeline of new nuclear builds, with an announcement expected early in the new year.

An Energy Bill, which is being driven forward in Parliament, is considered the driving force that will power up this long-term plan, forming part of a once in a generation plan to put in place powers to shield Britain from global forces and secure energy for future generations.

It comes as the UK sets a new ambition to reduce energy demand by 15% by 2030. This is backed by a new £1 billion ECO+ insulation scheme, and a major expansion to the government’s public awareness campaign - all of which will help households cut back on energy waste and deliver warmer homes and buildings and cheaper energy bills.

Business and Energy Secretary Grant Shapps said, “Global gas prices are at record highs, caused by Putin’s illegal march on Ukraine. We need more clean, affordable power generated within our borders - British energy for British homes.

“Today’s historic deal giving government backing to Sizewell C’s development is crucial to this, moving us towards greater energy independence and away from the risks that a reliance on volatile global energy markets for our supply comes with.

“This is at the heart of a package of measures that - together with the new Great British Nuclear and powers of the Energy Security Bill - will ensure secure supply for now, and for generations to come.”

FIGHTING CYBERCRIME

AFRICA

Law enforcement officials from 27 INTERPOL countries joined forces in the Africa Cyber Surge Operation to counter cybercrime across the continent.

Against the backdrop of the huge financial losses suffered by companies, businesses and individuals, the four-month operation (July to November 2022) saw officers detect, investigate and disrupt cybercrime through coordinated law enforcement activities utilizing INTERPOL platforms, tools and channels, in close cooperation with AFRIPOL.

Coordinated from an INTERPOL Command Centre in Kigali, Rwanda, the operation focused on removing the enablers of cybercrime.

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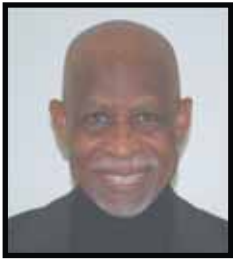
Among the operational highlights:

- 11 individuals were arrested, with one suspect linked to the abuse of children, and 10 others linked to scam and fraud activities worth USD 800,000 which had an impact on victims globally.
- Authorities in Eritrea took down a Darknet Market that was selling hacking tools and cybercrime-as-a-service components.
- Multiple cryptocurrency scam cases were resolved in Cameroon, including one with an estimated financial impact upon the victim of more than CFA 8 million.
- Tanzania recovered more than USD 150,000 of victims’ money from data infringement and copyright cases.
- Action was taken against more than 200,000 pieces of malicious cyber infrastructure which facilitate cybercrime across

the African Region. This included the takedown and clean-up of malicious infrastructure linked to botnet activity, and the dissemination of mass phishing, spam and online extortion activities (e.g. romance scams, banking scams and theft of data) to potential victims.

Participating countries were able to improve their own national cyber security by patching network vulnerabilities and cleaning-up defaced government websites and securing vulnerable critical infrastructure, thereby reducing the risk of potentially catastrophic attacks.

Investigations were shaped by intelligence provided by INTERPOL’s private sector partners including British Telecom, Cyber Defense Institute, Fortinet’s FortiGuard Labs, Group-IB, Kaspersky, Unit 42-Palo Alto Networks, Shadowserver and Trend Micro.



*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**Breaking The Curse
By Overcoming Fear**

Fear leads people to do some of the strangest things in life. I will return to make some observations about this opening statement, but before returning, I take note of a fact of interest being argued today that many of our fears have a genetic root.

Fearful memories are passed on from one generation to the next. Parents can pass down the fears they experience to their children. The results of experiments suggest that fallout from traumatic experiences may extend through generations. So, yes, we can fear.

While fear is a desirable and the most natural response to dangerous situations, when a person's fear is out of proportion to any stimulus, the fear can be debilitating. I am speaking of what is referenced as carnal fear. That is the fear that comes from the sources of demonism rather than the reverent fear that flows from the divine.

Can you think of how carnal fear affects its host? Here is a list of 16 ways I note from medical and social scientists.

1. Feeling anxiety - worried.
2. Feeling nervous, restless or tense.
3. At times feel a pounding heart, palpitations or accelerated heart rate.
4. Feeling chest pain or tightness in the chest.
5. Feeling sweaty.

6. Feeling hot or cold flushes.
7. Feeling shortness of breath or a smothering sensation.
8. Feeling nausea, vomiting or diarrhea.
9. Having a sense of impending danger, panic or doom.
10. Feeling weak or tired.
11. Trouble concentrating or thinking about anything other than the present worry.
12. Feeling like they want to hide.
13. Feeling the need for separation rather than relationship and fellowship.
14. Avoiding responsibility - excuse and abuse - blame others for what is wrong
15. Domineering - seeking to be in control of any in their environment.
16. Resentful of those about them.

We hear much talk these days about people suffering from anxiety disorders and mental illnesses. What label can we place on all that is happening in these spheres? I offer one word: FEAR.

Because of such fear, people are becoming anxious and worried about what might happen or not happen. As a result, they are becoming increasingly vulnerable to anyone playing a trade of false protection, such as that offered by charismatic politicians, voracious financial advisors, spiritualistic counselors, and magicians who are most effective at marketing fear.

Here are biblical and historical examples of individuals and their responses to fear. Adam and Eve ran and hid because they felt guilty after falling into sin (Genesis 3). Pharaoh oppressed Israel because he saw God's blessings on them and thought they would soon rise to rule the Egyptian people (Exodus 1-14). King Saul hated David and sought to kill him because he saw that David was more appreciated than he was. (1 Samuel 18-24). The religious leaders of Israel hated Jesus to the extent that they put him on the cross because they saw him as a threat to

their authority and religious system. They feared that the ordinary people loved him more than they were (Read the four Gospels). The wars of history have been fought because of fear. People resent one another because of fear. In contemporary times, xenophobia (fear of immigrants) drives people crazy. So yes, the examples are multiple.

The point I am making is that the resulting consequence of fear is that it opens the door to the enemy and, as a result, has been bringing a curse on individual lives and families. Or let me offer that we need to learn to let go of our fears. Unfortunately, many people have learned to live with their phobias and all the components of their fearful curses rather than seeking to let them go and find freedom. But we must eliminate the fears to be effective in the world and get on our journey without fear.

In his book Pilgrim's Progress, the famous writer, John Bunyan, painted a picture of two lions blocking the path to the heavenly City. The lions were ready to tear to shreds anyone who passed by. "Christian" (traveling on the path toward the City) grew increasingly fearful but slowly pressed on. As he got closer to the lions, he discovered that only their growls could reach him. The point is that the enemy, Satan has a loud growl, and if one is fearful, they will give in to him, but if one has faith, then one will be able to enter the city or find the freedom that is needed for this life and the life to come.

Faith is the opposite of fear, and those who have faith in God and learn how to trust those who are to be trusted will be able to overcome fear. Of the 365 reminders of "Fear not" in the Bible, I offer the one in Psalm 34:9 "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." (KJV)

Therefore, we need to seek the Lord, not the magicians, to find freedom from fear.

ROE V. WADE REVERSAL

(Continued from page 4)

measures should be represented in the privacy policies of App Store apps. Long-term, Apple should conduct periodic audits and remove or refuse to list third-party apps in violation of these standards.

The letter sent is the latest step New Jersey has taken to protect reproductive rights in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, which overturned nearly half a century of settled precedent and held that the U.S. Constitution does not protect the right to an abortion.

One week after the Dobbs decision was handed down, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation establishing protections for patients and providers. For patients, the legislation helps ensure that those who seek reproductive health care in New Jersey can access confidential care. For providers, the legislation prohibits New Jersey's professional licensing boards from taking disciplinary action against healthcare practitioners who provide reproductive health care that is legal in New Jersey.

On July 11, 2022, to further support access to abortion care in New Jersey, Attorney General Platkin announced the creation of a Reproductive Rights Strike Force ("Strike

Force"), comprised of officials across the Department of Law & Public Safety. The role of the Strike Force is to recommend civil and criminal enforcement actions and develop other strategic initiatives to protect access to reproductive health care for New Jersey residents and residents of other states who travel to New Jersey to access such care.

Joining Attorney General Platkin in signing the letter are the attorneys general of California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, New York, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington.

OVER \$1 MILLION IN FUNDING ANNOUNCED TO ENHANCE PRESCRIPTION MONITORING PROGRAM

TRENTON - Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin and Kelly E. Levy, Acting Director, Office of the New Jersey Coordinator for Addiction Response and Enforcement Strategies (NJ CARES), announced that the New Jersey Prescription Monitoring Program ("NJMPMP") was awarded \$1.4 million in competitive federal funding from the FY22 Harold Rogers Prescription Drug Monitoring Program to enhance the State's existing program that helps prescribers monitor patient use of opioid painkillers and other controlled drugs that can lead to addiction and fatal overdoses.

This is in addition to the \$972,426 in opioid settlement funds provided by Governor Murphy for the NJMPMP. Those funds will be used to support the NJMPMP's Electronic Health Record (EHR) integration. EHR integration improves ease of access and increases utilization of the NJMPMP so that healthcare providers can make the best data-informed treatment decisions for their patients.

The NJMPMP, within the Division of Consumer Affairs (the "Division"), is an electronic database that collects information from pharmacies on the dispensing of controlled dangerous substances, like opioids, to individual patients. The monitoring program allows healthcare professionals to see a patient's prescription drug history with the aim of improving overall prescribing practices and reducing the risk of potential abuse or fraud by patients who obtain prescriptions from multiple providers.

Since the NJMPMP began operating in 2011, a total of 53,259 prescribers and 8,137 pharmacists have registered for access to the NJMPMP, representing approximately 97 percent of eligible prescribers. To date, over 137 million controlled dangerous substance, human growth hormone and gabapentin prescriptions have been entered into the NJMPMP from more than 3,300 New Jersey licensed pharmacies.

The grant funds will further New Jersey's efforts to prevent the abuse, misuse and diversion of controlled substances and will help prescribers make better clinical decisions. Specifically, the award will fund five critical enhancements designed to improve NJMPMP information, reporting, quality, and integrity through the development and implementation of the following systems and modifications:

- Investigation Alerts Module. With the Investigation Alerts Module, the NJMPMP Administrator will be notified in near real-time when a patient of a prescriber who is under investigation has filled a prescription associated with that prescriber's DEA registration number.
- NJMPMP Reporting Exemption Module. Currently, NJ-licensed pharmacies who are eligible to apply for NJMPMP reporting exemptions must do so in paper form on an annual basis. The funding will upgrade the paper process to a streamlined electronic process.
- Public NJMPMP Data Dashboard. The interactive dashboard will hold over 137 million anonymized prescription records going back to 2011. Creating the dashboard will enhance public health initiatives, help develop targeted interventions and identify state trends, and enable data-driven policy.
- Interactive Reporting Module. This module will allow the NJMPMP to share enhanced data analytics and visual insights for state investigations by developing customized investigation-based reports about prescribers, pharmacies, and patients for use in state-initiated prescription-related investigations. The reporting module will create a secure, online portal for the Division's drug diversion investigators to access interactive reports, and will aid in their investigations by automating the

NJMPMP data analysis process.

- NJMPMP Programmatic Enhancements. The NJMPMP will implement platform modifications with its vendor to ensure that New Jersey healthcare practitioners are equipped with the most sophisticated prescription medication analytics program.

"I am proud that the federal government has recognized the NJMPMP's innovative work with an award of over \$1 million in competitive funds," said Attorney General Platkin. "Combating the opioid crisis requires us to use every tool in the toolbox, and these grant dollars, together with funding already provided by the Murphy Administration to bolster our efforts, means that we will remain on the cutting edge of technological solutions to address this national public health crisis."

"The NJMPMP is a highly effective tool in our fight against the opioid crisis. It helps ensure that prescribers and pharmacists have access to key signs of abuse and addiction," said Cari Fais, Acting Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs. "These enhancements to the NJMPMP will prevent opioids from falling into the wrong hands and will make the NJMPMP an even stronger and more user-friendly tool for clinicians."

"Since the establishment of the NJMPMP in 2011, the Department has been investing in enhancing the program to ensure prescribers and pharmacists have greater ability to prevent the abuse, misuse, and diversion of opioid drugs," said Kelly Levy, Acting Director of NJ CARES. "This additional federal funding allocated for the NJMPMP will undoubtedly continue our work towards strengthening the system by improving and advancing its data analytic capabilities."

For more information, visit the Division's NJMPMP website at www.NJConsumerAffairs.gov/pmp.

NEWARK FELON GETS 93 MONTHS IN PRISON ON MULTIPLE CHARGES

NEWARK - An Essex County man was sentenced Nov. 28 to 93 months in prison on weapons and drug charges, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced.

Teriek Edwards, 44, of Newark, was previously convicted on two counts of possession of firearms and ammunition by a convicted felon; one count of possession with intent to distribute heroin, cocaine, and oxycodone; and one count of possession of a firearm in furtherance of his possession with intent to distribute heroin, cocaine, and oxycodone, following a six-day trial before U.S. District Judge John Michael Vazquez, who imposed the sentence in Newark federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and the evidence at trial: On May 25, 2018, members of the East Orange Police Department attempted to stop Edwards as part of an ongoing investigation. Upon being approached by law enforcement officers, Edwards fled, and a struggle ensued. Edwards was arrested and law enforcement officers recovered heroin, cocaine, oxycodone, and other illegal narcotics from his pants pockets, as well as a 9mm firearm loaded with 12 rounds of ammunition. A federal complaint was filed against Edwards and a federal arrest warrant was issued.

On Aug. 22, 2018, the U.S. Marshals Service Fugitive Task Force arrested Edwards on that federal arrest warrant, at which time they recovered a second handgun - a 9mm firearm loaded with eight rounds of ammunition.

In addition to the prison term, Judge Vazquez sentenced Edwards to three years of supervised release.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Tracey Agnew and Samantha C. Fasanello of the U.S. Attorney's Office Criminal Division.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

HEARTSTRINGS ...

He was the last to be interviewed and a willing participant, so I thought, "You ready?" "Yep," he assured me convincingly. "Who is that one person in your life or someone that you know or know of that is the epitome of love? They are Love defined in a nutshell and when you think of love you always think of them?"

You'd have to have been there. The look on his face at that moment, the pause, and its dead silence. That deep inhale and the exhale were slightly prolonged, and I waited for it. "Nobody! I gotta go!"

I never saw a motorized wheelchair go so fast. I remember Author/Actor Barry Alston to be as quick to the draw when crowning his Mom as the one.

"My mother is the epitome of love. The first love I've known. There's other people that love me but not like her."

Omar Liles of Agape Love Network (Google that) affirmed that his mama holds that spot. Because if someone was out of work or didn't have a place to stay, she would always open her doors for them. I'll never forget that!

My boy Will who owns the corner store by the house and Herman who works there both were pretty quick with their response too. "My wife Patricia, she's my love. We've been married for 15 years. It's Patricia."

Herman told me that it was God for him because God knew his heart. Logically my mother's



Photos By Andrea Dialect

love choice exemplified was pretty much in the same vein as Herman's from the store.

"Jesus Christ is my first love. He is love and my choice because he'll never leave you, never forsake you. You can talk to people at times and sometimes call them up and they're not home, they're stressed out, they're busy, they don't want to talk. But when I call on him, he'll be there right on time."

Mimi the owner of Mimi Hair Braiding love rep was so eloquently stated in her native tongue. "Mommy!"

"Her quick one-word response seemingly had a much more calming effect than when I attest my mommy to be mine. Now I ask you... Who represents the epitome of Love in your life?"

THEM STREETS BE TALKIN'

I LOVE CHILE... "My grandmother Mabel!" He said that it was a hard question to answer because he has had so many great people in his life as girlfriends, family, and friends.

"But Grandma Mabel loves me no matter what." So she won the title.

His answer was very profound but for some reason the tape recorder wasn't taping. So this is what I remember the guy that lives around the corner from me to have said. Thanks, Mister!

The two lovelies that I met after running into the guy from my neighborhood was Sharon.



"It's a tie between my grandmother Agnes and my best friend. I feel that my grandmother is very caring and compassionate towards me and even though there's a large age gap between us I feel that she gets me more than other people do.

"It is my Family because they are always there when I need them and also my friends too. My name is Chioma."

When stumbling across this group of High Schoolers: Zion, Daveonna, Alex, Robert, and Amanda. Their response was in the form of a singsong. My Boyfriend, God, my Mom, Maria, my Girlfriend, and my Boyfriend!" ...

Read this article in its entirety at www.localtalkweekly.com and type The Observation Booth, Andrea Dialect and/ or Entertainment Section in the search bar. If you are interested in participating in a challenge, project sharing a topic, news or if you have any questions, comments or concerns, send them to localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

IRVINGTON HOMICIDE UNDER INVESTIGATION

ESSEX - Acting Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens II and Irvington Police Director Tracy Bowers announced Nov. 30 that the Essex County Prosecutor's Office Homicide/Major Crimes Task Force is investigating a fatal shooting of a 15-year-old boy from Newark.

On Sunday, November 27, at about 6:59 p.m., police were notified of a shooting at the intersection of Melrose Avenue and Wills

Place in Irvington. Police found the boy apparently suffering from a gunshot wound. He was pronounced dead at the scene at 7:24 p.m.

The investigation is active and ongoing. No arrests have been made. Anyone with information is asked to contact the Essex County Prosecutor's Office tips line at 1-877-TIPS-4EC or 1-877-847-7432. Calls will be kept confidential.

NEWARK #1 IN VOTER TURNOUT...BUT NOT IN A GOOD WAY

(Continued from page 9)

glossed over the fact that there was little to no competition," said Hamm on Baraka's behalf. "It's fair to assume that Newarkers simply didn't feel the anxiety of a potential shift in leadership looming over their heads like so many others within the state and across the country."

Hamm, in his six-paragraph opinion piece, recalled 2021's narrow re-election of Gov. Phil Murphy (D-Rumson) in pointing out two factors in keeping New Jersey voters consistently

engaged. One factor is that New Jersey, unlike most other states, hold annual elections. The other factor is that "Murphy was able to remain as the state's top executive because of black and brown voters - notably those that came out of the Newark area."

Hamm also cited a trend of "a growing generation of young voters who care less about party allegiance and care more about issues.

"This 'insider strategy' to find fault with the core group of voters that every statewide candidate will clamor for would be laughable if it wasn't so damn disrespectful," concluded Hamm.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 10)

one of her own: remove Wittleder from her vice presidency for "dereliction of duty based on her failure to communicate with the board before taking public action."

Board Attorney Frances Febres revealed that an investigation on Teleford was underway that meeting when he tried to interrupt Wittleder's explanation of her admonishment motion.

The Aug. 1 public chain of events ended with Siders' motion to strip Wittleder of her powers in defeat on a 4-4 vote. Teleford, who could have provided the tie breaking vote, abstained.

BLOOMFIELD - It can now be said, as of Nov. 14, that Lion Gate Park has gone from controversy to acclaim in two decades.

New Jersey Future has named Bloomfield winner of its 2022 Smart Growth Award for the 18-acre park and wetlands preserve. The North Center tract, which borders the Third River, includes a turf soccer field and a field house.

Its wetlands help absorb and naturally discharge up to 10 million gallons of stormwater runoff which would otherwise flood the township park and the neighboring apartment building. A 2000s townhouse development proposal would have used underground detention basins.

The Lion Gate tract, off Broad Street and Lion Gate Drive in the Second Ward, had been the site of the long-closed Scientific Glass plant. The township used its own Open Space Trust Fund money and a state Green Acres grant to buy and remediate the site.

NJ Future, in its 20th year of bestowing its Smart Growth Awards, is an environmental group that hails what it sees as sustainable civic projects.

"I'm so proud to announce this award as it's an acknowledgement of all the hard work we've done in remediating this location and making it a safe green space for our residents," said mayor Michael Venezia. "Our ability to open this park is a testament to the hard work and advocacy of so many people in our community."

MONTCLAIR - NFL NY Jets defensive tackle Solomon Thomas more than paid a visit to the Montclair High School football team here Nov. 21.

Thomas, joined by MHS Mounties Head Coach Jermain Johnson, consoled the team over their "lost" season. They were about to face Ridgewood in the NJSIAA sectional and regional playoffs when they were told that their season became null and void overnight on Oct. 28.

Montclair Public Schools administrators' self-reporting of "an academically ineligible player" on the Mounties' roster

to the NJSIAA prompted a quarter final forfeit to Ridgewood. Their 4-4 regular season record was also vacated. An off-schedule game for around Thanksgiving Day, to give the senior class a sendoff, was briefly considered.

"Other than our banquet, this is the last thing we'll do this year as a team," said Johnson in his introduction of Thomas. "For the seniors, there's no good answer for what happened to you; all we can do is put a bandage on it. For you underclassmen, you already know what the motivation is for next year."

Thomas, a Chicago native and five-year NFL player, came as founder of The Defensive Line. He founded the non-profit organization to "end the youth suicide epidemic, especially for young people of color, by transforming the way we communicate and connect about mental health."

"Mental health isn't only about illness; it can be tied to your relationships and your games," said Thomas. "Mental health is about having a presence of mind in all situations."

GLEN RIDGE - Borough elders and Public Service Electric and Gas more than fielded recent Lorraine Street residents' complaints of power outages this season.

Mayor Patrick Stuart and Borough Administrator Michael Zichelli had scheduled PSE&G representatives for the latter's public presentation at their Nov. 28 council meeting. The utility spokespersons will talk about this autumn's outages along parts of Lorraine and Madison streets, Astor Place and Hawthorne, Maolis and Midland avenues.

The said streets form an area Public Service calls Toney Brook 4003 Circuit. The utility has scheduled that circuit's maintenance "early next year."

Lorraine Street resident Henry Passaperra told borough elders at their Nov. 14 meeting that power outages along those streets have become more frequent that he and neighbor Rick Deutsch have resorted to buying portable generators. The blackouts, said Deutsch, last "12 hours or one-and-a-half days."

Zichelli meanwhile confirmed that there were six recorded outages along Lorraine and Madison in the last 24 months, lasting from "25 minutes to 17 hours, 30 minutes." The administrator added that the utility had to trace many failures to power lines and poles in residential backyards, adding to the repair time.

BELLEVILLE - The township's planning board is reviewing a proposal from Mayor Michael Melham and the Township Council to draw the Kmart site into quarters for "consistency" since Nov. 10.

Belleville's planners had received the

Mayor and Council's 371-411 "Main Street Redevelopment Plan" that Thursday night. That plan first calls for the 44-year-old, 77,800-square-foot Kmart building to be demolished.

Two 60-foot-wide streets would then cross the 5.94-acre property. Ralph Street would be extended south from Terry Street to Joralemon Street. An unnamed street would run east-west between Main and Stephens streets.

The quartering for the former wire factory lot would be divided into four "pads" for future residential and/or commercial use. There has been no discussion on what would go on each "pad" - a plan similar to the Starbucks, Wawa and self-storage building now on the former Jergen's/Roche industrial site in SoHo.

There will be a 20 ft.-wide landscape buffer along the site's Stephens Street side and a 10 ft.-wide similar buffer along its Terry Street border. There has been no traffic plan submitted.

The proposal, should it pass planning board muster, would have to go back to the council for their formal approval.

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