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VOLUME 23 • ISSUE 8 * DECEMBER 22, 2022 - JANUARY 4, 2023

25¢

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OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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E-mail - Newspaper: localtalk@aol.com * Printing: localtalkprinting@gmail.com



HAPPY HOLIDAYS!



THIS IS THE FINAL EDITION OF 2022. WE WILL RETURN ON JANUARY 5, 2023. HAVE A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

HONORING WEST ORANGE & WEEQUAHIC'S AMAZING SEASONS

Photo By Mustafa Hooten
D1MediaPro



By Walter Elliott

ESSEX - First, township elders, educators and sports-oriented residents in West Orange celebrated their high school football team's first-ever NJSIAA state championship with a Hometown Champions Celebration outside of the Municipal Building here Dec. 10.

WOHS Mountaineers footballers, boys and girls soccer players, cross country track and fielders, cheerleaders and the Marching Mountaineers band were escorted from a dinner at the Nicholas Anthony restaurant to the municipal building plaza that Saturday night.

Mayor Robert Parisi and Acting Superintendent of Schools Hayden Moore led a salute to the student-athletes and their supporters, starting with school district Acting Athletic Director Steve Zichella, WOHS Principal Oscar Guerrero and Mountaineers Head Football Coach Darnell Grant.

Grant, in his fourth season

since moving from his Irvington alma mater, helped lead the Mountaineers to an 11-win and two-loss overall 2022 season record. The 1991 Irvington High School graduate helped WOHS to win their first-NJSIAA State North Section 2, Group 5 championship.

WOHS's state football championship is the first since the former West Orange Cowboys and Mountain High School Rams became the Mountaineers with the 1984-85 school year. (The West Orange Public Schools had WOHS absorb the 1960-84 MHS and move into the latter's building.)

The Saturday night celebration reminded ones of the motorcades and rallies held for the championship-winning Irvington Blue Knights and East Orange Campus High School Jaguars Jan. 8, 2022 and Dec. 11, 2021. Dec. 10, 2022 however, was held at night for five more sports teams and the marching

(Continued on page 9)

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK DISTRIBUTES 2000 TOYS TO FAMILIES IN NEED

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TOP: Christine Geiges-Krey (left), administrative assistant for the Archdiocese of Newark's Respect Life Office, hands a bag filled with gifts to a community member during the Archdiocese's Fifth Annual Christmas Giveaway at The Mercy House in Newark on December 16, 2022. Photos by Archdiocese of Newark / Sean Quinn



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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to all of our readers. I wish a prosperous new year to you and your family. Also, as our tradition, we will not be printing our publication in the last week of December, as it is our vacation week. So, after December 22, 2022's publication, our new edition will be out on January 5, 2023.

Trump's tax returns for about 10 years up to 2017 were previously published by The New York Times. Now, the returns he refused to release will be revealed after some controversy. The Democrats are hurrying up because when the Republican majority takes over Congress in January, there will be

new committees. My main question for Trump's returns was whether or not Trump did anything illegal to avoid paying taxes. However, so far nothing has been declared illegal, and that the IRS will need more avenues to find out our more facts. This seems strictly political, and it's not a good direction country for our country to be going. The partition of the Democrats and the Republicans will divide further, and no one can do anything to help American citizens, who are taxpayers.

Another \$45 billion will be given to Ukraine. Our money is being given freely to help the war. Even though Russian President Putin is bad and not trustworthy, we should think about us and then use the power we have in the world to stop the war. It should not go the other way around, helping Ukraine to continue war and trying to ease the tension as a second step. The Russian Embassy warns of "unpredictable consequences" if

the US sends Patriot missiles to Ukraine. Maybe sending Patriot missiles will help to ease the tension, but if they are used and Russia weapons with nuclear weapons, then it might turn toward a different path.

The U.S. is suing Arizona for lining up shipping containers on Mexico's border to stop illegal immigrants entering that state. U.S. Attorneys stated that the containers are on federal property. Texas is sending guards to stop illegal immigrants, and if the guards act on federal properties, they might sue Texas too. I think this is another political agenda. However, 20,000 illegal immigrants a day are coming just to El Paso, Texas along, which will hurt all of us.

President Biden announced \$8 billion to help stop coal fired plants and to switch to renewable energy in Africa. This is very good. We can give out over a half a trillion dollars to Ukraine, which is in a war. Why not some to Africa, and we can help them

and continue to build African nations. China is doing large business in loaning them money over the past two decades.

Biden said at the US-African Leaders Summit, "Today's announcement joined a portfolio of Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment projects already underway in Africa."

The Taliban has banned women from universities in Afghanistan, sparking international condemnation and despair among young people in the country. The ban will stop the growth of women in Afghanistan, and it will be wrong precedent. Girls have already been excluded from secondary schools since the Taliban returned last year. Some women staged protests in the capital of Kabul on Dec. 21, but it did not make any impact.

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>
Constant Rain	Windy Mix, Temp. Falls	Partly Cloudy / Cold	Merry COLD-Mas	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
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State Officials Highlight Public Health Preparedness for Winter Months

TRENTON - With multiple respiratory viruses currently circulating throughout the state, the Murphy Administration continues to monitor the situation and support New Jersey's public health system as the winter months approach. Residents are encouraged to take the necessary precautions to keep themselves and their loved ones healthy in advance of many upcoming holiday gatherings.

"My Administration remains vigilant in monitoring the viruses currently circulating here in New Jersey and will continue to offer support to our hospitals and

health care providers as necessary," said Governor Phil Murphy. "The data and tools now available to us and the ongoing investments we are making in our public health infrastructure have better prepared us to address the public health needs of our state. Particularly as we enter the winter months and holiday gatherings take place over the next few weeks, I encourage residents to help keep themselves and their communities safe by taking simple precautions of their own, from getting vaccinated to staying home if they are sick."

"The lessons we learned and the tools we developed during the past two-plus years of the COVID-19 pandemic, including improved surveillance mechanisms, have prepared us operationally in responding to this season's uptick in respiratory viruses sending many of our residents to emergency departments across the state," said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli. "Being proactive in staying healthy is a col-

lective effort and we all need to play our part to avoid a surge that could strain our health care system early in the new year."

The New Jersey Department of Health continues to use data reported by health care settings and local health departments to monitor hospital capacity and disease progression, including daily cases of COVID-19 and influenza throughout the state. The Department is also maintaining regular contact with hospital leaders to understand their capacity to treat patients – particularly in pediatric units, which are seeing greater numbers of children with Respiratory Syncytial Virus Infection (RSV) this year.

The Administration is working daily to coordinate among New Jersey's hospitals to ensure patients can access the care that they need. Through this collaboration, strategies are in place to divert new patients to other nearby hospitals and to adjust to staffing constraints. Waivers remain in place to enable flexibility while also ensuring strong standards of infection prevention and control in these settings. The New Jersey Department of Health stands ready to employ other strategies such as transferring out lower acuity patients to urgent care facilities or federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) if necessary.

Residents are also encouraged to access the tools available to them to help avoid infections and/or severe illness, including both the COVID-19 and flu vaccines. As of this past week, everyone six months of age and older is now eligible for the bivalent COVID-19 vaccinations that also target recently circulating Omicron subvariants. While 81.3% of New Jerseyans have completed their COVID-19 primary vaccination series, there has been minimal bivalent booster uptake. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has also stated that this year's flu vaccine appears to be a good match for the strains circulating at this time. According

to the CDC National Immunization Survey, in New Jersey, only 25.1% of adults and 50% of children (six months to 17 years) have received the flu vaccine so far this season. There is no authorized vaccine against RSV.

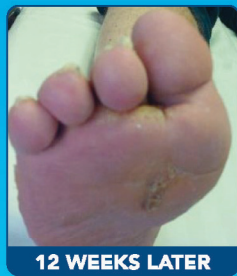
Governor Murphy and Commissioner Persichilli urge residents to stay up-to-date on these important vaccines. Flu vaccines, which are often covered by insurers at little to no cost to individuals, can be found at pharmacies, health care provider offices, FQHCs, and local health departments (LHDs). The latter two sites may offer the flu vaccine at little to no cost for eligible uninsured/underinsured individuals. COVID-19 vaccines, which are free to everyone, can be found at the NJ Vaccine Appointment Finder or by calling the statewide COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center (855-568-0545).

Residents are also encouraged to take other steps to keep themselves and their loved ones safe. Commonsense measures include coughing/sneezing into their sleeve, washing their hands, staying home when sick, and wearing a mask if they or someone they are with is at high risk of severe illness. Individuals are also encouraged to get tested as soon as symptoms appear, and monitor CDC COVID-19 community levels to determine if any additional preventative measures should be taken based on personal needs. Free at-home test kits are available from the federal government and testing is offered for free at certain sites around New Jersey.

Keeping children home from school and child care centers if they are feeling unwell is particularly important with the current impact RSV and flu are having on younger populations. If a child does become sick, parents and guardians are encouraged to contact the child's health care provider for any concerning or severe symptoms, including difficulty breathing, limited fluid intake, or worsening symptoms.

(Continued on page 5)

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SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

The college basketball season has started with a big splash. Four powerhouse teams took to the court this past weekend at Madison Square Garden. First, North Carolina, who had been ranked #1 at one point, defeated Ohio State 89-84 in overtime. Armando Bacot led the Tar Heels with 28 points and 15 rebounds in the win while Caleb Love added 22 points and 4 rebounds. As a team North Carolina shot 44 percent.

In the second game of the doubleheader, UCLA beat Kentucky 63-53. The Bruins got 19 points and 12 rebounds from Jaime Jaquez and 15 points and 3 rebounds from Tyger Campbell, while Christopher Livingston led the Wildcats with 14 points in the loss. Kentucky shot just 6 for 21 at 28 percent as a team in the 2nd half.

In other college basketball local action, the seton hall men's team fell short to Big East rival Providence 71-67. Leading The Hall was Kadary Richmond with 28 points in a tough loss at the Pru Center.

In football, the Jets had some questionable clock management late that led to a 20-17 at home to the Detroit Lions, after Greg Zuerlein was unable to connect on a 58 yard kick to tie the game as time expired. Both teams are now 7-7 this year, Meanwhile, the Giants went down to Washington and stunned the Commanders 20-12 to pull ahead in the NFC rankings at 8-5-1.

In soccer (aka that other football) news, Lionel Messi scored two goals to win his first World Cup along with his Argentina teammates, denying France a chance to repeat in a penalty kick shootout finish.

Finally, baseball has sent two big developments. First, the Yankees formally re-signed Aaron Judge, and named him the new team captain in the process. However, the biggest news came from the Mets, who swooped and signed Carlos Correa to a 12-year deal worth \$315 million after the San Francisco Giants pulled away from a better paying contract due to concerns about Correa's health.

HEALTH (Continued from page 4)

Protecting the health of vulnerable populations, such as residents in long-term care facilities and seniors, remains a crucial focus of the Administration's ongoing efforts. COVID-19 cases are closely monitored in long-term care and other high-risk settings, and all staff are required to receive training in infection prevention and control measures such as proper use of personal protective equipment. The Department of Health continues to provide direct assistance as necessary, through support from Mission Critical Teams, Infection Control Assessment and Response (ICAR) teams, facility consultations, and recent funding to help train frontline health care personnel

in these settings. To address both current and future public health needs throughout the state, the Administration continues to invest both federal and State funds to improve the effectiveness and resiliency of New Jersey's public health infrastructure. Recent investments include a \$41.5 million grant program to improve county health department infrastructure and another \$75 million grant to be administered to eligible county, municipal and regional local health departments (LHDs) across the state. An additional \$80.5 million from the CDC has also been awarded to the New Jersey Department of Health to help build, strengthen, and modernize New Jersey's public health infrastructure.



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THE EAST ORANGE CITY COUNCIL
JANUARY 2023 SCHEDULED MEETING DATES

In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975, Public Notice is hereby given that the East Orange City Council has established the following January 2023 Meeting Dates.

Formal action may take place at these Meetings and Executive Sessions may be held at Committee Meetings or at Regular Meetings. The Meetings will be held in City Council Chambers located at 44 City Hall Plaza, East Orange, New Jersey.

ANNUAL REORGANIZATION MEETING
Monday, January 9, 2023
5:30 PM

Committee Discussion & Agenda Meeting
5:30 PM

Regular Official Meeting
6:00PM

Tuesday, January 17th

Tuesday, January 17th



WELLS FARGO ORDERED TO PAY UP

UNITED STATES

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) is ordering Wells Fargo Bank to pay more than \$2 billion in redress to consumers and a \$1.7 billion civil penalty for legal violations across several of its largest product lines. The bank's illegal conduct led to billions of dollars in financial harm to its customers and, for thousands of customers, the loss of their vehicles and homes.

Consumers were illegally assessed fees and interest charges on auto and mortgage loans, had their cars wrongly repossessed, and had payments to auto and mortgage loans misapplied by the bank. Wells Fargo also charged consumers unlawful surprise overdraft fees and applied other incorrect charges to checking and savings accounts.

Under the terms of the order, Wells Fargo will pay redress to the over 16 million affected consumer accounts, and pay a \$1.7 billion fine, which will go to the CFPB's Civil Penalty Fund, where it will be used to provide relief to victims of consumer financial law violations.

"Wells Fargo's rinse-repeat cycle of violating the law has harmed millions of American families," said CFPB Director Rohit Chopra. "The CFPB is ordering Wells Fargo to refund billions of dollars to consumers across the country. This is an important initial step for accountability and long-term reform of this repeat offender."

Wells Fargo (NYSE: WFC) is one of the nation's largest banks serving households across the country. It offers a variety of consumer financial services, including mortgages, auto loans,

savings and checking accounts, and online banking services.

According to the Dec. 20 enforcement action, Wells Fargo harmed millions of consumers over a period of several years, with violations across many of the bank's largest product lines. The CFPB's specific findings include that Wells Fargo:

- Unlawfully repossessed vehicles and bungled borrower accounts: Wells Fargo had systematic failures in its servicing of automobile loans that resulted in \$1.3 billion in harm across more than 11 million accounts. The bank incorrectly applied borrowers' payments, improperly charged fees and interest, and wrongfully repossessed borrowers' vehicles. In addition, the bank failed to ensure that borrowers received a refund for certain fees on add-on products when a loan ended early.
- Improperly denied mortgage modifications: During at least a seven-year period, the bank improperly denied thousands of mortgage loan modifications, which in some cases led to Wells Fargo customers losing their homes to wrongful foreclosures. The bank was aware of the problem for years before it ultimately addressed the issue.
- Illegally charged surprise overdraft fees: For years, Wells Fargo unfairly charged surprise overdraft fees - fees charged even though consumers had enough money in their account to cover the transaction at the time the bank authorized it - on debit card transactions and ATM withdrawals. As early as 2015, the CFPB, as well as other federal regulators, including the Federal Reserve, began cautioning financial institutions against this practice, known as authorized positive fees.
- Unlawfully froze consumer accounts and misrepresented fee waivers: The bank froze more than 1 million consum-

er accounts based on a faulty automated filter's determination that there may have been a fraudulent deposit, even when it could have taken other actions that would have not harmed customers. Customers affected by these account freezes were unable to access any of their money in accounts at the bank for an average of at least two weeks. The bank also made deceptive claims as to the availability of waivers for a monthly service fee.

Wells Fargo is a repeat offender that has been the subject of multiple enforcement actions by the CFPB and other regulators for violations across its lines of business, including faulty student loan servicing, mortgage kickbacks, fake accounts, and harmful auto loan practices.

TALIBAN'S WAR ON WOMEN CONTINUES

AFGHANISTAN

If you thought that the Taliban regime in Afghanistan might have softened since getting power back last year, think again.

UN Special Representative in Afghanistan and United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) chief Roza Otunbayeva recently detailed some of the conditions that Afghans are dealing with since the Taliban reclaimed power.

"What struck me most was the misery of so many Afghans who live in great poverty and uncertainty. Many told me during my visits around the country that they are simply surviving," she said.

While the Taliban are essentially in control, they are unable to satisfactorily address terrorist groups operating there, she reported. Recently, the Islamic State - Khorasan Province (ISKP), an affiliate of the extremist terrorist group known as Daesh, carried out attacks against the Russian and Pakistani embassies, and a hotel hosting many Chinese nationals.

The Taliban now face little

domestic opposition, and have rejected the need for intra-Afghan dialogue, though the UN continues to push for wider consultation as well as representation.

The de facto authorities have continued to implement harsh social policies, including a slew of decrees that have been harmful to women, restricting them in both the social and political spheres.

"The prevention of secondary education will mean that in two years there will be no girls entering into university. This decision is extremely unpopular among Afghans and even within the Taliban leadership," said Ms. Otunbayeva.

Last month, Taliban leader Haibatullah Akhunzada ordered judges to implement capital and corporal punishment where applicable under Sharia law.

While sentences have been carried out since the takeover, the first public execution took place earlier on Dec. 7, attended by senior officials.

The envoy said she had stressed to the de facto authorities that the death penalty is incompatible with international human rights law.

UNAMA recently convened stakeholder meetings in 12 provinces. More than 500 people took part, including 189 women and over 80 Taliban representatives.

People expressed concern over issues such as the ban on girls' education, lack of health facilities, mental health, poverty, economic insecurity and discrimination against ethnic minorities.

Afghans are also frustrated with the international community's approach, she added. They want projects that are more long-term, involve cash-for-work rather than handouts, and which are more participatory, consultative and development-oriented.

"Under current conditions, however, donors are increasingly unwilling to look beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance," she said.

"As long as girls remain ex-

(Continued on page 11)

NEWARK MAYOR BARAKA, JOINED BY LT. GOV. SHEILA OLIVER & OTHERS, ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC PLAN TO END CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Photo Courtesy City of Newark Press Office



NEWARK - December 21, 2022 - Mayor Ras J. Baraka, joined by Lt. Gov. Sheila Oliver, Assemblywoman Eliana Pintor Marin, Essex County Board of Commissioners President Wayne L. Richardson, Chair of the City of Newark Commission on Homelessness Jim Pelliccio, Newark Homelessness Czar Luis Ulerio, Newark Alliance President and CEO Evan Weiss, Newark Municipal Council members, Newark resident and advocate Teresa Pringle, and other dignitaries have announced the City of Newark's strategic plan to end chronic homelessness, entitled: "The Path Home: Collaborating Across Our Community." The launching took place at the Newark YMCA, located at 600 Broad Street, in the City's downtown.

This comprehensive, data-driven plan was developed as part of a collaborative planning process involving more than 100 partners from public, private, business, and non-profit sectors, and including committed individual residents. It seeks to establish a cooperative structure to address the multiple needs of residents without addresses such as temporary and permanent housing, employment, medical and behavioral health care, and support services. The plan aims to end chronic homelessness in Newark over the next three years, through collaboration,

prevention, and housing, and eliminating systemic barriers to delivering services during difficult circumstances.

"My administration has continued to invest in solutions, including opening the historic Newark Hope Village, the innovative program using converted containers to shelter residents who are at-risk or without addresses," said Mayor Baraka.

"We also renovated the former Miller Street Elementary School building to now provide shelter and support services to residents without addresses, seeking a more stable life. I believe wholeheartedly that homelessness is a moral issue that demands our greatest efforts to achieve a solution. We need to provide our most vulnerable residents with decent homes and the tools they need to regain control of their lives. This plan does just that. Together, by lifting up those most in need - our residents without addresses - we can lift up our entire community."

In January 2022, there were 1,914 residents without addresses in Essex County. Of that, 1,695 were in Newark, and 134 were unsheltered.

"The Murphy Administration stands alongside the City of Newark in its efforts to end chronic homelessness, which takes an immense toll on people who are affected by the stress of

(Continued on page 13)

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ESSEX COUNTY WEEKLY COVID-19 CASE TALLY

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Belleville	13,486	157	13,583	159
Bloomfield	15,059	168	15,190	170
Caldwell	2,043	18	2,058	18
Cedar Grove	4,830	141	4,863	142
City of Orange	9,947	176	9,947	176
East Orange	20,600	396	20,797	399
Essex Fells	612	2	614	2
Fairfield	2,438	40	2,458	41
Glen Ridge	1,599	19	1,611	20
Irvington	14,052	283	14,135	287
Livingston	8,421	112	8,468	112
Maplewood	6,539	49	6,571	49
Millburn	4,609	18	4,634	18
Montclair	8,846	91	8,949	92
Newark	94,211	1,281	94,758	1,284
North Caldwell	1,805	10	1,818	10
Nutley	8,078	90	8,145	90
Roseland	1,752	26	1,762	27
South Orange	4,376	24	4,406	24
Verona	4,135	25	4,164	25
West Caldwell	3,339	67	3,339	67
West Orange	16,400	274	16,530	274
Total	247,234	3,467	248,952	3,486

OTHER COVID-19 TALLIES (As of December 21, 2022)

NJ: 2,444,235 cases / 32,271 deaths (Plus 3,116 probable)

United States (approx.): 100.12 Million / 1.089 Million deaths

Worldwide (approx.): 655.025 Million / 6.671 Million deaths

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ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK DISTRIBUTES 2000 TOYS TO FAMILIES IN NEED



Mercy House volunteer Joanne DePaul (in red sweater) helping community members. Photos by Archdiocese of Newark / Sean Quinn

NEWARK - The Archdiocese of Newark's Fifth Annual Christmas Giveaway served more people than ever before, distributing nearly 2,000 new and unwrapped toys to over 300 families in need who visited The Mercy House in Newark (620 Clinton Avenue) on December 16.

Meeting this unprecedented demand was not a challenge, however, as 2022 saw The Mercy House receive more basketballs, blocks, board games, and other gifts from donors than in any previous year. In fact, parents and guardians who came to this year's giveaway received three toys per child, which is two more than they normally get. Everyone also had the chance to pick out free chocolate, children's books, and Christ-

mas decorations, and several major prizes like large dolls were raffled off.

"Whenever the economy is bad like it is now, we actually receive more donations," said Cheryl A. Riley, director of the archdiocesan Respect Life Office and The Mercy House. "It's because people recognize the importance of giving when times are tough. And we appreciate their generosity because it helps us make sure that every family has what it needs for a great Christmas season."

This year many archdiocesan parishes, public and private schools, Knights of Columbus chapters, and individual donors contributed presents for the Christmas Giveaway. That includes Christ the Teacher Academy in Fort Lee, St. Michael the Archangel

Church in Lyndhurst, and North Arlington High School, which collectively donated hundreds of gifts. Additionally, the North Arlington Woman's Club provided stockings filled with small toys and candy, handed out at The Mercy House in Newark December 20.

Opened in 2018 as a center for pregnant and parenting women, The Mercy House has since expanded its mission to support anyone in need. Today it provides nonperishable food, clothing, baby supplies, furniture, and help finding work and housing to all who visit its Newark location. For more information, visit www.rcan.org/respect-life/mercy-house.

WEST ORANGE & WEEQUAHIC

(Continued from page 1)

band.

Although the West Orange Mountaineers basked in their Dec. 10 spotlight, there were other "Local Talk" area high school football teams who looked back on their gridiron seasons with measures of accomplishment.

Details of WEST ORANGE MOUNTAINEERS season include a 1-1-0 record in the NJSIAA Super Football Conference against National White Division rivals Bloomfield (won 34-7) and EOCHS (lost 25-12)

The other teams hailed for their titles included:

- Boys Soccer NJSIAA North 1 Group 4 Sectional Championship. (Had finished second in the Group 4 State Final.)
- Girls Soccer won second

straight Essex County Tournament Championship. (The 16-6-1 tie Mountaineers reached the North 1 Group 4 State Final.)

- Cross Country Boys were undefeated, 12-0 in the SEC Liberty Division Championship. Sana'a Smith (WOHS Class of 2023) won the Liberty Championship XC individual crown.
- WOHS Cheer Team first place in Randolph Rampage meet.
- Marching Mountaineers won Best Music in the NJ Marching Band Directors State Championship on The College of New Jersey's Ewing campus. (WHOS also reached the Bands of America Regional Championship Finals at Rutgers for the second time.)

NEWARK's WEEQUAHIC INDIANS, who came within

minutes of reaching their second straight Section 1 state championship finals Nov. 11, found solace in the North 1 Group 2 Sectional championship and the Nov. 24 Soul Bowl.

The Indians' 11-2 record includes a 10-1 regular season that climaxed with a Nov. 11 21-10 victory at home over Cedar Grove. They left Untermann Field with their second straight sectional title and a ticket to the semifinal game in Somerset Country's Franklin Field.

WHS, despite playing on a windy Franklin High School Field Veterans Day, was leading the Mountain Lakes Herd, 20-7 entering halftime. The Herd, however, came back with 22 points in the second half and kept the Indians to a field goal for a 29-23 final score.

WHS ended the season by feasting on South Ward rival Malcolm X. Shabazz Bulldogs, 68-8, at the latter's home field

Thanksgiving Day. The Indians set the pace with 14 first quarter points and by answering the Bulldogs' 8 eight points with another 34 of their own in the second quarter.

The Nov. 24 annual classic victory was WHS's third straight.

NEWARK's WEST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL ROUGHRIDERS used their 4-0 undefeated streak in the Patriot Red Division for an overall 7-2 record that got them into the Oct. 29 Section 1, Group 2 quarterfinal game.

The Patriot Red champions, however, found themselves in a defensive battle against the Dumont Huskies, where all the scoring was done in the second quarter. A blocked extra point kick made all the difference with a game-ending and WSHS season-ending 7-6 final score.

The IRVINGTON BLUE
(Continued on page 13)



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 - "Local Talk" has learned that Ronald "Cowboy" Wright has ridden west into the sunset for the last time on Sept. 27.

Wright was a longtime horseback riding instructor. His main day job was to teach members of the Newark Police Division Mounted Patrol Unit to properly ride their horses. Wright, who was known to ride his horse on city streets, liked to pass on his love of horsing to children.

Wright had wanted to train youth in production and marketing of his Cowboy's Ranch House Cookies in the 2010s. He was a frequent Municipal Council public speaker, looking for help in locating factory space. 444 Central Ave - a former Firestone tire dealership now Laundry Fresh Laundromat - was eyed 2014-16.

According to his several Facebook pages, Wright had studied in East Orange's Clifford J. Scott High School 1953-56 before settling in Newark. He was a horse handler at the Meadowlands "Big M: Racetrack in 1976-77.

Wright, who drove a Chevrolet minivan when his horse was not available, is survived by three sons, four daughters, 14 grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, three brothers and two sisters. A son and two brothers had predeceased him.

A funeral service here at Good Neighbor Baptist Church was held Oct. 14, followed by cremation at Hillside's Evergreen Cemetery.

IRVINGTON - Somerset County Prosecutor's Office and Watchung Borough detectives

brought a township man from his North Ward residence here to their county jail in Somerville as a residential burglary suspect Dec. 7.

Watchung police officers told SCPO detectives that they were called to a Johnston Drive residence at 1:26 a.m. that Tuesday. The resident said that someone had forced entry to the house and a safe - and removed items from the latter - sometime overnight Dec. 5-6.

The out-of-town law enforcers arrived at Randolph C. McCleod's Lenox Avenue address here later that Tuesday with search warrants. They said that they found items "from the residential burglary" in McCleod's place and car.

Neither Somerset County Prosecutor John P. McDonald nor Watchung Police Chief Andrew Hart, in their Dec. 16 joint release, have said how McCleod was otherwise linked to the burglary.

McCleod, 42, is being held on second-degree handgun possession without a permit, third-degree burglary and theft and disorderly person charges of possessing burglary tools and criminal mischief.

McDonald and Hart said that the investigation is continuing.

EAST ORANGE - The city and county had paid last respects to native son and public servant Arthur L. Wright here at the Faith Temple Baptist Church Dec. 21.

Wright, 78, who was most recently the Essex County Deputy Clerk and an East Orange School District Board of Education member and its board president, died here at his Woodland Avenue home Dec. 6.

The former Essex County Freeholder was also a longtime industrial arts public high school teacher here in East Orange and in Somerset County's Franklin Township. He founded CHELMS - a neighborhood organization of mostly African American families on six city streets.

Wright, who was born the 11th of 14 children here Sept. 16, 1944, was a lifelong East Orangeite. The student of public schools here, in Newark and Caldwell served the US Army in France as a Military Policeman.

He used his GI Bill to attain a B.A. in Industrial Arts from now -Montclair State University.

The VFW Post No. 7923 member, while in EOSD employment, was Co-Advisor of the annual Historic Black College and University Bus Tour and advisor of the Student Gospel Choir and Junior Kiwanis Club.

Then-First Ward Councilman Stephen S. Thomas introduced Wright to politics and governmental service.

Wife La Verne Wright, daughter Lisa, sisters Delores Frazier, Barbara Smith and Muriel Hargrove and brothers Marvin and Charles Wright are among his wide range of survivors and mourners.

ORANGE - A city man accused of carrying out a local mail fraud plot last year will return to a Newark federal court April 25 for sentencing since his Dec. 14 guilty plea submission.

Amin C. Jones, 29, had pleaded guilty before US Magistrate Judge Susan D. Wigerton that Wednesday to a count each of conspiracy to commit bank fraud and bribery. He faces a maximum \$1 million fine and 30 years' federal imprisonment on the conspiracy charge and up to \$250,000 and 15 years on the bribery charge.

Jones and at least one other individual are accused of approaching three USPS letter carriers in East Orange and Newark with around \$5,000 each to turn over their routes' arrow keys in June and July 2021. He and a second person then used those keys to access mailboxes in those cities.

The keys made it easier for Jones and at least one other person to take checks and bank cards from the mail January-July 2021. They used the stolen items and related information to steal money from others' bank accounts.

The scheme ended when Jones tried to bribe a fourth letter carrier - who happened to be an undercover USPS postal inspector - that July.

It is not known as of press time whether Jones accomplice or accomplices are in custody or at large. It is also unknown what sort of disciplinary measures were meted out to the three let-

ter carriers.

Neither US Attorney Phillip R. Sellinger nor his New Jersey District-Newark officers have disclosed their status.

WEST ORANGE - Township Council members, with a notable exception, voted to have Fairview Insurance Agency Associates search for the best health benefits for municipal employees here Nov. 22.

Councilman Rev. Bill Rutherford was the sole dissenter that Tuesday night, expressing no confidence in the Verona-based firm.

"I think they meddle in local elections in an improper or distasteful fashion," said Rutherford without elaboration, "so I can't support anything from them."

The nearest incident to what the councilman was talking about can be found in Jersey City in 2012-13. Fairview director Ryan Graham was accused of telling then-Jersey City Board of Education Member Stirling Waterman in an email to "to vote the contract down" the proposed hiring of a rival firm GC Murray, of Princeton, at their board meeting.

The JCBOE, in 2012, awarded Fairview an insurance contract. Fairview spokesman Tim White said that Graham's message to Waxman was "advice." Graham was a top fundraiser to City Councilman Steve Fulop's successful mayoral campaign. Fairview, in a 2016 Federal Election Commission filing had donated \$10,000 towards Fulop's prospective gubernatorial campaign.

West Orange Township Attorney/Business Administrator John Grodd reminded the council that they had hired Fairview earlier in 2022 to make similar rate searches for other departments.

Fairview founder John F.X. Graham was an NJBIZ 2021 Icon Award recipient.

SOUTH ORANGE / MAPLEWOOD - Parental efforts to get the South Orange-Maplewood School District to restore courtesy busing took a new turn when several public speakers asked the district to conduct a "Hazardous Routes Analysis" at the Board of Education's Dec. 15

(Continued on page 11)

WORLD NEWS (Continued from page 6)

cluded from school and the de facto authorities continue to disregard other stated concerns of the international community, we remain at something of an impasse.”

“It is clear that there are severe differences of positions on a range of issues between UNAMA and the de facto authorities,” she added.

IRAN CLOSER TO NUCLEAR CAPABILITY

MIDDLE EAST

No progress has been made on the implementation of a high profile 2015 Security Council resolution (2231), aimed at ensuring that Iran’s nuclear facilities be used only for peaceful purposes, in return for the lifting of sanctions, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, told the Security Council on Dec. 19.

Rosemary DiCarlo said that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has reported that Iran intends to install new centrifuges at one of its fuel enrichment plants, and plans to produce more uranium enriched up to 60 percent, at another.

The agency, she continued, estimates that the country now has a total enriched uranium stockpile of more than eighteen times the allowable amount under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the nuclear deal that was developed in the wake of Resolution 2231, including “worrying quantities of uranium” enriched to up to 60 percent.

(Continued on page 12)

TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 10)

meeting.

Several public speakers from South Orange said during that Thursday night meeting that their children have been walking to their schools since the start of the 2022-23 school year. Some of those routes, they pointed out, had been designated as hazardous in a previous SOMSD study.

The two-town district had filed a 2021 Audit of Hazardous Routes to the New Jersey Department of Education. The current Board of Education, citing time and financial constraints, had eliminated courtesy busing from its 2022-23 school budget.

Outgoing Board President Thair Joshua had promised that he and his colleagues would consider restoring courtesy busing

later this school year. Board Attorney Frances Febres added that Thursday that the matter "is before a (BOE) committee' but, "due to all the litigation, we can't talk about that right now."

Febres was referring to a recent Administrative Law Judge ruling in Newark. That judge found in favor of a suing SOMSD parent in that the district was not following its own transportation policy.

Public school districts may run buses for students who reside between a mile and two miles of their assigned schools. NJDOE requires the said districts to run buses for students who live beyond a two-mile radius of their schools.

BLOOMFIELD - The owner of the former Friendly's restaurant here at 1243 Broad St.

has been mulling its next move since the Bloomfield Planning Board had turned down its proposal to replace it with a Wendy's/ Taco Bell Dec. 6.

The board, after three marathon public hearings in as many months, kicked out Finomus Bloomfield RE Holdings LLC's site plan application at 11:30 p.m. that Wednesday.

Township planners expressed safety and aesthetic concerns for rejecting Finomus' application. The proposed 29 parking spaces in front of and behind the combined restaurant, they reasoned, may not be enough to handle peak customer demand. The front lot parking, furthermore, is not in keeping with on-site parking of neighboring establishments.

Although the "No Left Turn" from the lot
(Continued on page 15)

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*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**Breaking The Legacy Of
The Curse At Christmas**

While thinking about breaking the legacy of the curse at Christmas time, I began to browse on Google and was surprised to find many books written with titles on the curse of Christmas. To mention three, I note (1) *Gabriel and the Curse of Christmas*, which is a story about witches, (2), *The "Curse" Begins at Christmas*, which is a book about a Christmas massacre in which an entire family was wiped out, and (3) *The Christmas Curse*, a part of a Novella series about haunted houses in England where families unwittingly go to spend their Christmas holidays. The titles suggest that instead of celebrating the joy of Christmas, many who celebrate find that Christmas offers them nothing but curses.

The titles aside, I think this Christmas is at least bringing a curse to many families worldwide. I think of the ongoing war in Ukraine with the darkness and

harshness of the winter from the constant attacks of Russian drones and missiles and the displacement of millions of families from the war. I think of what is happening behind the scenes to families in Russia daring to protest the war. I think of what is happening in Iran to the women who are being arrested and hanged because they are protesting against the wearing of the Hijab imposed on them as a public dress code since 1979.

I think of the conditions in China, where the people are being surveilled against any interest they might have in protest against the government because of the constant lockdowns during the pandemic. I also think of what is happening to the thousands of families in tents in Mexico or those crossing the southern border of the United States with uncertainties. Finally, I think of what is happening to the millions of poor, hungry children worldwide who seem cursed this Christmas. Yes, many do not see Christmas as a blessing but a curse.

Well, just because we live in conditions where Christmas is celebrated with tinsels, lights and the news of Santa passing by, we must not assume that there are no curses in our situation. While my intent is not to bust anyone's bubble, I must make it clear that many of us have fallen victim to the com-

mercialization of Christmas in a way that instead of Christmas being a season of joy and peace, it has become a time of anxiety, worry, stress and busyness that any blessing we should receive is turned into a curse.

Not long ago, I read a brilliant editorial in a newspaper called *The Targum*, and it made clear that marketers are having a feast on the naivety of the millions. The editor's point was that the businesses are framing their strategy to coax out the hands of the unsuspecting few bucks to the benefit of retailers. The comment is that the free market is based on manipulation; the marketers, therefore, present themselves in subtle and unexpected ways to call out any greed in us.

For example, a product on sale for \$49.99 rather than \$50.00 is a tactic businesses use to manipulate people into thinking the product is cheaper. The Christmas season is open for marketers because they make it seem that if you love your spouse, your friends or colleagues, your pastors, or who have you, you will buy them some gifts. So if you want to keep your kids' faith in Santa Claus alive, you'd better buy them that new toy they want.

I do not want to "bust your bubbles" about exchanging gifts, but I think it important that you think about how we can get so caught up in the spirit of the hol-

idays, especially that of Christmas, without recognizing that that which was supposed to be a blessing is turned into a curse. I am not saying you should not celebrate your holidays of Christmas, but, as I read in the editorial article, I noted from *The Targum*, "it should be done with a tighter wallet. Making gifts instead of buying them is a good first step, as well as denying business to companies that push Christmas and other holidays on every product they sell."

Let me add five other steps.

1. We should buy what we need and not just seek to satisfy our greed.
2. Do not force yourself to buy what you cannot afford to please anyone.
3. Do not run up credit to please anyone or respond to any commercial.
4. Please do not buy your children stuff that they do not need.
5. Consider the poor about you and be generous to them.

Remember that Christmas began as a pagan holiday, from the Saturnalia and Mithra sun worship in Rome. But as Christianity spread across Rome, efforts were made to incorporate the holidays to remind Christians of the birth of Christ. Unfortunately, much of the effort to

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WORLD NEWS *(Continued from page 11)*

The IAEA's ability to effectively monitor Iran's nuclear facilities and ensure that they are being used for exclusively peaceful purposes - a core element of the JCPOA - is now compromised, said Ms. Di Carlo, by Iran's decision to remove the agency's surveillance and monitoring equipment.

"Against this backdrop, we once again call on Iran to reverse the steps it has taken since July 2019 that are not consistent with its nuclear-related commitments under the Plan", declared Ms. Di Carlo, who also called on the United States to lift or waive its sanctions as outlined in the deal, and to extend the waivers regarding the trade in oil with Iran.

Ms. Di Carlo then turned to provisions in the Plan related to ballistic missiles and, in particular, two flight tests of space launch vehicles conducted by Iran in June and November of this year, and a new ballistic mis-

sile unveiled by Iran in September.

Information received by the UN about this hardware, reflected "divergent views" amongst certain Member States - France, Germany, Iran, Israel, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States - as to whether those launches and other activities are inconsistent with resolution 2231.

Ms. Di Carlo announced that the UN has inspected cruise missile parts, seized by the British Royal Navy in international waters south of Iran, which they assessed to be of Iranian origin, which resembles parts seen in the debris of cruise missiles used by the Houthis against Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates between 2019 and 2022, and those seized by the United States in 2019.

In a recent video, U.S. President Joe Biden was heard saying that a nuclear deal with Iran was "dead."

**DOZENS OF HUMAN
TRAFFICKERS BUSTED**

LATIN AMERICA

An INTERPOL operation targeting human trafficking and migrant smuggling across Latin America and the Caribbean has seen victims rescued, migrants detected, and suspected perpetrators arrested in 32 countries.

The fourth in INTERPOL's 'Turquesa' series of operations, the five-day (Nov. 28 - Dec. 2) operation saw Latin American investigators use INTERPOL capabilities to work with police forces on all continents to generate investigative leads and disrupt the global crime groups behind people trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Frontline officers conducted controls at trafficking and smuggling hotspots identified

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CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

(Continued from page 7)

not having stable housing,” said Lt. Governor Oliver, who also serves as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

“The DCA administers several innovative homelessness prevention programs such as the Eviction Diversion Initiative, Homeless Diversion Initiative, and Housing Choice Vouchers, which are making a difference in communities like Newark. We look forward to strengthening these programs and creating new ones to help provide individuals and families in need with safe and decent housing and a better quality of life.”

“I applaud Mayor Baraka for his plan to end chronic homelessness in Newark,” said Rep. Donald M. Payne, Jr., in a statement. “No American should have to sleep on the streets in a country with so many resources to help them. This plan will help people who deal with homelessness get the resources necessary to get them off the streets and into permanent housing. It is a great plan that will give these Americans shelter and provide them with hope for the future.”

“When creating policy, lawmakers keep in mind the community in which they serve. It is amazing to see what can happen when bills become action. We can and we are doing more to protect our families, residents, and veterans by coordinating with the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, and City-Wide organizations that interact with the homeless population daily. It is a guarantee to improve access, transform the culture in shelters, and to create new housing,” said Assemblywoman Pintor Marin.

“Essex County, Newark and countless community-based organizations work together every day to bring services and hope to residents coping with homelessness,” said Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr., in a statement. “The plan introduced by Mayor Baraka will be another tool we can use to address chronic homelessness and assist some of our most vulnerable residents in our state’s largest city.”

“Homelessness is a chronic problem across the United States. With the implementation of this strategic plan, Newark will again be a shining example to the rest of the

country that with the cooperation of government, community, the private and public sectors, no problem is insurmountable. Every person should have a roof over their head. Congratulations to the City of Newark, The County of Essex, and the State of New Jersey for taking this bold action to end homelessness,” said President Richardson.

The plan, which is attached to this press release, has three priorities:

- Better Address Street Homelessness by working with consultants to get real-time data about who comes in to support facilities, when, and where. These will include enhanced street outreach efforts; multiple entry points to shelter and services; coordination with mobile behavior health services to reach street homeless; and strengthening health care partnerships.
- Improve Access and Services Throughout the Shelter System, to address the complete range of needs for these persons, from temporary shelter to health care to job training and employment. These will include integrating coordinated entry into emergency shelters; improving access to behavioral health services in shelters; and developing more flexible space options in shelters.
- Expand Prevention and Housing Services will include developing a public and private funding plan to expand housing and services; creating the Landlord Task Force; securing additional Rental Subsidy Vouchers; supporting creative housing solutions; and expanding the number of Permanent Supportive Housing units.

“This plan will marshal the considerable resources of this commission, our community partners, the private sector, elected officials, and state and government agencies,” said Mr. Pelliccio. “We will focus this effort on more effectively addressing chronic homelessness, improving access, and services throughout the system, collectively investing in prevention and housing.”

“Newark refuses to be a city that accepts that some residents will inevitably experience prolonged homelessness. We know that there are best practices that work to bring people off the streets and into long-term housing, but the City cannot implement solu-

tions in isolation,” said Mr. Ulerio. “Lasting progress requires our community to act collaboratively to make system-wide reform, and we are doing that.”

“The City of Newark has undertaken a major collaborative effort to acknowledge and serve our most vulnerable neighbors with a homeless plan. “This will bring great healing to our city and serve as a model to other cities experiencing this great challenge,” said Ms. Pringle.

“The Newark Alliance, representing the anchor institutions of this city, has named addressing homelessness as one of its three priorities for our 2022-25 Transformative Project cycle,” said Mr. Weiss. Under Mayor Baraka’s leadership, alongside Lieutenant Governor Oliver and County Executive DiVincenzo, we are confident Newark can be an exception to the national trend of rising homelessness and deliver exceptional solutions that will continue to be a model in this state and across the country. The Commission and Homelessness Czar Ulerio have done a remarkable job of identifying tangible solutions from housing to healthcare that the Alliance will work to match with private sector resources and expertise.”

The array of participating organizations are listed in the strategic plan, some of which include: Newark YMCA; Prudential Financial; New Community Corporation; Newark Housing Authority; Apostle House; Newark Emergency Services for Families; Newark Downtown District; Catholic Charities; Edison Properties; Integrity House; Newark Community Street Team; Newark Alliance; and Yglesias Properties.

The City has already taken dramatic steps to address homelessness. These include establishing the City of Newark Commission on Homelessness in 2018 and the Mayor’s Office of Homeless Services earlier this year. The City also opened the Miller Street Shelter, a “state-of-the-art” facility with 166 beds, which included a “Drop-In Center” that provides access to bathrooms, meals, and support services. In 2018, Mayor Baraka created the Equitable Growth Advisory Commission to prevent gentrification and assure equitable growth. Drawn from the city’s academic, business, and non-profit sectors, the commission works to ensure that development policies and projects in Newark incorporate the principle of equitable growth.

WEST ORANGE & WEEQUAHIC

(Continued from page 9)

KNIGHTS, who won their first North 2 Group 4 Sectional Championship with an 11-2 record last year, saw their repeat championship bid end by Northern Highlands in the Nov. 4 semifinal round.

IHS's 8-3 overall record, included 3-1 in their Freedom Red Division. They ranked

second to the 4-0 Union City squad.

The EAST ORANGE JAGUARS, who enjoyed a 12-0 undefeated season and the North Group 5, state championship last year, won this season's Freedom Red divisional championship. The Jaguars went undefeated, 3-0, over the Bloomfield Bengals (2-2) and WOHS (1-1). This was incorporated into their 4-6 overall season record.

This team, then as now, in-

clude scholar-athletes from East Orange School District's STEAM Academy and Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Performing and Fine Arts.

The GLEN RIDGE RIDGERS ended their 5-5 regular season by winning the NJSI-AA North Jersey Group 1 regional invitational tournament here Nov. 10.

GRHS, under first year head coach Manj Singh, doubled up on the Hawthorne Bears' 7-0 first

quarter lead before halftime. The Ridgers went on for an overall unanswered 36 points for a 36-13 final score at Hurrell Field that Saturday.

Glen Ridge competes in the North Section Group 1 National Red division. Singh, Montclair High School Class of 1996, had coached the Bloomfield Jr Bengals youth program and, until last year, Montvale's St. Joseph Regional High School Knights.

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

CASH RULES EVERY THANG

Last week, I wrote a tribute to my father Mr. Julious Caesar Brown II commemorating his rise. Ironically a few days ago someone asked me if he'd left us anything. Supposedly, they were inquiring about material assets and money and thangs which were none of their business, to say the least. Yet the probing question for some reason has become galvanized in my head and I now realize even more so that for "Andrea" it most certainly needs to become more of a focus.

Money mattering is something that we all can use some of, so that's when I thought I'd better call Keisha. I guess I'll be as bold as that inquiring mind in

want of the tea and toss the forbidden rule of no money talkin' and sprinkle it around like confetti today.

Question: What about you and yourn? Have you anything left to leave yours, or anything left for yourself? Do you have it together for sure, somewhat or midways so or are you peeking over at that money bag or purse with the side eye like I sometimes do? Are credit cards your shanty glass house or that brick house or are bank overdrafts that apartment that ya living in and it gotcha beggin', borrowing or doing without which is the messy relationship that you're pondering a tip out?

For me I haven't committed to home buying just yet, but overdraft and I sometimes hang too tight lol. WE'VE GOT TO GET IT TOGETHER!

MONEY DOES MATTER

FINANCE 101? (YOU'D BEST START) ...

Keisha: Yes, you heard me right and I'll say it again. "Start," that is the answer and that would be my advice to any and everyone because here's the thing: Just like me when I didn't think that I could do anything you can and once you get into the habit of paying yourself and putting things in place for yourself then it grows and so anytime you have extra your already used to dropping it into the game plan.



Financial Coach Keisha N. Cole (KeishaNataleeCole.live) (myfearlesslifebydesign@gmail.com) Photo By Andrea Dialect

That's the first thing I always say to my clients after I've done a presentation or shown them some things. I talk to them about what they have going on. I always say to them listen it looks like a lot because at the end of the day to realize that you need two million to retire, that is a lot and people get intimidated by that number.

If you have someone that retires at seventy, if they live twenty years a hundred thousand dollars is not taking them through twenty years of retirement. That's why it's so important for people to know what their financial independence numbers are because that's how much money you're going to need during retirement. That depends on how old you are.

We build our financial house from the ground up, right? So,

the foundation has to be life insurance because you could be putting away two hundred dollars a month in an investment vehicle but if you've only been investing for three months and you die how much is in that vehicle?

Is six hundred dollars going to take care of your family? No, it's not even going to bury you. So, we always start with the right foundation. Get the right insurance so if anything were to happen to you at any point while you're building your portfolio or while you're saving for retirement. Your family has something to help them get through for however many years you are providing for them. Because life insurance is income replacement it's not about burial, it's not about paying off bills or debt its income replacement and a house. It's about income replacement because if that income is gone who's going to pay that income?

There's whole life insurance that's where it has a cash value attached to it like a saving portion and then there's term life insurance ...

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.

WORLD NEWS

(Continued from page 12)

ahead of operations, with particular emphasis on transit points such as airports, bus terminals and border crossings.

Although results are still coming in, preliminary reporting points to the arrest of 268 individuals suspected of involvement in migrant smuggling, human trafficking, or associated crime such as document fraud and sexual offences.

A total of 9,015 irregular migrants were detected, and 128 women and two men rescued from human trafficking. Most of the trafficked victims were from Colombia and Venezuela.

Multiple cases involved the interception in Central America of migrant men, women and children from all parts of the world on

their way to North America, including the detection in Mexico of 2,400 migrants from the Americas (Venezuela, Cuba), Africa (Angola, Burkina Faso, Guinea and Ethiopia) and Asia (Bangladesh and Nepal).

Mirroring this global smuggling link, Nicaragua police detected more than 2,000 migrants traveling from Asia (Afghanistan, China, India, Kyrgyzstan, and Nepal), Africa (Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo) as well as the Americas (Haiti and Ecuador) towards the US and Canada.

Honduras authorities arrested a 30-year-old woman for the organized sexual exploitation of three minors and Guatemala police arrested a similarly aged woman on suspicion of both human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

El Salvador authorities arrested a number

of women suspected of trafficking their own children, including a disabled girl, who were destined for sexual exploitation.

Chilean police controls on the border with Bolivia and Peru saw 300 migrants from Venezuela and Bolivia, including minors, detected whilst Brazilian authorities arrested four suspects attempting to smuggle 21 migrants from Cuba and South Africa between French Guyana and Brazil.

Illustrating the growing trafficking link between Latin America and Europe, Bolivia arrested a Red Notice subject wanted by Spain for sexual abuse, and in Paraguay a woman who was the subject of a Red Notice for human trafficking and sexual exploitation, was arrested attempting to traffic her niece to Spain for sexual exploitation.

TOWN WATCH (Continued from page 11)

to southbound Broad Street was held over from the 1971-2021 Friendly's era, the applicant had testified that they may need the services of a traffic officer at peak hours.

Some board members and public speakers were concerned that parking for food pickup service was a workaround of the property's "No Drive Through Service" ban. The building was set too far back for the comfort of adjacent homeowners.

Finomus is not barred from restarting the process with a revised application.

MONTCLAIR - Township administrators and staff have until Jan. 13 to provide a state grand jury the personnel files of all seven Township Council members, including those of the Mayor.

Those files, to be delivered in a sealed box, are to include any and all timesheets and timecards, paychecks and pay stubs, attendance records and duty rosters and any documents related to council members' salaries, bonuses and/or incentive awards going back into 2011.

Acting New Jersey Attorney General Matthew Platkin's office had issued a subpoena for the above material that was served on the Municipal Building Dec. 8.

It is believed that the material demand and grand jury empanelment has to do with ex-Chief Financial Officer Padmaja Rao's attempts to bring Township Council records into compliance with a 2010 state law. That law states that employees with a fixed work week of 35 hours are eligible to state benefits.

Rao had filed a harassment and hostile workplace lawsuit against the township and Township Manager Timothy Stafford in October. The ex-CFO stated that she had tried to bring this and several related matters to Stafford, only to have the manager shout at her and being barred from a finance committee meeting.

Rao had asserted that four council members were not entitled to the State Health Benefits Plan. Montclair had switched from a private insurer in 2017.

The Council had put Stafford on administrative leave Oct 25 in the wake of Rao and one other former employee's lawsuit. The township's law department had filed a countersuit against Rao, saying that "boorish, unprofessional behavior" are not grounds for a harassment suit.

BELLEVILLE - Township and surrounding police are looking for four men who assaulted a bank ATM user early Dec. 14 and the Mercedes-Benz they were driving.

Responding Belleville police officers met a man by the Valley National Bank

ATM at 237 Washington Ave early that Wednesday. He said that he was making a deposit around Midnight when he noticed that a red Mercedes C300 was circling the area.

The victim said that he was about to enter his parked car when the Mercedes "accelerated" and pinned him between the two cars. He then noticed that all four occupants were wearing ski masks. While none said a word or left the C300, "one of them motioned that he had a gun."

The Mercedes driver eventually reversed to free the victim and began driving south on Washington Avenue. The victim drove behind them until he called the police.

An initial BPD search had failed to find the car or the suspects.

NUTLEY - Fire Chief Henry Meola has gone from his arrest at home here Dec. 16 to his return Dec. 17 - after an overnight stay at the Hudson County Correctional Center and a conditional court release.

Meola, 33, was arrested by North Bergen Police officers, in company with Nutley police and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit, at his home Friday morning. The two year chief was charged at NBPD Municipal Court on third-degree endangering the welfare of a minor and second-degree attempted luring.

Meola was released from the South Kearny jail by State Superior Court Judge Armando Molina on condition that he regularly calls into the judge's Jersey City bench until his case is adjudicated. Township Attorney Jonathan Bruno, on Dec. 15, said that Meola has been suspended from his volunteer job since Dec. 7.

Meola was in the North Bergen Walmart parking lot, where he had arranged to meet a 14-year-old boy through a cell phone app. The boy was actually a decoy brought along by OLN Nation program producer "Remy," 33, and one of his associates.

Remy has been producing "To Catch a Predator" like shows on Instagram. He and his two associates' encounter with Meola was being livestreamed.

Meola brought his three guests into Nutley - but to Petracco's Restaurant and Deli on Bloomfield Avenue. Eatery owner and Nutley Public Safety Commissioner Alphone Petracco said Meola had call him that he was going there and that he was "in a situation."

The Meola-Remy party was met there by Bruno and NPD officers. They were tipped off by Instagram livestream viewers. They took Meola in for questioning, starting an investigation that was transferred to ECPO and HCPO. Remu has been cooperating with authorities.

FROM THE PASTOR'S HEART

(Continued from page 12)

Christianize Christmas is lost today because Christians and the world about Christianity have, once again, secularized and commercialized the season.

My point is simple. If at all you celebrate Christmas, be sure to make it a time to reflect on Christ and not to support the commerce in which the world is so caught up. Be careful how you might merge the pagan with the Christian or the profane with the holy. The wrong mixture will take the joy out of Christmas and continue the curse. We read in Hebrews 12:2 "Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (ESV)

Let's break any curse connected with Christmas by looking to Jesus.

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