

LOCAL TALK

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25¢

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

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Photo By Lev D. Zilbermints



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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Iowa's republican-led legislature passed a bill banning abortions after six weeks with some exceptions like for rape and health. That legislature has passed almost the same bill in 2018, which was reversed by the state supreme court. Right now, Iowa has a ban on abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Changing it to six weeks is ridiculous. The majority of women do not know that they are pregnant in six weeks. If they believe in the right to live even by the embryos, I understand, but there should be more given time for women to find out that

they are pregnant, and then they might have their own problems with a partner and have to decide by consulting family members, friends or experts.

Even 12 weeks is not enough. They should require more time, but as some women said, they should be allowed to decide at least within 12 weeks. It is the body of a female. She is the one who has to live with it for whatever decision she makes. It is their right. So, allow at least 15 or 16 weeks, so she can make a decision after taking the advice of experts and family members. So for now, abortion in Iowa is legal until 20 weeks, until the court assesses the new law's constitutionality.

Former President Donald Trump will possibly be indicted for his role in the January 6 riot. On July 18, Trump published on his "Truth Social" media platform that he has received a letter from Special Counsel Jack

Smith. The letter says that he has to appear in front of a grand jury within four days. Trump said that he has been targeted. As per his social media, he stated that this could mean his arrest or leading to an indictment. Trump has had ongoing legal problems since 2016.

Hunter Biden also has problems, but he made a deal with the Department of Justice, and everything has been calmed down with a settlement. However, Hunter Biden may be prosecuted in more cases in the near future if his father President Joseph Biden is not reelected in 2024. Most of the polls are not accurate. It seems like they are tweaking them to be favorable for President Biden.

The U.S. military has been accidentally sending emails to Mali, a West African Country. Millions of emails with some sensitive information have been sent for the past 10 years as per

the news. The government says it is just a typo. All military emails are sent with .MIL, but some were sent to .ML, which is for Mali. A typo can happen one time, but not over and over again. Also, with a million emails, no one talks about how they had not received the email sent to them. It is not a mistake, but a blunder for years. It must be investigated thoroughly. Mali has been recognized as Russian Federation since January 1992. Right now, Russia has an embassy in Bamako, Mali and Mali has an embassy in Moscow. I hope the Democrats trying to defend these huge errors of the military for the past 10 years giving sensitive information to Mali and indirectly to Russia are not politically trying to hide it under the rug.

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>
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FDA Approves First Nonprescription Daily Oral Contraceptive

FDA - On July 13, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Opill (norgestrel) tablet for nonprescription use to prevent pregnancy - the first daily oral contraceptive approved for use in the U.S. without a prescription. Approval of this progestin-only oral contraceptive pill provides an option for consumers to purchase oral contraceptive medicine without a prescription at drug stores, convenience stores and grocery stores, as well as online.

The timeline for availability and price of this nonprescription product is determined by the manufacturer. Other approved formulations and dosages of oth-

er oral contraceptives will remain available by prescription only.

Nonprescription availability of Opill may reduce barriers to access by allowing individuals to obtain an oral contraceptive without the need to first see a health care provider. Almost half of the 6.1 million pregnancies in the U.S. each year are unintended. Unintended pregnancies have been linked to negative maternal and perinatal outcomes, including reduced likelihood of receiving early prenatal care and increased risk of preterm delivery, with associated adverse neonatal, developmental and child health outcomes. Availability of nonprescription Opill may help reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and their potential negative impacts.

The contraceptive efficacy of norgestrel was established with the original approval for prescription use in 1973. HRA Pharma applied to switch norgestrel from a prescription to an over-the-counter product. For approval of a product for use in the nonprescription setting, the FDA requires that the applicant demonstrate that the product can be used by consumers safely and

effectively, relying only on the nonprescription drug labeling without any assistance from a health care professional.

Studies showed that consumer understanding of information on the Opill Drug Facts label was high overall and that a high proportion of consumers understood the label instructions, supporting their ability to properly use the drug when it is available as an over-the-counter product. When properly used, Opill is safe and effective.

Opill should be taken at the same time every day; adherence to daily use at the same time of day is important for the effectiveness of Opill. Using medications that interact with Opill can result in decreased efficacy of Opill or the other medication, or both, potentially resulting in unintended pregnancy.

The most common side effects of Opill include irregular bleeding, headaches, dizziness, nausea, increased appetite, abdominal pain, cramps or bloating.

Opill should not be used by those who have or have ever had breast cancer. Consumers who have any other form of cancer should ask a doctor before use. Opill also should not be used together with another hormonal birth control product such as another oral contraceptive tablet, a vaginal ring, a contraceptive patch, a contraceptive implant, a contraceptive injection or an IUD (intra-uterine device).

Use of Opill may be associated with changes in vaginal bleeding patterns, such as irregular spotting and prolonged bleeding. Consumers should inform a health care provider if they develop repeated vaginal bleeding after sex, or prolonged episodes of bleeding or amenorrhea (absence of menstrual period). Individuals who miss two periods (or have missed a single period and have missed doses of Opill) or suspect they may be pregnant should take a pregnancy test. Consumers should discontinue Opill if pregnancy is confirmed.

Opill is not for use as emergency contraception and does not prevent pregnancy after unprotected sex. Oral contraceptives do not protect against transmission of HIV, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases such as chlamydia, genital

herpes, genital warts, gonorrhea, hepatitis B and syphilis. Condoms should be used to prevent sexually transmitted diseases.

The FDA granted the approval to Laboratoire HRA Pharma, recently acquired by Perrigo Company plc.

FDA Approves New Drug to Prevent RSV in Babies and Toddlers

FDA - On July 17, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Beyfortus (nirsevimab-alip) for the prevention of Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) lower respiratory tract disease in neonates and infants born during or entering their first RSV season, and in children up to 24 months of age who remain vulnerable to severe RSV disease through their second RSV season.

RSV is a virus that causes acute respiratory infection in individuals of all age groups. While most infants and young children experience mild, cold-like symptoms, some infants, especially with their first infection, develop lower respiratory tract disease such as pneumonia and bronchiolitis (swelling of the small airway passages in the lungs), that often leads to an emergency department or physician office visit. Premature infants, and those with chronic lung disease of prematurity or significant congenital heart disease, are at highest risk for severe RSV disease. Approximately 1% to 3% of children under 12 months of age in the United States are hospitalized each year due to RSV, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

In most parts of the U.S., RSV circulation is seasonal, typically starting during the fall and peaking in the winter; it is transmitted from person to person through close contact with someone who is infected.

Beyfortus is a monoclonal antibody with activity against RSV. Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-made proteins that mimic the immune system's ability to fight off harmful pathogens such as viruses. One dose of Beyfortus, administered as a single intramuscular injection prior to or during RSV season, may provide protection during the RSV season.

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SPORTS WRAP



By Wally Boyette and William Hathaway, Jr.

NEWARK - The Monte Irvin Baseball Classic was held July 14 - 16 at the Weequahic Park Baseball Complex in Newark. The tournament was hosted by the Monte Irvin and Jackie Robinson Newark baseball organizations. Under the direction of Wally Boyett, Donna Judd and a host of volunteers, the tournament included 14 teams from New York to Trenton and although Sunday's Championship games were rained out several teams presented themselves well throughout the tournament.

At the 14u level, the Trenton Elite Giants was the most dominant team allowing three runs in three games, while scoring 36 runs. They looked like the class of the 14u division. At the 16u

level Legit Baseball (East Rutherford) and Makina Baseball Academy (Newark) looked like champion game contenders. In the 18u division, Newark RBI, and QN Comets (Queens, NY) look to be on a path to the championship game. But the Silk City Sluggers, (Paterson) were right there!

The Monte Irvin Baseball Classic Opening Ceremony was attended by Essex County Board of Commissioners President Wayne Richardson and Newark South Ward Councilman Pat Council who both spoke words of encouragement to the players and threw out the ceremonial first pitch.

Although a true champion was not crowned, the Monte Irvin Baseball Classic was a win without winning!

Photos By Wally Boyette




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This past weekend in Orange, St. Matthews Church hosted their annual Bridging The Gap 3 on 3 Streetball Tournament. This has been an annual event in Orange but was interrupted during the pandemic. The sixth edition of the event was held at Central Playground this past weekend, with age groups ranging from 13-18.

Among the teams taking part were the following was The Dream Team, Prime Time, Team God, Big 0 Warriors, The Church God's Plan, and Team Orange. This year's champion was The Dream Team, winning the title over Prime Time. MVP honors

went to Darius Phillips from The Dream Team, who finished as the leading scorer overall. Kysir Green was the second high scorer and led Prime Time in the loss.

In other news, for the first time in a decade, the National League beat the American League 3-2 in the All-Star Game. Rockies catcher Elias Diaz, who hit the go-ahead homer, was named MVP in Seattle.

Finally, the New York Giants failed to reach an agreement on a long-term contract with running back Saquon Barkley, meaning that a long holdout may be coming.



Photo By Roland Tucker



UNITED STATES

HOLLYWOOD CIVIL WAR

It's Thanos vs. The Avengers ... not really, but if studios do not reach an accord with actors and writers soon, your imagination may produce more entertainment.

On July 13, the united SAG-AFTRA union - which stands for Screen Actors Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists - went on strike after failing to reach an agreement with AMPTP, or the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers. This means that all members of the 160,000 SAG-AFTRA union have walked the job, which includes any productions they may have been working on, and not promoting them in any way as well. Such was the case with a screening of the movie "Oppenheimer," in which stars walked out after the strike was authorized.

SAG-AFTRA President Fran Drescher said in a statement, "SAG-AFTRA negotiated in good faith and was eager to reach a deal that sufficiently addressed performer needs, but the AMPTP's responses to the union's most important proposals have been insulting and disrespectful of our massive contributions to this industry. The companies have refused to meaningfully engage on some topics and on others completely stonewalled us. Until they do negotiate in good faith, we cannot begin to reach a deal. We have no choice but to move forward in unity, and on behalf of our membership, with a strike recommendation to our National Board."

The situation holds some irony for Drescher, as on her TV show "The Nanny," her character Fran Fine refused to cross a picket line with her theater producer employer Maxwell Sheffield.

In reply, AMPTP said, "This is the (SAG-AFTRA) Union's choice, not ours. Rather than

continuing to negotiate, SAG-AFTRA has put us on a course that will deepen the financial hardship for thousands who depend on the industry for their livelihoods."

As for the WGA, or Writers Guild of America, they have been on strike since the beginning of May, with no deal even remotely in sight. The unfortunate rumor that has floated around suggests the studios are waging a battle of attrition, meaning that they are going to wait until writers start getting behind on bills and desperate for income as they are starved out.

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

Information recent as of 7-18-2023 at 12 p.m.

2023 Mass Shooting Stats: (Source: Mass Shooting Tracker, <https://www.massshootingtracker.site/data/?year=2023>)

- Total Mass Shootings: 452
- Total Dead: 576
- Total Wounded: 1804
- Shootings Per Day: 2.27
- Days Reached in Year 2023 as of July 11: 199

Latest High Profile Incident (See above)

- Location: Dogwood Lakes neighborhood - Hampton, GA
- Time: Around 10:45 a.m. local time, July 15.
- Deceased: 4.
- Injured: 3.
- Shooter(s): Andre Longmore, 40.
- Weapon(s): Handgun.
- Motive: Unknown.
- Status: Deceased after shootout with police the next day; 2 officers wounded.

Notes: The victims were identified as: Scott Leavitt, 67; wife Shirley Leavitt, 66; Steve Blizzard, 65; Ron Jeffers, 66.

EUROPE

UK LEGISLATION WORRIES RIGHTS ADVOCATES

The United Kingdom parliament has passed a bill inconsistent with the country's obligations under international human rights and refugee law that could

have profound consequences for people seeking international protection, warned the UN rights chief and the head of refugee agency UNHCR on July 18.

The Illegal Immigration Bill eliminates access to asylum for anyone who arrives "irregularly" in the UK, meaning they passed through a country - however briefly - where they did not face persecution.

The bill bars migrants from presenting refugee protection or other human rights claims, regardless of their circumstances. It has passed through the Commons, but has yet to clear the Upper House, the House of Lords.

The law as it stands requires their removal to another country without a guarantee that they will necessarily be able to access protections there. The bill also creates sweeping new detention powers with limited judicial oversight.

"UNHCR shares the UK Government's concern regarding the number of asylum-seekers resorting to dangerous journeys across the (English) Channel.

"We welcome current efforts to make the existing asylum system work more effectively through fast, fair, and efficient case processing, that allows the integration of those found to be in need of international protection and the swift return home of those who have no legal basis to stay," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.

"Regrettably, this progress will be significantly undermined by the new legislation. Cooperation with European and other partners along the routes through which refugees and migrants are moving, is also key," he continued.

The Bill denies access to refugee protections for anyone falling within its scope - including unaccompanied and separated children - regardless of whether they are at risk of persecution, have suffered human rights violations, or whether they are survivors of human trafficking or modern-day slavery.

"Carrying out removals under these circumstances is contrary to prohibitions of refoulement and collective expulsions, rights to due process, to family and private life, and the principle of best interests of chil-

dren concerned," said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk.

The 1951 Refugee Convention, to which the UK was one of the original signatories, explicitly recognizes that refugees may be compelled to enter a country of asylum irregularly.

Most people fleeing war and persecution do not have or are unable to access formal travel documents such as passports and visas. Safe and "legal" routes to immigration are therefore often-times not available to them.

Without the adequate operational capacity to remove large numbers of asylum-seekers or create viable removal arrangements with third countries, thousands of migrants can be expected to remain in the UK indefinitely in precarious legal situations, the agencies said. .

WORLD

RUSSIA PUTS UP GRAIN ROADBLOCK

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said on Monday that he deeply regrets Russia's decision to terminate the Black Sea Initiative, in effect ending a "lifeline" for hundreds of millions worldwide facing hunger and spiraling food costs.

Following weeks of negotiations, the UN-brokered accord that facilitated the export of more than 30 million tons of Ukrainian grain to global markets via three Black Sea ports expired on July 17.

"Today's decision by the Russian Federation will strike a blow to people in need everywhere," said Mr. Guterres, speaking to journalists at UN Headquarters in New York.

The Black Sea initiative was agreed by Russia, Ukraine, Türkiye and the UN in Istanbul last July along with a parallel accord between the UN and Russia on grain and fertilizer exports from that country.

By its decision, Russia has also withdrawn security guarantees for ships navigating in the northwestern part of the Black Sea.

"Ultimately, participation in these agreements is a choice. But struggling people everywhere and developing countries don't have a choice," Mr. Guterres said.

CHESS GRANDMASTER, 14, TAKES ON 29 OPPONENTS - AT THE SAME TIME

By Lev D. Zilbermints

WESTFIELD - Being extremely good at chess means being able to play 29 games at the same time.

Huh? Say what??

Yes, you read that right the first time. Playing against twenty-nine opponents at the same time. This is something Abhimanu Mishra, a 14-year-old grandmaster, did quite easily on Sunday, July 9, at the Westfield Chess Club.

Out of 29 games, Mishra won 28, and lost 1.

The simultaneous exhibition was planned months in advance by Westfield Chess Club leaders. David Lazarus, Haibo Hu, Alexander Hu all put in a lot of effort in organizing the event. Since the chess club only meets on Sundays, it was important to reserve a date far in advance. This would allow the simultaneous exhibition to be held in a timely manner.

Registration for the simultaneous exhibition began at least two or more months in advance. The entry fee of \$35 could be paid online via PayPal. Altogether 29 players paid the entry fee. A total of \$1,015 was raised. Presumably a portion of that money goes to pay Abhimanu Mishra for the simultaneous exhibition. The remaining part of the money goes to the Westfield Chess Club treasury.

Grandmasters frequently use simultaneous exhibitions to earn money. It is not uncommon for a grandmaster to be paid hundreds of dollars for the simultaneous exhibition.

“Local Talk” arrived just as the simultaneous exhibition was about to start. The simultaneous exhibition started at 10:20 a.m. Cell phones took photos and videos.

The simultaneous exhibition was held on the second floor of the Westfield YMCA, in a large conference room. Tables were set in the shape of a giant square. Chess boards and pieces were set up. Each player had a number from 1 to 29 and a scoresheet to write down the moves. Without exception, everyone played the Black pieces. It

is traditional for the strong player giving the simultaneous exhibition to play the White pieces in every game.

Grandmaster Abhimanu Mishra was in the middle of the huge square. Mishra moved from board to board, making moves quickly. David Lazarus, the director, moved with Mishra from board to board to ensure there were no arguments.

Many of the players were Asian. Some were from India. Others were from South Korea, Taiwan, Russia, and other countries. The simultaneous had both boys and girls, men and women. There were 25 boys and men, and 4 women and girls.

Most of the players were children, ranging in age from 5 to 17 years old. Four adults also participated in the simultaneous exhibition. However, everyone lost, save for Elizabeth Tsugel. She was the only one who defeated the grandmaster.

In his game against Tsugel, Mishra sacrificed two pawns for an attack. However, Ms. Tsugel defended accurately and beat off the attack. The grandmaster resigned the game after his opponent captured all his pieces, leaving a lone White king against a Black Queen, Rook, Bishop, and a number of pawns.

Under the rules of the simultaneous exhibition, players were allowed one “pass.” That is, they could miss making their move once. If the grandmaster came to a player’s table, and that player missed his move a second time, he lost. Usually there are more “passes” - between 2 and 5 - a simultaneous exhibitions. However, since the YMCA closed at 3 p.m. on Sundays, it is plausible that this is the reason why the amount of passes was limited to one.

As the simul progressed, it became clear that the grandmaster was using solid play to gain an advantage. Since his opponents all played Black, many of Abhimanu Mishra’s games were similar to one another. This allowed the grandmaster to avoid surprises. If a position becomes complex, the grandmaster might lose or draw. The reason for this

(Continued on page 11)

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- **JULY 15: Community Conversation** is a chance for the community of Essex County to openly discuss the growth opportunities and needs of families and youths. We’re gathering parents and caregivers, city and county officials, educators and school leaders, plus community partners at 12:30p.m.
- **JULY 20: All About The Spectrum** meets 6:30 p.m. monthly on 3rd Thursdays *in-person*. It is for parents of children on the autism spectrum between the ages of 2 and 8 years old.
- **JULY 27: Better Together Dads** meets 6:30 p.m. monthly on 4th Thursdays to give fathers a safe place for connection with other passionate dads.
- **AUGUST 1: Nurtured Heart Approach** meets 6:30 p.m. monthly on 1st Tuesdays to connect and address their concerns, questions, and feelings about raising children with special needs.

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ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE'S ACCREDITATION REAFFIRMED BY REGIONAL ACCREDITING COMMISSION

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) has reaffirmed the accreditation of Essex County College (ECC) for the next eight years. The next eight-year reaccreditation evaluation will occur in the academic year 2030-2031.

The MSCHE recently announced the accreditation reaffirmation after finding ECC to be in full compliance with each of the Commission's 15 Requirements of Affiliation and 7 Standards of Accreditation. The announcement follows the College's extensive multi-year self-study process and an MSCHE small team site visit to the Newark campus this past March.

"This reaccreditation is a testament to our commitment to our Mission, thus providing 'Access to Success' through comprehensive educational programs and workforce development. We are grateful to the Commission for providing guidance. I extend my appreciation to the ECC Board of Trustees, all the stakeholders, and the College community for their team effort throughout the accreditation process and beyond," said ECC's President, Dr. Augustine A. Boakye.

Dr. Boakye added that the self-study was an intensive effort engaged in by more than 100 members of the ECC community over the past several years, which included ad-

ministrators, staff, full-time and adjunct faculty, and students.

"From the implementation of the Self-Study, to the evaluation team's visit, to the Commission's reaffirmation of accreditation, the entire process has been rewarding and acknowledges that Essex County College is on track and achieving its Vision, Mission and Values to effectively serve students and community with excellence," said Ms. Marion A. Bolden, Chair of the ECC Board of Trustees.

Essex County College's approach, as outlined in its Self-Study Design and Self-Study Report was to "challenge itself to faithfully abide by two simple guiding principles: to make the process a fully inclusive, college-wide endeavor, and to embrace the process as an opportunity for institutional renewal through self-appraisal, self-reflection, and bold action."

Under this inclusive and transparent approach, the institution held regular College-wide Town Halls for both students and College employees. The Board of Trustees were briefed regularly on the progress of the self-study by President Boakye and members of his leadership team. Members of the Board also met with representatives from the Commission including the Evaluation Team on

multiple occasions.

Essex County College earned commendations from the Evaluation Team, which applauded the institution for its transformational progress in spite of an extraordinarily challenging Covid-19 pandemic. In the Evaluation Team's Report to the Commission, the College received recognition of accomplishments and progress for several exemplary and innovative practices.

Commendations were in such areas as

- Leadership in fiscal oversight, institutional planning, resource allocation, and infrastructure improvements.
- Creation of sound and comprehensive blueprints and guides for assessing student achievement, educational goals, and the integration of the institutional mission.
- Development and implementation of a succession planning process.
- Use of data and assessment findings to annually update and refine the College's Strategic Plan.
- Commitment to support and develop faculty as evidenced by its Association of College and University Educators Effective Teaching Practices training curriculum

(Continued on page 13)

TOWN WATCH

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

NEWARK - The city's July 12-14 tribute to fallen fighters Augusto Domingos Acabou and Wayne Marcellus Brooks, Jr. concluded with the latter's remains being taken to Montclair's Rosedale Cemetery July 14 for a private cremation. A northbound NJTransit 92 bus was held for two minutes at Thomas Boulevard while Brooks' 70 car procession, 56 thereof being motorcycle police officers passed by.

Brooks, starting with his June 3, 1974 birth at Glen Ridge's Mountinside Hospital, was familiar to the "Local Talk" area on many levels. Raised in Irvington and Newark, the 1992 St. Benedict's Prep graduate was also the first minority Sabre fencer to reach the Junior Olympics.

"Bear" worked at Newark Liberty International Airport's Continental Airlines' hub for 29 years before taking Newark police and firefighters exams. He chose firefighting, graduated first in his class and served for 17 years.

Brooks meanwhile met and married the former Michele Vaughn, initially moved to Union but settled in Maplewood. Their two daughters were Columbia High School fencerscholars; Dasia Vaughn graduating in 2014 and Taylor Brooks in 2019. Mother Linda Terry Brooks and brothers-in-law Richard Lee Vaughn and Tanner Lee are also among his survivors.

"Augie" Acabou preceded Brooks in his July 12 visitation and July 13 Funeral Mass at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart July 12-13. Acabou was born Oct. 6, 1977 in Newark and was a lifelong Ironbounder.

The 1996 East Side High School graduate was a 15-year linen department-turned security guard at Edison's HMH JFK Hospital when he applied to the Newark Fire Department. The NFD academy class of 2013 graduate was a nine-year firefighter.

Parents Manuel and Maria Acabou, brothers Joao and Miguel, grandfather Augusto Da Cunha and life partner Cynthia Gulics and her daughter Gillian are among his survivors.

Memorial donations may be made to the Acabou and Brooks GoFundMe.com family pages.

IRVINGTON - The Essex County Prosecutor's Office is trying to determine how a motor vehicle lost control and struck three pedestrians by a major intersection here July 13.

Irvington police units were first called to Springfield Avenue, near Lyons Avenue on report of "a car striking a pedestrian" at about 8 p.m. that Thursday.

They instead found three people with blunt force trauma injuries - and the driver of a car at the scene. IPD officers promptly called for assistance from local EMS and the ECPO's Vehicular Incident Unit.

Ambulance workers were taken to Newark's University Hospital for treatment. There are no further details, as of press time, on their condition.

It is also not known whether the driver, who has been cooperating with detectives, will be charged with any motor vehicle offenses or battery. The field investigation closed at least one lane of Springfield Avenue, delaying traffic including NJTransit's Nos. 25 and 70 buses.

EAST ORANGE - ECPO Homicide Unit detectives are looking for the July 3 shooter who killed an 18-year-old city man who was 13 days into his post-high school life. Essex County Sheriff Armando Fontoura, through his CrmeStoppers outlet, had posted a \$5,000 reward July 5 for information leading to Nicholas Edwards's killer.

City police officers were called two two locations at around 7 p.m. that Monday. One group of EOPD went to Ashland

Avenue, where a Mercedes-Benz had run into a couple of parked cars. The Mercedes had evidence of a shooting, including blood.

A second EOPD detective group meanwhile responded to CareWell Health Medical Center. A CareWell official had called police headquarters, saying that a man was brought into their emergency room with a gunshot wound at 6:55 p.m.

That wound proved fatal to Edwards, who was pronounced dead at 8:05. Edwards had graduated with the East Orange Campus High School Class of 2023 on June 21.

Edwards' friends, who brought him to the hospital, said that they were in a car following his Mercedes when someone from along Ashland Avenue shot at him. Edwards the lost control and struck the parked cars.

Edwards' funeral arrangements have not been publicly announced as of press time.

ORANGE - The Noon, July 29 memorial service for Walter R. Elliott at Bethel New Life Community Outreach, 450 North Maple Ave., East Orange will also celebrate the life of his wife, Ann Brown Elliott.

Ann Elliott, 85, was a 57-year city resident here and was also the yoga instructor for Orange Public Schools' Alternative Learning Center 1970-71. The professional art and Spanish teacher authored and illustrated the Infinity Natural Foods Cookbook in 1972 and was an award-winning artist on the bi-state art show circuit.

Elizabeth Ann Brown Elliot, who was born in Springfield, Mo. Sept. 15, 1935, was teaching in Flint (Mich.) Public Schools when she and Walter R. Elliott met on a blind date in 1957. The Southwest Missouri State College Class of 1957 graduate married the General Motors Institute (now Kettering University) dealership management major Feb. 18, 1958 and settled in Orange to raise their only son, Walter F., in 1964.

Ann Elliott, who created "Mugwump" rag-and-sock dolls and ceramics, specialized in surreal oil-on-canvas paintings. She was a regular at the Irvington, South Orange and Greenwich Village art shows. She and Walt were Cleveland Street School

PTA members who also supported the effort to build the current Orange High School.

Curiosity over a tapestry's lettering on exhibit at Independence, Mo.'s Harry S. Truman Museum in 1975 led her to learn Tibetan. She and Cornell linguistics teacher and brother-in-law Charles Elliott learned the language by first learning Sanskrit - South Asia's equivalent to Latin - and created their own textbook.

Ann used her skills to translate everything from monks' meditations to application forms at New York City's Jetsun Sakya Center 1977-81. She had also held memberships in the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Montclair and Paramus' Maranatha Church of the Nazarene at different times. She eventually took Roman Catholic Initiation for Adults classes and considered herself Catholic in her last years.

Elliott died in East Orange General Hospital May 3, 2021. Daughter-in-law Naomi and Tompkins County, N.Y.'s nephew Charles "Chaz" and niece Carol Elliott are also among her survivors. Memorial donations may be made to Indycar Ministry, PO Box 24297, Speedway, IN 46224. Condolences may be sent to ggwoodyfuneralhome.com and/or c/o 56-62 Halleck St., Newark 07104.

WEST ORANGE - Municipal authorities had confirmed on July 13 that two people were arrested and one person was injured by an illegal firework set off during the township's official July 5 display on the high school grounds.

Mayor Susan McCartney said that township police, fire and medics quickly contained a brief stampede towards the display's exits after the alleged firework went off after 9 p.m. that Wednesday. She said that "thousands" of people had been there since 11 a.m. for the nighttime display, listening to musical performances and eating from food trucks since 11 a.m.

Medics found and treated several people who suffered minor injuries from either the stampede or the unauthorized pyrotechnics or both. One person, however, was taken to the RWJBarnabas Health Cooper-

(Continued on page 14)

3 WAYS THE GOVERNMENT IS WASTING MONEY: IS IT DOUBLE DIPPING OR FRAUD?

Wasteful spending on Health Benefits is a waste of our tax dollars. According to a report from Acting State Comptroller Kevin Walsh, many townships and cities are wasting money on health insurance.

Many local governments spend too much on health benefits for employees. Kevin Walsh, Acting State Comptroller, explains how to stop three wasteful practices:

1. Make sure elected and appointed officials aren't improperly receiving benefits.

Under state law, an elected or appointed official (hired after May 21, 2010) may be considered an "employee" and may receive state health benefits if the official works *at least 25 hours per week*. Some municipalities, however, have policies that are more stringent, requiring employees to log as many as 35 hours a week.

To comply with this law, governments must track when elected and appointed officials work. Our audit of Berlin Township found the government didn't keep time and attendance records. For instance, two Berlin Council members receiving benefits told OSC auditors that their hours worked ranged from 5 to 20 hours a week, making them ineligible for health benefits.

Takeaway: Make sure your local government maintains time and attendance records. Review personnel manuals, policies,

and local ordinances to ensure that the town is in compliance. If your municipality doesn't have these records and is providing health benefits to elected and appointed officials, how does anyone know these officials are working the minimum number of hours needed?

2. Stop health insurance waiver payments that amount to "double dipping."

Municipalities have the discretion to offer an opt-out waiver payment to an employee who waives state health benefits insurance coverage. Under state law, a municipality may pay up to 25 percent of the savings, but no more than \$5,000. However, municipalities should have policies and procedures in place to prevent "double dipping" when spouses or other relatives are also employed by the municipality. It is wasteful to pay an employee for opting out of health insurance coverage when the employee is actually still receiving health insurance coverage through a spouse or relative employed by the municipality.

OSC's audit found that Brigantine made wasteful waiver payments of \$64,000 to employees; these employees received the payment and also received the city-provided insurance coverage through a family member or spouse employed by Brigantine. OSC's audits of Berlin Township, the Borough of Keansburg, and the Borough of Roselle also

revealed wasteful spending on waivers. In some cases, the payments violated the state law on opt-out waiver payments and local policies.

Takeaways: Scrutinize the use of opt-out waiver policies and payments *annually*. Was everyone who received an opt-out payment eligible? Do your policies allow for double-dipping? Did anyone check to make sure that employees aren't double-dipping?

If you're concerned about this issue, you may want to review personnel manuals; forms submitted by employees requesting opt-out waiver payments; lists of payments made; and any analyses prepared that address how much is paid to employees who receive waiver payments.

Equally important, elected officials and local residents should consider whether these payments are a good use of taxpayer dollars. Keep in mind that such payments are not required by law and are not negotiable in contracts, which means that municipalities can unilaterally choose not to allow these payments.

Also, as the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has noted, public employees who have to contribute financially to their health insurance already have a sufficient incentive to avoid receiving health insurance that is not needed. DCA "strongly recommends that the governing body of each local unit authorizing payments in lieu of
(Continued on page 12)

CHESS GRANDMASTER

(Continued from page 7)

is that when someone is playing 29 opponents at the same time, there is not enough time to analyze all the complications.

According to Hemant Mishra, Abhimanu became an Expert at 7 years 6 months; a master at 9 years 2 months; International Master at 10 years 9 months; and a grandmaster at 12 years, 4 months. Mishra became the youngest grandmaster in chess history.

According to the United States Chess Federation, an Expert is 1799 - 1999 points; Candidate Master, 2000 - 2199 points; Master, 2200 - 2399 points; Senior Master, 2400 - 2599 points. The titles of International Master and Grandmaster are obtained playing in a very strong tournament where International Masters and Grandmasters play. To be awarded a title, a player has to fulfill a norm by obtaining a certain amount of points, say, 7 out of 9. Once a player has achieved three norms, he or she is awarded the title by the World Chess Federation (FIDE).

Hemant Mishra told "Local Talk" that Abhimanu's rating is currently 2591. According to Hemant Mishra, his son is going for 2650 by the end of 2023. His ambition is to make 2700 by the end of 2024.

Asked about his background, Hemant

Mishra said that the family came to the United States from India in 2006. Abhimanu was born in 2009. He started playing chess at 2.5 - 4.5 years old. Abhimanu's father works with him 20 - 25 hours a week, studying chess. Resources used include books, chess videos, study of endgames, positional games and tactics.

"Local Talk" did an interview with Hemant Mishra, the grandmaster's father.

Local Talk: What city and province did you come from India?

Hemant Mishra: City - Bhopal, State - Madhya Pradesh.

LT: You are Abhimanu's mentor? Was there anyone else who taught your son?

HM: GM Arun Prasad and GM Magesh Panchnathan have played a big role.

LT: How many hours per day do you have your son study chess?

HM: He works on all aspects of the games (about 8+ hours a day).

LT: Is Abhimanu in high school? When I was 14, back in 1981, I just finished junior high, and started high school.

HM: He will in high school next year.

LT: Does Abhimanu travel a lot to play in big tournaments?

HM: Yes.

LT: When do you see your son making an attempt for the World Chess Championship?

HM: It is far. The next medium term goal is to cross 2700 ELO and become Super GM. He is hoping to get that in a year time and try to become youngest ever Super GM in the world. Movement after 2700 ELO is a different ball game. Unfortunately, there is not much corporate support for chess players in USA and it is very difficult to move forward without that.

I will keep supporting him as long as he loves the game and works hard. If things work out as planned there is a realistic chance to do that in next 3-4 years before he gets into college.

LT: Have you considered writing a book about your son's best games?

HM: His autobiography is already published which has 30 of his annotated games.

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*From
The
Pastor's
Heart*

OP-ED BY DR. ROBERT KENNEDY

**Live In Harmony
With One Another**

I am not advertising their service, but in taking note of the appeal of the apostle Paul that called the church members in Rome to "Live in harmony with one another," I reference eHarmony, the online dating service directed towards the goal of relationship building.

If you are unaware of the service, let me explain more that it is a dating platform where single women meet and men. They claim that those who direct the service know what it takes to help people find compatible partners by the use of personality and other tests. Their most remarkable claim is that they make perfect matches. Another claim is that they are a safe dating space, one that's free of fake profiles. You can flag anything that feels

suspicious. Basic membership is free and you can view information about your matches at no charge.

I have not checked to see how many of the perfect matches have broken up, but from all my knowledge and experience as a pastor, I know that many breakups have taken place because it is not just the perfect matching at the start of any relationship but what is put into the relationship to help it sustain. If you reflect on the Biblical story of creation, you will know that even the perfect pair placed in the Garden of Eden found a way to mess up. Then they began to shame and blame each other for the state in which they found themselves.

The point I am making is that whether we are in our homes, churches, or other institutions of our society, the apostle Paul's appeal that we must "live in harmony with one another," needs to be directed to us. If this must become a possibility, we must put away the negative relationships listed below.

1. Pride that is the foundation of all the sins and conflicts that

2. Self-centeredness that makes us most defensive.
3. Distrust that makes us so suspicious of one another.
4. Lusts that allow us to hurt those around us.
5. Prejudices that cause us to disdain those we think are not like us.
6. Self-justification that makes us blame others.
7. False imagination that makes us think evil of everyone we meet.
8. The suspicions that allow us to perceive everyone as enemies.
9. Contentiousness that we do over trivial matters.

And instead, we must adopt the positives that, not only, bring us into harmonious relationships but sustain them. I speak of:

1. Love that calls us to give ourselves, in obedience and commitment, service, sacrifice, and even suffering for others.
2. Grace that helps us to build bridges to repair when breaks come in the relationship. Grace is the "undeserved favor" given when there is no

3. Forgiveness: Given to cover a wrong.
4. Respect: Shows that we esteem the other person.
5. Acceptance of differences that helps us to understand that not everyone is like me. Each person is different, but each is important to the body.
6. Trust which takes away the constant suspicion of the other.
7. Empathy and compassion will help us to stand in the place of the other person, feel with them what they are feeling.
8. Tolerance that teaches patience even when we disagree with the actions of others.
9. The Holy Spirit that enables us to build harmony. The Holy Spirit is the most incredible unitive force in the universe. He spreads love in our hearts. He makes us love even those who might treat us as enemies.

Yes, we are called to live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16), for without harmony, we will be in a constancy of strife and destruction.

GOVERNMENT WASTE

(Continued from page 11)

health benefits annually review, and have a thorough discussion about, their policy, its impact on the local unit's budget, and whether such waiver payments remain fiscally prudent."

3. Scrutinize recommendations made by insurance brokers paid on commission.

Local governments often rely on insurance brokers who have a built-in conflict of interest: the broker gets paid a commission if the local government uses a private insurance company. The broker does not get paid if the local government chooses a state-sponsored health insurance program.

When local governments buy health insurance through a commission-only broker, they have to be mindful of the potential pitfalls. In one report, OSC projected that the Borough of Roselle would have saved \$1.9 million if it had participated in the State Health Benefits Program.

In our audit of Brigantine, we found that the broker's pitch to use private insurance omitted a comparison of relevant rate plans,

used inaccurate rates, excluded applicable contributions, and made unsubstantiated assumptions about medical waiver payments. In our audit of the Buena Regional School District, we found violations of state contracting and transparency laws, and that the broker had not disclosed its commission as required by law.

Takeaways: Check to see if your local government participates in the state health insurance programs by looking at <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/documents/pdf/sehbpemp.pdf> for schools and <https://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/documents/pdf/shbpemp.pdf> for other governmental entities - municipalities, counties, authorities, and commissions. If the entity is not on this list, it is most likely obtaining health insurance from a private company.

OSC recommends that officials use insurance brokers who are paid a flat fee for their service. That will help ensure brokers are making recommendations based on what is most beneficial for taxpayers and government officials.

If you want to dig further, documents to review include:

- Written correspondence required by N.J.S.A. 17:22A-41.1a, whether provided

by an insurance broker or insurance company, that notifies the local government of the amount of any commission, service fee, brokerage, or other valuable consideration that the broker will receive as a result of the sale, solicitation or negotiation of the health insurance policy or contract.

- The contract or other agreement between the local government and the broker
- Cost projections prepared by the broker and data used to make those cost projections
- Any auditor reports addressing health insurance costs.

Final tip: If you find a violation of law or waste, fraud, or abuse, we want to know. You can share what you find with OSC online or by calling us on our confidential hotline at 1-855-OSC-TIPS (672-8477).

OP-ED: All employees should sign a contract, under penalty of perjury, that he/she is not receiving any health benefit(s) from any other government offices or part of his/her family health benefit(s). If he/she lied under oath, he/she faces a sentence of up to 5 years of jail time and at minimum one year jail time.

COACH USA MAKES DRASTIC SERVICE CUTS

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - Chances are that readers may know of a relative, colleague or acquaintance who have been making adjustments to their routines with CoachUSA's Nos. 24, 31 and 44 bus routes since July 17.

CoachUSA, through its respective Orange-Newark-Elizabeth and South Orange Avenue Independent Bus Operating Authority divisions, as of July 17, will not run their said buses before 5 a.m. and after 8 p.m. Mondays through Saturdays.

The roughly 20 percent reduction in bus runs mean that those Newark, East Orange, Irvington, Orange, South Orange and Elizabeth in working nights or overnights will have to take other transportation.

Those wanting to catch a late show or date night along those three bus routes will have to cut those activities short - or take NJTransit, taxis, ride hail or ride share services home.

Those used to taking the 24, 31 and/or 44 on Sundays or Major Holidays will get a rud-er shock. As of July 23, there will be no Sunday service on those routes.

The lack of Sunday, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day service turns parts of Central Avenue, Harrison Avenue, Frelinghuysen/Newark Avenue, South Orange Avenue, Tremont Avenue and Rhode Island Avenue into transit deserts.

Those needing to get to the Veterans Administration and/or CareWell Health hospitals may need to arrange medical van transport.

Rather than CoachUSA becoming strict about the Sunday sabbath, company vice president of public affairs Dan Rodriguez told a reporter July 12 that, despite current ridership just above 90 percent and a five percent a five increase last year, it can no longer afford to maintain pre-July 17 service.

"It's 92 percent (ridership) and not break-even," said Rodriguez from CoachUSA/ONE's Elizabeth garage. "We've lost money on it seven out of the last 12 years."

Rodriguez further explained that ONE and SOA IBOA were chartered as private companies long before the 1980 creation of partially-taxpayer funded NJTransit. Like DeCamp, which ended its 153-year-old commuter service on April 7, it has to watch every cent it receives.

ONE and SOA IBOA's 2011-23 mostly drought period includes three earlier service cut rounds in 2017-18.

The CoachUSA subsidiaries, on Feb. 6, 2017, reduced the No. 44's runs to hourly intervals. The No. 31's services to St. Barnabas Hospital, Livingston Mall and the Maplewood Loop were cut around 65 percent March 6, 2017 and lopped those branches off Jan. 1, 2018.

"Local Talk" first got word on the current cuts while boarding a 31 between Newark Penn Station and Broad and Market streets. A CoachUSA handbill on the driver's safety partition told of the 5 a.m. - 8 p.m. service limitation and "No Sunday Service." The driver confirmed to "Local Talk" that the cuts applied to the 24 and 44.

Some of the three routes' buses, as of July 10, posted new timetables on other partitions.

Those handbills and word of mouth are what CoachUSA is using to get the word of cuts out. What new paper timetables that are published, if they are published, did not reach Newark Penn Station as of 8 a.m. July 18.

"They haven't sent us schedules for a year now," said the NJTransit Customer Service clerk. "I advise you that you check their website."

"Local Talk," on July 10, found it almost impossible to find new 24, 31 and 44 scheduled on CoachUSA/ONE's websites. It is easier to find information on CoachUSA's other 24 bus routes and lines elsewhere in the U.S. and Canada.

There are riders who have reached out to their commuter advocacy groups and their municipal elders.

Sally Gellert, President of the Lacka-

wanna Coalition has called CoachUSA's cuts "troubling" and is asking whether "taxpayer-subsidized buses come with any specific service provision requirements."

Gellert, who leads the Millburn-based watchdog for the Morris & Essex and Montclair-Boonton commuter rail lines, was referring to NJDOT's leasing buses to private carriers for \$1. The lease program has been around for 50 years.

"It's an unstated curfew or travel ban for the transit dependent," said Geller July 18. "If CoachUSA was running subsidized buses on these routes, NJTransit should reclaim them and either run the routes or ensure coverage through its NewBus plan now in development."

NewBus Newark, which would overhaul Newark area bus routes, had been delayed in part by March 2020's COVID-19 pandemic.

Newark South Ward Councilman Rev. Patrick Council had convened a public meeting July 10. What will come from that meeting, including substitute service for South Warders who work at Newark Airport, Port Newark/Elizabeth or Elizabeth's Jersey Gardens Mall, remains unknown as of press time.

"NJTransit officials informed the City of the pending update," said Connie Jackson, Public Information Officer for East Orange Mayor Theodore "Ted" Green July 17. "We issued an advisory on Facebook of the service changes and alternate routes provided by NJTransit."

Orange Mayor Dwayne D. Warren, said Business Administrator Chris Hartwyk July 17, are also awaiting a response from NJTransit and NJDOT after receiving "a few inquiries from the public."

"In the meantime the public is encouraged to attend the next NJTransit Board of Directors meeting," said Hartwyk, "which is on July 19; the meeting after that is Sept. 14."

The July 19th NJTransit directors meeting in Newark is to start 6 p.m. past "Local Talk" deadline.

CHES GRANDMASTER

(Continued from page 11)

LT: Does Abhimanu play on lichess.org, chess.com, Internet Chess Club?

HM: Yes.

LT: Do your younger kids look to Abhimanu as a role model?

HM: Yes.

LT: What do you believe to be important in achieving the master title (2200 USCF)?

HM: Knowledge of all theoretical end games is a must. It helps to check some good books on middle game planning and having a proper opening repertoire (with limited openings) is needed.

Full Disclosure: Lev D. Zilbermints is a chess player as well as a reporter. Mr. Zilbermints has been the Essex County Chess champion since 1995. He is also the Union County chess champion since 2014, having successfully defended his title in 2018. Mr. Zilbermints is a Candidate Master.

ECC ACCREDITATION

(Continued from page 9)

- lum.
- Responsiveness to both faculty and students during the COVID-19 pandemic (Remote Learning Questionnaire Results).

As per their website, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, "is a global institutional accreditor recognized by the United States Secretary of Education since 1952," ensuring students and the public of "the educational quality for

over 500 institutions of higher education." Its rigorous process for accreditation ensures "institutional accountability, self-appraisal, improvement, and innovation through peer review" as well as its application of "standards within the context of institutional mission."

The Commission's Self-Study Evaluation Team concluded its report with: "As a MSCHE Evaluation Team, we are inspired by your unwavering dedication to your students, faculty, staff, and the community."

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

YUMMY (PART 2)

For your convenience, this is being laid here again to provide context...

Most of the foods I enjoyed throughout my life also "Ain't what it used to be!" But a few COMPANIES reign supreme and those are the true keepers of standards out there. May God bless those homes.

Question: what is a food that you enjoyed throughout your life, be it as early as childhood, if you liked, that's packaged the same because it looks the same and tastes the same way it did way back when and now?

Talking about difficult for me, it was like pulling teeth. I soon came to realize over the years how many companies began weaning us off of the origi-

nal taste of prime ingredients in many foods, snacks, or whatever. So many of the foods or such that I enjoyed and devoured as a kid I wouldn't dare touch today. I've always been a person that smells my food, and if it doesn't smell right, it ain't right.

Lately, I've been discarding a lot of the meat and other things I've bought because my senses made the suggestion and when that part of me speaks, it goes right in the trash. I was eating the spaghetti that I made the other day as doing some editing on my computer, and a fly was flying about that was being an annoyance. I swear these are highly intelligent species. Seemingly after my killing his Home Boy, he had it out for me. But guess what? He flew all about me. Yet as close as flown, which was too close for comfort for me and that yummy bowl of spaghetti. It never lit not once, as hovering over the leftover grub in that bowl to eat.

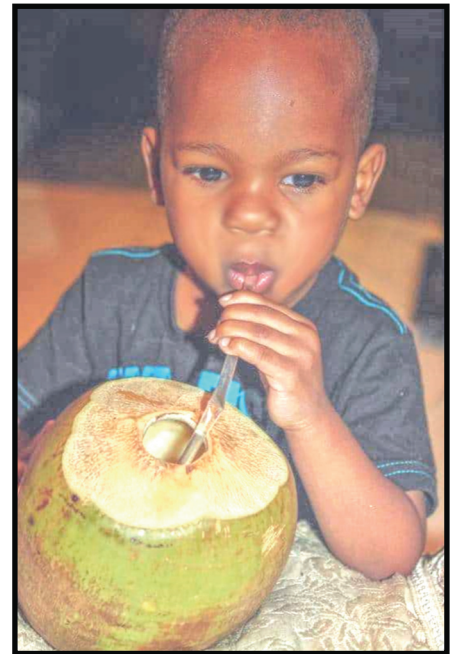
I needed to see as it sees and I spared its life just for that reason. Sometimes we have to enter our own test lab and look the



part like the big boys do with our imaginary lab coats and those spectacles dangling on our noses. So you can see what we need to see. So now, what does that tell you? I say it all the time you might want to purchase an art farm, rat farm, roach farm, fly farm, or whatever intellectual insect that might be accessible and utilize them as bonafide food testers. Because if they don't eat it, neither should I.

It's an excellent secondary method of food security trailing behind prayer, of course. PRAY OVER YOUR FOOD as a mandate. That includes water, candy, and anything else you prop or pop into your mouth. To nasty or obsolete, you say? Then try an imaginary peek into that gut and imagine all of the deposits and stuff put into those foods by those glorified right-winged food designers; enough preaching. What food still tastes the same when you're munching on it? I had to rack my brain, but luckily, I'll say Fig Newtons. There also would have been a bag of chips that I loved, but when I purchased them just the other day, my light and airy salt-less chips tasted like they'd been fried in motor oil, which was saddening to me because I loved them so much. So I'll go with the Fig Newtons. But, now, "Them Streets Are Talking."

Star Crunch would be mine. I just had one of those a few days ago and I want to get another one because it reminded me so much of my childhood. (Mo)



Photos By Andrea Dialect

UTZ Sour Cream Potato chips would be mines hands down it always tastes the same! (Dayjah Brown)

Thomas English Muffins: They taste the same way they did when I was a child. (Jazmine)

Lay's plain chips: It never changed (Tamika)

Our West Indian classic curried chicken and corn beef and rice that my mom cooks. We ate that a lot when we don't have money to buy more lavish meals. (Diana The Dragon) ...

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TOWN WATCH

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man-Barnabas Medical Center Burn Unit.

WOPD officers meanwhile arrested two people who are accused of bringing in and igniting the illegal fireworks. Details - including their names, ages and charges - remain undisclosed as of press time.

This year's increased public safety presence was due to three factors, starting with the Township Council not approving the July 5 event until their concerns were satisfied on June 30. The additional enforcers were due to closing off the adjacent Degnan Park complex at 11 a.m.

Three out-of-town high school-age girls suffered minor injuries after fighting each other just before July 6, 2022's fireworks display. They said that their bed with each other started on social media earlier that day.

SOUTH ORANGE - Village elders have scheduled a July 19 public meeting and a July 24 Board of Trustees meeting - both to start at 7 p.m. at SOPAC - to consider revising its 154-year-old charter.

Village President Sheena Collum and the Village Trustees, pending locals' approval, will ask the State Legislature to rename their job titles to Mayor and Village Council.

They are asking to change "The Village of South Orange Township," made in the 1980s, back to "The Village of South Orange." Orange and South Orange had added "Township" to their names to take advantage of state and/or federal funding programs.

The charter changes mirror those that were put before the State House before the 2020 COVID pandemic. This bid, however, is more than just name changes.

Village elders also want to move their nonpartisan municipal elections from May onto future November General Election ballots. (The proposed election day move will

not affect the two-town South Orange-Maplewood School District school board elections.)

The State Legislature granted South Orange's request to become independent of South Orange Township (now Maplewood) May 4, 1869. It also became one of five statewide municipalities to be named a village.

MAPLEWOOD - Retired federal judge H. Lee Sarokin, 94, - whose Maplewood youth and Newark legal practice led to his ruling on at least three historic cases in the 1980s and 90s - died June 20 at his La Jolla section home in San Diego.

Sarokin, perhaps best known for overturning the conviction of former boxer Ruben "Hurricane" Carter's murder conviction on Nov. 7, 1985, had died from pulmonary fibrosis. He and wife Margie had retired in San Diego since 1996 to produce thought-

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TOWN WATCH

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provoking plays at the North Coast Reperatory Theater.

Although Haddon Lee Sarokin was born in Perth Amboy Nov. 25, 1928, his parents moved to 127 Parker Ave. here. Lee, who was Columbia High School's "Mirror" yearbook editor, graduated in 1946 and went on to get his juris doctorate from the Harvard Law School in 1953. Newark to start a private practice and joined as a Lasser and Hochman LLC partner.

President Jimmy Carter appointed Sarokin to federal court-Newark in 1979. President Bill Clinton appointed him to the federal appeals bench in 1994 which he stayed until he resigned to avoid becoming political campaign fodder in 1996.

Sarokin issued 2,500 rulings while on the federal bench those 27 years - including his overturning Carter's 1968 conviction for allegedly shooting three white people in a Paterson bar on the grounds that state prosecutors had "fatally infected the trial" with an unproven racial revenge theory.

Sarokin, in 1991, overruled the Morristown Public Library's ban on a homeless man for his odor. "If we wish to shield our eyes and noses from the homeless," said Sarokin, "we should revoke their condition, not their library cards."

Sons Jeff and Jim, daughter Abby Mantini, stepchildren Ted and Kathy Schlein and 11 grandchildren are also among his survivors. His memorial service was being planned as of presstime.

BLOOMFIELD - It is to the understanding of "Local Talk" that the Township Council earlier this year had hired an environmental consultant to evaluate the two remaining Bakelite factory buildings here on the DPW yard at 230 Grove St.

The two long vacant World War One era brick buildings - one two-story, the other three-story - may be revamped as a garage and/or office or replaced with a new building for that purpose. Bloomfield Township, after receiving the factory complex from Bloomfield College in the 1960s, replaced the Bakelite office and back buildings with the current garage bays and an office trailer.

Bakelite's inventor, Leo Baekeland, moved into the then-10 building complex so he can produce his resin-based products - from insulators to napkin rings. 230 Grove St. made sense because it was next door to the Erie Railroad's Orange Branch Bloomfield Station and across the street from the freight yard.

230 Grove St. became Bakelite's R&D lab after moving the factory to Bound Brook in 1939. Rooftop panels to rate Bakelite color fade were a common site until

the company donated the complex to Bloomfield College in the 1950s. They were the college's science labs until they gave the property to the township.

Second Ward Councilman Nicholas Joanow has long advocated bringing DPW trucks and equipment permanently indoors. He said that outdoor exposure to the elements have shortened department vehicles' lifespan.

MONTCLAIR - A late June vote among "Montclair's bravest," as revealed on July 8, have signaled their lack of confidence in their fire chief.

The 70 electors representing Montclair Firefighters Benevolent Association Local 20 were asked online to agree or disagree on the following statement: "I have confidence in Chief (John) Hermann's ability to lead our department."

Fifty FMBA Local 20 electors, representing 75 percent of the vote, disagreed with the statement. There were 16 electors who agreed; the remaining four abstained.

Local 20 President John Fierro, on July 8, more than confirmed the vote. Fierro, however, would only add that the "secure, anonymous vote" was taken online and that it is a means of its members to "voice grievances."

At-Large Councilman Peter Yacobelli - after explaining that the Township Council is not involved in a fire chief's hiring, disciplining and/or firing - said that he understands that Acting Town Manager Brian Scantlebury and Human Resources Director Alisha Dawkins possess the survey.

"The Fire Chief reports to the Town Manager," said Yacobellis. "I expect (the Town Manager) to ensure that our employees are happy and thriving."

Hermann and fired Town Manager Timothy Stafford were named by two MFD firefighters in an April racial discrimination suit. The aggrieved firefighters pointed at how Hermann, with Stafford's consent, created a September 2021 promotional exam process that led to the promotion of fire chief's son over otherwise more experienced or qualified personnel.

GLEN RIDGE - Motorists, pedestrians and bus riders who use the Bloomfield Avenue Bridge linking Glen Ridge and Montclair may want to dust off their 2018-19 detour notes for the next five or six weeks.

The Glen Ridge Police Department will help refresh memories by setting up detour signage at the Glenridge Avenue intersection. Montclair police will likely do the same at its Pine Street and Maple Avenue intersection.

Public Service Electric & Gas informed both police departments and Essex County Division of Roads and Bridges

that it will be closing three of the bridge's four lanes two or three days a week until either Aug. 26 or Sept. 1. That single "open" lane may shift with the work on different weeks.

PSE&G said that they have to repair or replace underground electric cables or natural gas mains underneath the bridge deck. They were last worked on during the 1911 bridge's \$11 million renovation 2018-2020.

NJTransit's 11, 28 and 29 bus service is expected to be among the detoured traffic. Service on the Montclair-Boonton Line, which runs under the bridge, is not expected to be delayed. Toney's Brook is also expected to be unaffected.

BELLEVILLE - It can be said that a revenue issue had cropped up at the July 11 Township Council meeting between Belleville School 10 and one of the owners of 571-73 Belleville Ave. to its immediate west.

Anthony Tuituriello, who is one of the building owners, said that the solar roof array and car sun shade over School 10's parking lot is obstructing the view of three billboards on 571-73's east side Tuituriello, during the July 11 public comment segment, said he is concerned that the billboard companies will not renew their contract with him.

571-73 Belleville is a two-story brick retail and apartment building constructed in 1937. Its billboards go back to at least the mid-1960s.

School 10, a three-story elementary school, was built in the 1920s. The solar panel array and car shade between the school and the brick building was erected last year.

Mayor Michael Melham redirected Turturiello to the Belleville Public Schools and its Board of Education Trustees. Melham explained that, aside from a courtesy hearing before the Belleville Planning Board, the panel/sunshade was a BPS project approved by its trustees.

The solar panel array on the sunshade roof was built as an energy saver. It can theoretically charge back the power utility after it has paid for itself.

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