

LOCAL TALK

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25¢

"LET'S TALK FOR THE BETTERMENT OF OUR COMMUNITIES"

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

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BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE: STATISTICS FOR NJ & THE USA

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FATE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER UP IN THE AIR

By Walter Elliott

NEWARK - The Newark Public Schools community may be taking sides and board members considering interim measures, while their Nov. 29 petition to remove a former board president is mullied by the New Jersey Department of Education School Ethics Commission.

That petition, whose details were made public and the board's Dec. 19 meeting, prompted calls on either side of the dais for an outside attorney - where one of its advocates was nearly ejected from the East Ward Elementary School auditorium.

Superintendent of Schools Roger Leon signed the petition after the board voted 4-3-1 at their Nov. 29 meeting at the Dr. William Horton School. Four approved to petition, four abstained and Dawn Haynes - at the center of the controversy - voted against.

It is not clear whether the petition is calling for unseating Haynes - a six-year member into her third term - on grounds of a conflict of interest. The petition to remove came after Haynes' daughter had filed a legal claim Oct. 25 against the district and its Newark School of Global Studies magnet high school.

Akela Haynes had claimed that the district and the Global high school administration had not protected from alleged religious, racial and gender discrimination while as a student there. A. Haynes had named Leon and Global Principal Nelson Ruiz as

allowing the "physical and psychological harms" she said she had experienced.

A. Haynes, in a Dec. 18 interview with a reporter, said that she had waited until she had transferred from Global in her junior year and later became an NPS graduate before filing her claim. (State law requires a complaint filer to give the public entity being complained on six months to respond.) She said that she had "suffered pervasive and consistent" discrimination, sexual harassment, assault, battery, bullying, cyberbullying, emotional distress and intimidation there, between Sept. 1, 2020 and Dec. 31, 2022.

A. Haynes, in the interview, said that a male peer student had called her a terrorist and "a N____," while passing by in a Global hallway and another "destroying my headphones." She left while she was a National Honor Society student and student government treasurer.

Global Studies high school had been at the center of discrimination claims from some of its students, teachers and patients since 2022. A. Haynes was among a group including Global Studies Black Student Union President David Allen and several other students and teachers who voiced their complaints to Leon and the board Nov. 22, 2022.

NPS' elders responded by commissioning CREED Strategies consultants on January 2023 to report on Global's "anti-

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REMEMBERING PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

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Editorial
Dhiren Shah
Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

Happy New Year to all of you. I wish 2025 is a peaceful, not political but people friendly and healthy and happy new year.

One of the noble presidents of our time, Jimmy Carter, has passed. He lived 100 years (October 1, 1924 - December 29, 2024). Upon celebrating his 100th birthday, he became the first former POTUS to reach that age. He was a farmer who became the governor of Georgia and then became President of the United States. He was the 39th President and served from

1977-1981). The “Local Talk” team and I will pray for the soul of President Jimmy Carter and offer condolences to his family, friends and followers.

President-elect Donald Trump filed an appeal against the jury verdict for the case E. Jean Carroll asking for a new trial. A federal appeals court denied Trump’s appeal to reverse the \$5 million civil verdict.

Also, Trump appealed the verdict for a separate case where a jury awarded Carroll \$83.3 million after finding Trump defamed her by denying her account. Carroll alleged Donald Trump sexually assaulted her in a department store and then defamed her by denying the claim. Trump has denied all wrongdoing. Both cases were civil lawsuits, as Trump

is not facing any jail time.

A crash killed 179 people in a South Korean Jeju Airplane from Bangkok to Muan International Airport in South Korea. The flight control tower gave permission to land and three minutes later notified, "Mayday, mayday, mayday, bird strike, bird strike, going around." This is the worst plane accident in South Korea. Out of 181 people on board only 2 survived. Even though it seems horrifying, air travel is the safest traveling amongst all. The South Korea government worked to inspect all of the airlines.

According to USA Facts: “There was a total of 689 serious injuries in US air travel from 2002 to 2022, an average of 33 per year. In that same time, 48

million people were hurt in passenger vehicles on US highways - that’s approximately 2.3 million per year. In 2022, passengers in cars and trucks were injured at a rate of 42 per 100 million miles traveled. For air travel, it was 0.007 per 100 million miles. The most dangerous form of travel was via motorcycle - motorcyclists got injured at a rate of 339.3 per 100 million miles. That’s more than six times the rate of any other form of transportation.”

The world population increased by more than 71 million people in 2024. Now, it will be 8.09 billion people on New Year’s Day.

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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BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE - STATISTICS FOR NEW JERSEY AND THE UNITED STATES

By Lev D. Zilbermintz

According to a December 2022 report by the American Immigration Council, "The Digital Equity Act of 2021, as part of the landmark Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, identifies several covered groups of people who suffer disproportionately from gaps in access to broadband internet service. These populations include:

- Individuals who live in households with an annual household income that is at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level
- Aging individuals, defined as those 60 years or older
- Veterans
- Individuals with disabilities
- Individuals with a language barrier, including those who are English learners and who have low levels of literacy
- Individuals who primarily reside in a rural area

Data used is from the American Community Survey.

According to NJSHAD - Summary Health Indicator Report - Broadband Internet Access, in New Jersey, by race, 94.1% of White people had broadband Internet access; 92.6% of blacks; 93.1% of Hispanics; and 97.7% of Asians. Across New Jersey, 94% of the population had broadband internet access, as compared to 92.1% of the United States.

The same report states that across the 21 New Jersey counties, at least 90% or more of the population have broadband internet access. Salem, Cumberland, Ocean counties have 90% - 91.9% broadband internet access. Gloucester, Camden, Atlantic, Warren, Mercer counties have 91.9% - 93.5% broadband internet access; Monmouth, Union, Essex, Bergen and Passaic counties have 93.5% - 94.6% broadband internet access. Sussex, Morris, Hunterdon, Somerset, Middlesex, Burlington, Cape May counties have 94.6% - 96.5% broadband internet access.

According to the report, "Access to reliable, high-speed broadband internet improves access to education, employment, and health care opportunities and is associated with increased economic development."

According to the American Immigration Council (AIC), in New Jersey, approximately 523,000 people, or 1 in 16 lacked Internet service as recently as 2019, including dial-up internet service. Nationally, nearly 24.6 million people, or 1 in 13 did not have internet access at home during the same period.

Important data can be seen from the "Share of Individuals without internet, by Nativity, 2019," in the AIC report. Those who are U.S. born, New Jersey make up 385,000 or 5.8% of population without the Internet. Foreign-born New Jersey residents make up 138,000 or 6.7% of population without Internet. The combined total of both U.S.-born and foreign-born New Jerseyans without Internet stands at 523,000 residents, or 6% of the state's population.

By comparison, U.S. - born, nationally, stands at 20,711,000 or 7.5% of residents without Internet access. Foreign-born, nationally, make up 8.8% of the population. Total, nationally, is 24,574,000 people, or 7.7% of the national population, without the Internet.

According to the American Immigration Council's December 2022 report, "If we look at high-speed, broadband internet access alone, then significantly fewer people have access at home. The access to high-speed, broadband internet is essential to the ability to work or study at home. In 2019, approximately one in six, or 16.3% of people in New Jersey lacked access to broadband Internet. In total, approximately 1,400,000 people were without broadband access at home."

Immigrants were slightly more likely to lack broadband internet access than those born in the United States: 18.9% of immigrants lacked home broadband access compared with 15.5% of U.S.-born. In total, approximately 382,000 immigrants did not have high-speed internet at home.

In addition to the Internet, people also need a computer or tablet if they are to develop and maintain digital literacy or access the information and services increasingly offered online. In 2019, approximately 877,000 people in New Jersey did not have access to either a desktop,

laptop or tablet computer.

Both immigrants and U.S. - born citizens face poor access to these digital tools, with 13.1% of immigrants in New Jersey lacking access to a computer or tablet, compared with 9.2% of U.S.-born individuals," the American Immigration Council wrote in its December 2022 report.

Numbers tell the story. According to the AIC, the share of individuals without access to a computer, laptop or tablet, by nativity, in 2019 was 608,000 or 9.2% of New Jersey's U.S. - born population. Foreign-born without access to a computer, laptop or tablet made up 269,000 or 13.1% of the state's population. The total for New Jersey was 877,000 or 10.1% of population.

Comparatively speaking, New Jersey had a smaller percentage of individuals without computer, laptop or tablet access than the national average. Nationally, the country had a total of 41,210,000 or 12.9% of population without access to computers, laptops or tablets. Across the nation, 34,123,000 were U.S. - born, while 7,088,000 were foreign born.

Those without broadband Internet in New Jersey made up 1,400,000 or 16.3% of the state population. Of these, 1,018,000 or 15.5% were U.S. born, and 382,000 or 18.9% were foreign born. Compared to the national average, New Jersey had a smaller population of individuals without broadband internet. The national total was 62,795,000 or 23.3% for U.S. born without broadband internet access. Foreign born, nationally, was 10,800,000 or 25%. The national total without broadband internet was 73,595,000 or 23.5% without broadband access.

What does the cited data mean?

The data cited shows that with the cessation of print editions by five newspapers the issues of Internet access; computer literacy; financial income; disability; proficiency in English; rural areas; and being of a certain racial or ethnic minority came to the fore. What follows is data from the American Community Survey as reported by the American Immigration Council in its December 2022 report.

As of 2019, New Jersey's population lacking broadband access stood at 206,000 or 42.6%. Of these, 136,000 or 43.4% were U.S. - born. Another 70,000 or 41.1% were foreign-born. Across the United States, 9,054,000 U.S. - born or 47.5% lacked broadband access. Another 2,031,000 or 44.7% of foreign-born, nationally lacked broadband access. Nationally, the total population lacking broadband access stood at 11,085,000 or 47%.

All of the above-mentioned were "people in households at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty Level," states the AIC December 2022 report.

In New Jersey, the total number of those aged over 60 without broadband internet access is 501,000 or 25.2%. These include both U.S. born and foreign born. This is much less than the national average of 32.6% lacking broadband internet access. The national total is 23,358,000.

Veterans made up 23.3% of those who did not have high speed internet. In New Jersey, this was 67,000 people. Nationally the figure was 4,494,000 or 27%.

People with disabilities lacking high speed internet made up 29.6% or 256,000 of the New Jersey population. Across the country, the number was 14,037,000 or 35.9%.

In New Jersey, there were 160,000 Limited English Proficiency speakers, or 31.7% of the population. Nationally, the percentage was much higher, 4,782,000 or 38.7%.

In New Jersey, 293,000 or 45% of U.S. born rural residents disproportionately lack broadband coverage, often due to inadequate structure networks. Of these, 28,000 or 50.2% of the population are foreign born residents.

In New Jersey, 18.8% of racial/ethnic minorities lack broadband coverage. This makes up 428,000 of U.S. born New Jersey residents. Foreign born make up another 314,000 or 19.5%. Total New Jersey racial/ethnic minorities population lacking broadband coverage is 742,000 or 19.1, both U.S. born and foreign born.

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REMEMBERING PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER

Plains, GA - The only man to ever reach a century of life after serving in the nation's highest office has finally met his end.

James Earl Carter, Jr., known to the world as Jimmy, died on Dec. 29 at age 100 after two years in hospice care due to failing health. He is survived by his four children: Jack, Chip, Jeff, and Amy; 11 grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife Rosalynn and one of their grandchildren.

Carter was born on October 1, 1924 in the very small town he will rest in: Plains, Georgia. While the town was small, his mother was a nurse, which gave him something that no prior president had, and that was being born in a hospital. All his predecessors did not have that luxury.

As a youth, he worked on his family's peanut farm. After graduating from high school, he would start his collegiate career at Georgia Southwestern College before heading over to what is now known as Georgia Tech. Eventually, he got his wish to join the Naval Academy, where he would meet his wife for decades, Rosalynn.

After bouncing around the country due to his Naval commitments, he and Rosalynn would end up back at his parents home, as peanut farmers.

Carter was firmly pro-civil rights, and began his political career in 1962, challenging for an open Senate seat. He eventually won the seat after another election was held due to fraud in the previous contest against opponent Homer Moore.

Over time, Carter would climb the political ladder in the Peach State, and was sworn into the Governor's office in January 1971. Then, with the turmoil of Richard Nixon's dirty deeds permeating Washington, DC, Carter had an opening to run for President. With Gerald Ford damaged by the association to his predecessor, Carter won the 1976 Presidential Election.

Although Carter gave the nation a reprieve from the scandalous prior leadership, his tenure as POTUS was riddling with problems. The Iran hostage cri-

sis, gas shortages, stagflation and more made him ripe for a challenge by California Governor Ronald Reagan, who trounced him in the 1980 Election. The only reason the defeat was not as hard was that four years later, his Vice President Walter Mondale only managed to win one state and DC against Reagan in 1984.

Carter may have been a one-and-done President, but his greatest work came after the White House, bringing a welcomed presence of diplomacy around the work. He brokered peace deals and inspired others to come to the table. In 2002, his efforts were powerful enough to earn the Nobel Peace Prize. Among his best collaborations was with Habitat for Humanity, providing housing for many needy people.

Statement from President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.

"America and the world lost an extraordinary leader, statesman, and humanitarian.

"Over six decades, we had the honor of calling Jimmy Carter a dear friend. But, what's extraordinary about Jimmy Carter, though, is that millions of people throughout America and the world who never met him thought of him as a dear friend as well.

"With his compassion and moral clarity, he worked to eradicate disease, forge peace, advance civil rights and human rights, promote free and fair elections, house the homeless, and always advocate for the least among us. He saved, lifted, and changed the lives of people all across the globe.

"He was a man of great character and courage, hope and optimism. We will always cherish seeing him and Rosalynn together. The love shared between Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter is the definition of partnership and their humble leadership is the definition of patriotism.

"We will miss them both dearly, but take solace knowing they are reunited once again and will remain forever in our hearts.

"To the entire Carter family, we send our gratitude for sharing



President Carter (right) with a young Senator Joe Biden (left)

them with America and the world. To their staff - from the earliest days to the final ones - we have no doubt that you will continue to do the good works that carry on their legacy.

"And to all of the young people in this nation and for anyone in search of what it means to live a life of purpose and meaning - the good life - study Jimmy Carter, a man of principle, faith, and humility. He showed that we are great nation because we are a good people - decent and honorable, courageous and compassionate, humble and strong.

"To honor a great American, I will be ordering an official state funeral to be held in Washington D.C. for James Earl Carter, Jr., 39th President of the United States, 76th Governor of Georgia, Lieutenant of the United States Navy, graduate of the United States Naval Academy, and favorite son of Plains, Georgia, who gave his full life in service to God and country."

Statement from President Donald J. Trump

"I just heard of the news about the passing of President Jimmy Carter. Those of us who have been fortunate to have served as President understand this is a very exclusive club, and only we can relate to the enormous responsibility of leading the Greatest Nation in History.

"The challenges Jimmy faced as President came at a pivotal time for our country and he did everything in his power to improve the lives of all Americans. For that, we all owe him a

debt of gratitude.

"Melania and I are thinking warmly of the Carter Family and their loved ones during this difficult time. We urge everyone to keep them in their hearts and prayers."

Statement from President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

"Hillary and I mourn the passing of President Jimmy Carter and give thanks for his long, good life. Guided by his faith, President Carter lived to serve others - until the very end.

"From his commitment to civil rights as a state senator and governor of Georgia; to his efforts as President to protect our natural resources in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, make energy conservation a national priority, return the Panama Canal to Panama, and secure peace between Egypt and Israel at Camp David; to his post-Presidential efforts at the Carter Center supporting honest elections, advancing peace, combating disease, and promoting democracy; to his and Rosalynn's devotion and hard work at Habitat for Humanity - he worked tirelessly for a better, fairer world.

"Hillary and I met President Carter in 1975 and were proud, early supporters of his Presidential campaign. I will always be proud to have presented the Medal of Freedom to him and Rosalynn in 1999, and to have worked with him in the years after he left the White House.

(Continued on page 13)

**BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE -
STATISTICS FOR NEW JERSEY
AND THE UNITED STATES**

(Cont. from page 4)

New Jersey State Policy Lab Data

According to data released by the Rutgers University New Jersey State Policy Lab, "Approximately 14% of Black and 13% of Hispanic population in households in New Jersey do not have access to the internet and a computer, compared to 9% of White households in New Jersey. The difference is more pronounced in the communities of Newark, Trenton, and Camden where the median income is \$41,335, \$39,718 and \$30,247 respectively (all less than 50% of the state median income). One quarter of all households in Newark (23%), Camden (23%), and Trenton (26%) lack access to the Internet. Given the importance of our cities, digital equity is of critical importance to the economic vitality of the state."

Education is one of the most important factors associated with access to Internet and digital technologies. Based upon American Community Services (ACS) data, amongst population 25 years and older more than a quarter (27%) of those with less than a high school degree does not have access to Internet, compared to smaller shares of those with a high school diploma (12%) or bachelor's degree or higher (14%)."

Employment status is also associated with internet access. According to the ACS data, 5% of the employed population does not have access to the internet, compared to 10% of the unemployed population. Importantly, 20% of civilians 16 years or older New Jerseyans who are not part of the workforce lack access to the internet."

According to "Interactive Map: Internet and Computer Access Across NJ Reflects a Digital Divide | NJ Spotlight News, dated December 11, 2018," "Residents of New Jersey's cities and poorer rural areas are much less likely to own a computer or smartphone or to have internet access at home than those in the more affluent suburbs, new data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows...."

That high-speed online access can be expensive and may hinge on one's ability to pay is troubling for low-income households, given the important role technology plays in many aspects of life.

"In today's modern economy, a smartphone has become necessary for most jobs, like a car is for jobs located away from public transportation," said Stephanie Hoopes, director of the United Way's ALICE Project. "Workers, especially low-wage employees, get their schedules on a smartphone, report to work using a smartphone, and even share client infor-

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mation via smartphone apps."

The same article makes two important points. First, libraries often limit their computer users to a set time (usually an hour or two per day). Second, Newark, New Jersey, has taken the lead worldwide in making free internet available.

"Although libraries offer computer and internet access, many limit the amount of time a person can spend at a desktop when they don't have enough computers for all to use.

Newark, where a third of households have no internet access at home, became the first city in New Jersey and only the fourth in the world to provide high-speed Wi-Fi "Link" kiosks throughout the city so that anyone can go online and charge a phone for free. The New York-based technology company Intersection has installed several dozen sidewalk kiosks throughout downtown Newark and in each ward at no charge to the city."

SPORTS WRAP



Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens

By William Hathaway, Jr.

On the local area sports scene, the 2nd Annual Brick City Classic was held in Newark at historic Weequahic High School. This year's basketball tournament featured 38 teams from NJ, NY, PA, MD and NC. Here are some of the highlights.

Dec. 19 action saw the Science High girls team beat Belleville 54-11, American History slip by Roselle 46-43 and Seton Hall Prep defeat host Weequahic 82-46. On Dec. 20, games saw Arts High, led by Harmoni Burgess and her 12 points, beat West Caldwell 56-18. West Caldwell got seven points from Nilajha Green.

In boys' competition, Columbia defeated Central 57-44. Leading Columbia was Brantley Jude with 20 points, while Central got 27 points and 6 rebounds from Malachi Thomas. Rounding out that night's games, Pingry beat Newark's East Side 60-51. Leading Pingry was Neel Sappidi with 18 points and 4 rebounds.

In the Dec. 20 games, the West Orange High girls getting by the University High girls 53-44. WOHS was led by Rhyann Watt's 15 points and 6 rebounds. UHS star girls Paradise Fisher had 14 points and 6 rebounds.

As the high school athletes took part in one event, the collegiate were on the hardwood at the Never Forget Classic, held on December 21st at the Prudential Center. In a great Jersey rivalry

game, Rutgers edged out Rival Princeton 83-82. Leading RU to the win was Dylan Harper with 22 points and 5 rebounds, while teammate Ace Bailey added 15 points. Leading Princeton was Xavier Lee with 21 points, 6 rebounds and 11 assists.

In other college basketball action, the Georgetown Hoyas added to Seton Hall's less than great season, taking down the Pirates 61-60 at the Prudential Center on December 22nd. Leading SHU in the loss was Isaiah Coleman with 25 points and 9 rebounds. Thomas Sober led Georgetown with 18 points.

There was even more b-ball action across the river at Madison Square Garden in the CBS Sports Classic. Ohio State thumped Kentucky 85-65. Leading Ohio State was Bruce Thornton with 30 points and John Mobley, Jr. with 15 points. OSU shot 65 percent from the field. Kentucky was led by Otega Oweh with 21 points and 4 rebounds, and Andrew Carr with 13 points.

In the second game of the doubleheader, North Carolina won a close one over UCLA 76-74. Leading North Carolina was RJ Davis with 17 points and Seth Trimble with 12 points. UCLA got 26 points from Tyler Bilo-deau.

In the NFL, the Jets took a brutal loss at the Buffalo Bills 40-14. As for the Giants, they got good news, bad news, and worse news. The good news is that they



will not go winless at home after a 45-33 win over the Colts. The bad news is that the win knocked them out of the #1 pick in the 2025 Draft. The worse news is that former running Saquon Bar-

kley went over 2,000 yards rushing for the Eagles.

Finally, the sports world said goodbye to legendary anchor Greg Gumbel, who died on Dec. 27 at the age of 78.

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TWO ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE STUDENTS NAMED TO ALL-ACADEMIC TEAM

Laela Lawal and Towela Mwale are Essex County College's 2025 representatives on the All USA-New Jersey Community College Academic Team. These excellent students are also in the running for the All USA National Academic Team.

Laela and Towela are members of the College's Alpha Theta Theta chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK). The All USA honor is offered through PTK. Laela is a Biology, Pe-Medicine major from Newark who has a perfect 4.0 grade point average. Towela, who lives in Oranges, is also a Biology, Pre-Medicine major who has earned a 3.70 average.

"I filled out my application for the award literally at the last minute. So, I was shocked and surprised to find out I received it. This honor is so unexpected, and I am so honored to receive it," said Laela. She is Vice President of Service in the Honor Society Chapter. Last year she was

Student Government Association Parliamentarian.

Towela admitted she hesitated in applying for the All-USA award. "But I decided to do it anyway. Of course, it certainly felt good when I got it," she added with a smile. "I made the right choice starting my higher education career at ECC. It's affordable and close to my home," Towela said, who is Secretary of the PTK Chapter.

"Both Laela and Towela are great examples of student leadership. They are active, not only in activities and events of Alpha Theta Theta, but other groups and organizations on campus. I see nothing but great things ahead for them," said Professor Lynn Wilson, co-advisor of the ECC PTK chapter.

"Laela and Towela are outstanding students. Congratulations to both of you. We are proud of you. And thank you to our PTK advisors," said ECC's President, Dr. Augustine A.



Laela Lawal



Towela Mwale

Boakye.

Laela's career goal is to come a neuroscientist. She is considering Johns Hopkins University and Rutgers University-New Brunswick after she graduates from ECC. "I've always enjoyed the sciences," she stated.

Her interest in the medical field is leading Towela toward

becoming a neurosurgeon. She said she is going through a list of colleges as transfer possibilities.

They will represent Essex County College in Trenton in May of 2025, where they will be recognized alongside other New Jersey community college nominees by State officials.



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 - Some baseball fans in "Local Talk Land" remembered when Rickey Henderson, upon his Dec. 20 death from pneumonia in a San Francisco hospital, had some of his final hurrahs here with the Newark Bears 2002-04.

Henderson, who died five days short of what would have been his 66th birthday, was already hailed as Major League Baseball's "King of Steal" when he joined the 2002 Atlantic League of Professional Baseball champion Bears. The 2009 MLB Hall of Famer was well on his way to a career record 1,406 stolen bases when he was dropped by the Boston Red Sox at the end of 2002. He, at 43, was the oldest American League player at that time.

Metropolitan New York City fans remembered Henderson's stints with the Yankees (1985-89) and the Mets (1999-2000) among the nine MLB teams he had played for in his 25-year career.

Henderson joined the AA-level independent Bears, while hoping to return to "The Bigs," while playing at Bears and Eagles Riverfront Stadium. He hit eight home runs and made 33 runs batted in during his 56 games here for a .339 batting average. He was named to the Atlantic League's all-star team and named is all-star game MVP after making an RBI double.

The Los Angeles Dodgers called up Henderson and bought

his contract for the rest of 2003. He added three more stolen bases, made 15 hits for a .208 batting average in those last 30 games. The Dodgers team was his last in MLB.

Back with the Bears for 2004, Henderson knocked in nine home runs and 31 RBI for a .281 batting average. Henderson, who never announced his retirement, helped the Golden Baseball League San Diego Surf Dawgs to the team and league's inaugural championship in 2005. He returned to the Mets as a batting coach and first base coach in 2006-07 for a player opening that never came.

The Chicago-born but mostly Oakland, Calif.-raised Henderson played four times for the now-Sacramento/Las Vegas team. The then-Oakland Athletics retired his No. 24 in 2009. Wife Pamela and three children are among his survivors.

Professor Charged With Sexual Contact And Harassment

Essex County Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens II and Essex County College Police Department Chief of Police Anthony Cromartie announced that Gnanaseharan Selliah of West Orange, was taken into custody and charged with criminal sexual contact and harassment.

The defendant, an adjunct professor at Essex County College in Newark, is accused of engaging in sexually inappropriate contact with an adult student in November 2024.

These allegations are merely accusations. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until they enter a guilty plea or are found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

IRVINGTON - A township woman is being held in Newark's Essex County Correctional Facility on murder charges since a Dec. 17 gunfire exchange with Newark police across its border with East Orange.

A Dec. 20 ECPO release said that A-Jahada Amirah Bostwick, 26, is being held on first-degree murder, first-degree attempted murder of a law enforcement officer and second-degree weapons offenses.

Newark Police Division officers said that they were near 433 North Fourth Ave. in its Roseville section that Tuesday when they heard gunshots and rushed to North Ninth Street and Springdale Avenue in East Orange's Ampere neighborhood. They were fired on their approach, starting the gunfire.

The county release did not say how the fight ended but they had apprehended Bostwick unharmed - and found Tyron T. Whitley, 38, of Red Bank, unresponsive. Whitley was rushed to University Hospital, where he died. The initial and later gunfire injured no one else.

Authorities have not said how Bostwick is tied to Whitley's death. Whitley's celebration of life service was set for 9-11 a.m. at the Shrewsbury Avenue AME Church, 258 Shrewsbury Ave. Red Bank.

EAST ORANGE - Yvonne C. Blake was eulogized at her private funeral service here at Calvary Baptist Church, followed by interment at Montclair's Rosedale Cemetery, Dec. 20. Mayor Theodore "Ted" Green, who also presented a City Council proclamation, former Fifth Ward Councilwoman and county commissioner Carol Clark and the Rev. Robert S. McCaskill, Sr., - Pastor of Bloomfield's Union Baptist Church, were among that morning's speakers.

Blake, who turned 76 Dec. 5, died Dec. 7, 2024. She was a former three-term Fourth Ward Councilwoman, an East Orange High School student and teacher and, at the time of her death, the city's Acting Health and Human Services Director - and Substance Abuse Division director.

Blake is considered an East Orange daughter although she was born in Georgetown, S.C. and having attained her health and physical education bachelor's degree at Raleigh, N.C.'s Shaw University. Her family of 10 moved here before her teenage years, allowing to become EOHS Class of 1966 - and develop a passion for teaching.

She returned to "The Home of the Panthers" after attaining a master's degree in education from Seton Hall University and

stayed for 28 years. "Coach Blake," when not as student activities assistant coordinator, led the Panthers cheerleading squad and their nationally recognized "rhythmic cheerleading" style.

Blake, on one hand, left the East Orange School District for 12 years at Newark Public Schools - where she was a teacher and health and physical education chairwoman at Central High School and Academy Principal of Weequahic High School's Allied Health Sciences Program. She, on the other hand, further served East Orange

The Hon. Blake was Fourth Ward Councilwoman 1984-86 and 1990-97, serving on the council's Health, Education & Welfare and Law & Education committees. Her peers had once named her their Council President. Outside of City Hall, she was Chief Operating Officer of Kaleidoscope HealthCare ambulance service of Jersey City.

Son Kevin Mickens, brother Larry Ali Blake, Jr. and sisters Prof. Sandra Blake and Dr. Shelly Blake are among her survivors. Brothers Johnny Rahim, Victor Joseph, Kenneth Edmond and Edwyn Tarreall Blake predeceased her.

ORANGE - Although the Orange Planning board approved SYMREC Orange JV LLC's preliminary and final site plan application for 205 S. Essex Ave in November and memorialized it at their Dec. 18 meeting, the redeveloper's plans remain not completely clear as of press time.

SYM Real Estate Corp., of Lakewood, was approved by the City Council on July 5, 2023 as the official redeveloper of the "Central Valley Redevelopment Area." That area includes the former Orange Memorial Hospital, the former Ippolito Funeral Home and adjacent properties.

SYMREC Orange JV LLC is partners with Orange Flats LLC, Orange NJ Holdings LLC, 256 Henry Holdings LLC (for the Ippolito property) and 184 Matthew Holding LLC in the purchase and redevelopment of the overall 8.25 acres covering nine lots bordered by South Essex Avenue, Henry Street, Ivy Court,

(Continued on page 13)

LOCAL TALK



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January 2025						
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BUSINESSMAN PLEADS GUILTY TO BRIBING FORMER NEWARK DEPUTY MAYOR

NEWARK - A Newark business owner admitted bribing a former city official in exchange for that official's assistance in acquiring and redeveloping Newark-owned properties, U.S. Attorney Philip R. Sellinger announced.

Frank Valvano, Jr., 57, of Florham Park, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Madeline Cox Arleo in Newark federal court to two counts of an indictment charging him with honest services fraud and bribery.

"As he admitted in court, Frank Valvano, Jr. provided cash, jewelry, and other benefits to a public official in exchange for the official's use of his influence to further Valvano's private business interests, defrauding the people of Newark of their right to the official's honest services," U.S. Attorney Sellinger said. "He corrupted the public official's independent judgment and violated the public trust for his own financial gain. Our office will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to make sure that the people of New Jersey are protected from public officials whose greed overrides their sworn duty to serve the people and from the individuals who bribe those officials."

According to documents filed in the case and statements made in court: Valvano admitted bribing Carmelo Garcia - who served as deputy mayor and director of the Newark Department of Economic and Housing Development (DEHD) and executive vice president and chief real estate officer of the Newark Community Economic Development

Corporation (NCEDC) - in exchange for Garcia's assistance with the acquisition and redevelopment of city-owned property.

From 2017 through April 2019, Valvano, Irwin Sablosky, and others provided significant monetary payments and other benefits to Garcia while he was serving as a high-level Newark official, and prior to that, as an executive officer of the NCEDC (now known as Invest Newark), in exchange for Garcia's use of his official positions and influence within the city of Newark and the NCEDC to advance real estate development matters of interest to Sablosky and Valvano.

These matters included obtaining preliminary designation letters for Sablosky and Valvano and securing Newark-approved redevelopment agreements (RDAs) that allowed them to purchase and acquire various Newark-owned properties for redevelopment, and to ensure that Garcia did not use his influence and authority to act against their interests.

In addition to cash, Valvano and Sablosky also gifted Garcia jewelry, including multiple high-end watches and chains, from their pawnbroker and jewelry business. They also paid for Garcia's expenses on a trip to Miami, Florida.

Phone records and text messages obtained by law enforcement show extensive communication between Garcia, Valvano, Sablosky, and others throughout this period of time, including text messages in which Garcia arranged to personally collect cash

provided by Valvano and Sablosky. In one instance, in June 2018, Valvano and Sablosky, through an intermediary, supplied Garcia, then the city's acting deputy mayor and director of the city's DEHD, \$25,000 in cash as part of the stream of bribes provided to Garcia.

The Travel Act charge in Count 19 of the indictment carries a maximum potential penalty of 5 years in prison. The bribery charge in Count 26 carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. All charges are punishable by a fine of \$250,000 or twice the amount of the pecuniary gain from the offense. Sentencing is scheduled for April 16, 2025.

Valvano originally was charged by indictment in October 2021 with Sablosky, 64, of Springfield, New Jersey, and Garcia, 49, of Hoboken. Garcia previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to defraud the city of Newark and the NCEDC of Garcia's honest services, honest services wire fraud, and receiving bribes in connection with the business of a federally funded local government and organization and is awaiting sentencing. Sablosky previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to honest services wire fraud and bribery and is awaiting sentencing.

The government is represented by Elaine K. Lou, Deputy Chief of the Criminal Division, and Katherine J. Calle and Edeli Rivera of the U.S. Attorney's Office's Special Prosecutions Division.

FATE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER

(Cont. from pg. 1)

Blackness" culture. CREED turned in its report later that year, to which Newark's BOE released three of the report's recommendations on fostering conversations on racial issues. Leon, since September 2023, has not released the report to the public to date, saying that it was an internal document.

The Newark Teachers Union sued NPS in November 2023 to release the report - but withdrew its two suits Nov. 6, 2024 after an undisclosed agreement with the district. Two former Global English teachers, on June 2023, filed discrimination and retaliation complaints against Global's administrators with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. The federal probe, started on Dec. 21, 2023, continues.

Leon said he would resolve the cited problems at the end of the Nov. 22, 2022 meetings and visited the high school the next day. D. Haynes, who was Board President for the 2022-23 school year, responded by seeking a meeting among Global's administrators, students and teachers.

The 2022-23 school board, however, passed on an ethics complaint against D. Haynes with the School Ethics Commission by Global Studies Parent Liaison Samantha

Heer. Heer claimed that D. Haynes was using her position to "pressure" Heer to set up that meeting and that the authority rests with the NBOE." The commission's decision on that complaint has not been publicly posted as of press time.

D. Haynes, at the Dec. 19 meeting, asked the board that they hire an outside attorney instead of Board General Counsel Barbara Liss. The board member raised the question on whether Liss was representing the BOE or the NPS administration.

"The Board has lost so many cases, been misdirected on so many occasions, while we're paying a lot of money," said D. Haynes. "There's no way I can believe that the board attorney we now have has our best interest when I was cross-examined by her for the (news) article that came out this morning - and not to mention the failure of my board colleagues on such a matter that was wrong."

Liss responded that she represents NPS, "which is governed by the BOE." She added that board members should call her if they have legal questions and "don't believe everything you read in the media."

NAACP-Newark Branch President and activist/board candidate Denise Cole were among those who supported D. Haynes and asked for the release of the CREED report and details of the board's complaint against

her to the state commission. Cole, however, were among the public audience who shouted out their demands for an independent counsel - which caused her to be surrounded by three NPS security guards.

Board President Hasani Council called on NPS Security Department Executive Director Levi A. Holmes, after several minutes of trying to bring the meeting back to order, to "please handle" the outbursting public. Haynes then asked Council to "ask them to step away from" Cole.

D. Haynes, who is a Newark City Hall employee, has two other daughters in the district. Should the state commission permit the board's proposed ouster, Haynes would be leaving with more than two years' left on her term, which is scheduled to end in May 2027. State law requires a special election to fill an elected official's unexpired term if there is more than 12 months left.

It is not known as of press time whether the board will receive the ethics commission's decision on D. Haynes will be posted in time for their January meetings. They have a Jan. 11 retreat, rescheduled from Jan. 18, at their 765 Broad St. headquarters, a Jan. 21 business meeting there and a Jan. 23 public meeting at the Sir Isaac Newton School, 150 Newton St.

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 10)

Matthew Street and Central Avenue. The property area includes the former hospital parking lot/Record Ambulance site to 205 So. Essex's north.

The partnership's current plan calls for redeveloping the 1928 former Mary Austen Hall nurses dormitory on the southeast corner of South Essex and Henry into apartment units and retaining the powerhouse at South Essex and Central Avenue. While those two buildings will be repurposed within national and state historic registers' stipulations, the other five buildings will be replaced by apartment buildings.

"Local Talk," however, has not found how or whether 205 Essex, a 1926 two-story professional/office building on a .21 acre lot, fits into the five parties' hospital redevelopment plan. Block 3702, Lot 20 has not been added - or at least not yet - to the other nine lots. The site plan application is subject to state Open Public Records Act regulation.

205 S. Essex currently houses E&M Pharmacy and two physicians' offices. E&M had been there since 2012 and Drs. Mehesh and Sanjay Patel going back to 2005. The property was last bought by Harsh 7 Naini, of Florham Park, May 14, 2009.

The building started out as a residence until the city planning board permitted its rezoning to office-medical/mental health use by 2000. It is to the understanding of "Local Talk" that the SYMREC and its four part-

ners' hospital redevelopment plan needs to pass N.J. State Historic Preservation Office Historic Sites Council and Orange Historic Preservation Commission muster.

WEST ORANGE - Town elders, on Dec. 15, announced that they have received a grant to improve the pedestrian streetscape between its Tory Corner with Main Street into Orange's High Street, starting in July 2025.

The project - pending final January-June public input and design settings - will standardize the seven-to-eight-foot wide sidewalks to federal ADA standards along the street's .4-mile length. Flashing pedestrian signs, "street trees, enhanced lighting" and trash cans will be installed along its five eastbound blocks and seven westbound blocks.

Curb bump outs will be installed at Washington's intersection with Columbia Street and Wellesley Avenue to "shorten the Washington Street crossing distance, improving pedestrian safety." This Tory Corner intersection is landmarked by Jimmy Buff's restaurant and the former Washington Ford building.

The federal Transportation Alternatives grant program is coming from USDOT's Surface Transportation Block Grant for small scale projects. The grant's value was not disclosed as of Dec. 16.

The project will improve what is also known as Essex County Road No. 671, con-

necting County Rd. No 659 - Main Street with CR No. 638 in Orange's High Street - which opens a question on Orange or Essex County's parts in the process.

This project includes three Washington intersections - at High, Burnside and Bradford streets - in Orange. It is not known whether that city's elders and residents were at Dec. 17's preliminary engineering public workshop here or were otherwise given the opportunity to comment.

A second and final workshop is to be announced before July's groundbreaking.

SOUTH ORANGE - Patrons were to be getting some - but not all - of the Baird Center's services here on Dec. 27 in the wake of a Dec. 23 water pipe leak.

The leak, which became evident from 5 Mead St.'s second floor 6 p.m. that Monday, forced the evacuation of the entire building. A remediation contractor was called in to complete the cleanup on or by Dec. 26.

There are Baird parts still closed off as of Dec. 27, starting with the South Orange Public Library's temporary space. Village Mayor Sheena Collum said that Thursday that the library's shelving and books had to be moved to allow the floor to dry. SOPL's website said that the 5 Mead St. space remains closed "until further notice."

SOPL patrons can use the institution's other temporary space at 298 Walton Ave.

(Continued on page 14)

CARTER (Cont. from pg. 6)

"Our prayers are with Jack, Chip, Jeff, Amy, and their families."

Statement from President Barack Obama

"For decades, you could walk into Maranatha Baptist Church in Plains, Georgia on some Sunday mornings and see hundreds of tourists from around the world crammed into the pews. And standing in front of them, asking with a wink if there were any visitors that morning, would be President Jimmy Carter - preparing to teach Sunday school, just like he had done for most of his adult life.

"Some who came to hear him speak were undoubtedly there because of what President Carter accomplished in his four years in the White House - the Camp David Accords he brokered that reshaped the Middle East; the work he did to diversify the federal judiciary, including nominating a pioneering

women's rights activist and lawyer named Ruth Bader Ginsburg to the federal bench; the environmental reforms he put in place, becoming one of the first leaders in the world to recognize the problem of climate change.

"Others were likely there because of what President Carter accomplished in the longest, and most impactful, post-presidency in American history - monitoring more than 100 elections around the world; helping virtually eliminate Guinea worm disease, an infection that had haunted Africa for centuries; becoming the only former president to earn a Nobel Peace Prize; and building or repairing thousands of homes in more than a dozen countries with his beloved Rosalynn as part of Habitat for Humanity.

"But I'm willing to bet that many people in that church on Sunday morning were there, at least in part, because of something more fundamental: President Carter's decency.

"Elected in the shadow of Watergate, Jimmy Carter prom-

ised voters that he would always tell the truth. And he did - advocating for the public good, consequences be damned. He believed some things were more important than reelection - things like integrity, respect, and compassion. Because Jimmy Carter believed, as deeply as he believed anything, that we are all created in God's image.

"Whenever I had a chance to spend time with President Carter, it was clear that he didn't just profess these values. He embodied them. And in doing so, he taught all of us what it means to live a life of grace, dignity, justice, and service. In his Nobel acceptance speech, President Carter said, 'God gives us the capacity for choice. We can choose to alleviate suffering. We can choose to work together for peace.' He made that choice again and again over the course of his 100 years, and the world is better for it.

"Maranatha Baptist Church will be a little quieter on Sundays, but President Carter will never be far away - buried

alongside Rosalynn next to a willow tree down the road, his memory calling all of us to heed our better angels. Michelle and I send our thoughts and prayers to the Carter family, and everyone who loved and learned from this remarkable man."

Statement from President George W. Bush

"Laura and I send our heartfelt condolences to Jack, Chip, Jeff, Amy, and the entire Carter family.

"James Earl Carter, Jr., was a man of deeply held convictions. He was loyal to his family, his community, and his country. President Carter dignified the office. And his efforts to leave behind a better world didn't end with the presidency. His work with Habitat for Humanity and the Carter Center set an example of service that will inspire Americans for generations.

"We join our fellow citizens in giving thanks for Jimmy Carter and in prayer for his family."

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

READ THIS ONE ONLY IF YA GROWN

Forgery is an art form in so many respects. That is what the true meaning of this story and this holiday has shown me. CHRISTMAS has come thus this week's draft submission was a given. Check out the Madonna by reading the draft below and visit Localtalkweekly.com to read the full story in the Entertainment section. Don't forget to follow my [msdialect](#) Instagram and [Andrea Dialect Lab](#) pages and Portal Sessions. Like, follow, and share!

FORGERY AND THE REPLICATED MADONNA

This Is The Authentic Image

Of The Madonna; Logically Her Image Will Foster Attempts To Be Replicated Once Again!

... TAKE 1: Last night's conversation with a friend triggered recall, and I remembered an occurrence that happened several months ago: I was walking with my Granny's son Phenomenal, who was about 6 at the time and as we were passing one of the Army recruitment offices, I came across one of my boys. He came out, and we stood there chatting for about an hour or so. By this time, Phenomenal had gotten quite comfortable with him. He'd gone into the office and got him a Bible, a pad & pencils, crayons, and a couple of other things.

So at that point, Phenomenal was sold! He was being deployed that day. So, there I was, dishing the ol' motherly advice and whatnot. As we were leaving, he walked us a ways and then doubled back. As we were midways crossings the intersection, Phenom stops short and starts calling back to Jah. With his hands waving, he shouts, "WAIT, WAIT, Mr. Jah! WAIT, Mr. Jah!" ("Jah responds, "What's up, Phenom?") With full force and one of the most serious faces I've ever seen, Phenomenal shouts back, "DON'T GET KILLED!"

I suppose that Jah had given Phenom something, and he wanted to give something back. I was able to use that this morning



Photo Courtesy Andrea Dialect

when lying in bed wrestling with myself. Amazingly, "not getting killed" as a defense is basically just being still and allowing myself to be engulfed by whatever comes. Never selling my soul, never trading my birthright to it, for it. Never denouncing purpose nor my GOD!

That is a powerful statement. But something showed up in my dream last night that will aid me in future fights even more so. In my dream, I was constantly being bombarded by the imagery of Africa. Images quite similar to those often shown by the media—the usual mayhem and scarcity. Then I began seeing flashes of a familiar image that now, like nothing else, can galvanize my God-given ability to fight.

DEATH GAZE

That image of the African woman and child is not new to me. It has been stuck in my head

since I was young. Throughout the years, I have seen several images of various women and children. Same scenario; just woman and child sitting in the middle of nowhere surrounded by dirt, dust, and nothingness with flies resting on them and flying all about. This was always shown in the media, and I was infuriated by it and ashamed of it.

But last night, that image became something different. When I saw it before, I saw it as a public display of lack or the galvanizing of it in one's head in support of it, all under the guise of help. Also, the father's absence was appalling to me. But the child became very significant last night.

There they are, in the middle of nothingness with flies all about. Do you know how much of a nuisance flies are? But this child is not crying. He has not succumbed to the pangs of hunger, and he is young. So, can you imagine the strength of his father? The father's strength is displayed in his seed. Nonetheless, the power is in the gaze. ...

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.

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 13)

Cardholders with ReBEL and/or BCCLS stickers can use libraries in neighboring towns.

The mayor added that Baird's elevator subcontractor was to diagnose and fix that lift also on that Thursday. The elevator had broken down for the second time in as many weeks. The center's HVAC compressor will also be replaced under warranty; there had been heat complaints in the previous 14 days.

The 1890's-era Baird Center had reopened in April after a \$15 million renovation and expansion. SOPL has split itself between Baird and the former Jersey Animal Coalition Center while a \$16 million project re-vamping and connecting its previous to buildings at 45-59 Scotland Rd.

MAPLEWOOD - At least one South Orange-Maplewood School District parent

wants the Board of Education, at the latter's Dec. 19 meeting, to stop searching for school bus companies through its third party process.

Nicole Josey spoke at that Thursday night session that her eight-year-old son has had five different drivers, three different aides, "two early pickups and multiple very late pickups, by the school bus company that has been contracted to serve OMSD's out-of-district students so far this school year.

Josey and her son's experience lows had been on Sept. 9, when he was left behind at school for an hour after dismissal and on Nov. 27, when he waited two hours for the bus home. The worst event was on Dec. 13, when he was attacked by an 18-year-old student while waiting for the bus.

"When I received that devastating phone call (Dec. 18), I left in the middle of my work conference and ran to my son's school," said Josey. "I've written countless emails, gone to meetings, taken off work to

transport my son - myself and my husband. The list goes on.

Josey, who is Co-President of the President's Council, said that she has volunteered on various PTAs and related groups the last seven years but feels that "this district is failing my family and families like mine." She said that she had heard similar experiences from other families and wants "another bus company" to replace the current outfit's "unprofessional" owner and staff.

The board, who has been working with SOMSD administration on reviving the district's courtesy bus program, did not immediately respond to Josey's plea.

BLOOMFIELD - Relatives and friends have been making funeral arrangements for Vilma Huamani-Centeno while authorities are investigating her fatal accident in Saddle Brook, since Dec. 16.

Huamani-Centeno, 65, said the Bergen
(Continued on page 15)

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 14)

County Prosecutor's Office, was struck by a car while trying to cross U.S. Rt. 46 East there at about 9:11 p.m. that Sunday. The incident happened from across the Walmart at 189 Rt. 46 West.

Responding Saddle Brook Police officers said they found Huamani-Centeno unresponsive and summoned local EMS. Medics rushed her to a local hospital - where she was declared dead on arrival.

SBPD, with assistance from their East Rutherford and Tenafly colleagues, closed Rt 46 E at its Fifth Avenue intersection while they and the BCPO Fatal Accident Investigation Unit conducted their field study.

The driver, who stayed at the scene and was cooperative, has not been charged as of press time. Huamani-Centeno's arrangements have not been announced as of press time.

MONTCLAIR - If you want your takeout food order from the township here to include utensils and/or condiments on or after March 1, you will have to ask for them.

The Township Council, in a unanimous Dec. 17 vote, passed their "Skip the Stuff" Ordinance No. 0-24-36. It follows Maplewood, Jersey City, Hoboken and 13 other New Jersey municipalities in the waste reduction move. They are usually linked to bans on Styrofoam and other plastic food containers and single-use bags - which Montclair passed in 2019. (Maplewood passed their law in 2020.)

Restaurants, take out services and other vendors tend to automatically include single-use plastic and/or non-plastic utilities, chopsticks, stirrers and condiment packets with customers' orders. If customers do not want them or decide not to use them, they either get stored in shelves - or thrown out with the garbage.

New Jersey's Clean Water Action has been promoting "Skip the Stuff" bills as a means to reduce the waste stream. Deputy Mayor Susan Shin Anderson, who introduced the ordinance in November, said her bill was based on other towns legislation. Montclair Business Improvement District Executive Director Abhishake Shaw, that Tuesday night, endorsed the measure, saying that "Skip the Stuff" will reduce business costs.

A statewide "Skip the Stuff" law, billed A5331 in 2022-23, has been circulating in the General Assembly the last three years. It would follow their May 1, 2022 single-use plastic bag ban.

GLEN RIDGE - Marie Ann Glancy, 94, who died in Clifton Dec. 17, may

have lived here with husband Anthony Robert Petillo to raise their two sons and a daughter - but her influence was long felt in East Orange, Bloomfield and Belleville.

Born Marie Ann Petillo in Belleville May 17, 1930, Glancy returned to Belleville High School as one of its physical education teachers. She left BHS to marry Petillo and moved to Glen Ridge to raise sons Robert Eugene and Eugene Edward Glancy and the future Joanne Decker.

Glancy, after raising her children, resumed teaching at East Orange High School as a health instructor and as a Bloomfield College adjunct professor. She retired from both to Clifton in 1990.

Three grandsons, three granddaughters and seven great-grandchildren are also among her survivors. Husband Anthony and son Robert predeceased her.

Bloomfield's O'Boyle Funeral Home, who posted Glancy's obituary Dec. 20, has not announced the date of her private service.

BELLEVILLE - Vincent D. Cerca is likely enjoying the holidays as a retired civilian since ending his 30-year career as a police officer here with a Dec. 3 ceremonial "walkout."

BPD Capt. Cerca walked out of the Public Safety Building at Noon that Tuesday to the applause of colleagues, relatives, friends and dignitaries. Cerca, who had just received congratulatory remarks, was then driven to his Valley home in the back of a marked squad car.

Cerca's being among "Belleville's Finest" coincided with working out of the 1994-built Public Safety Building his whole career. The modern structure is connected to the 1913-built Belleville Town Hall.

Cerca, who retired as Patrol A Commander, was promoted from sergeant in 2016.

His successor, likely to be promoted from the 110-member force, is to be announced.

NUTLEY - Bergen County law enforcers and prosecutors are asking the public's help in finding more information on a college professor that they had arrested on sexual assault charges here on Dec. 20.

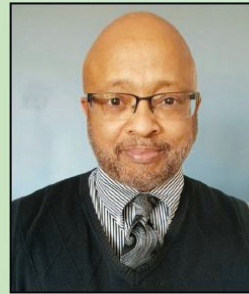
Prof. Zameer Buksh, who named Newark on his LinkedIn profile, was arrested by the Bergen County Sheriff's Office and Bergen Community College Police on charges of criminal sexual contact and harassment by offensive touching. He was released on summonses to return to Hackensack's N.J. Superior Court later this month.

BCC, as of Dec. 22, indefinitely sus-

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pending Buksh, who has been a six-year instructor on business administration and accounting. He is also a business law teacher at Eastwick College's Nutley campus; it is not known whether Eastwick has also suspended him.

Buksh is also a professor in St. Peter's University Graduate School of Management/MBA Program in Jersey City. He has been an adjunct business professor at Essex County College's Newark campus 2017-18.

BCC PD called in the county sheriff's officers after a student came into their Paramus main campus station on Dec. 11. She said that Baksh had kissed her on the cheek, made "inappropriate comments" and grabbed her genital area earlier that Wednesday.

Those who have information may contact BCS Det. Samantha Oh at (201) 336-4546.



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