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VOLUME 25 • ISSUE 13 \* JANUARY 30, 2025 - FEBRUARY 5, 2025

25¢

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

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

1576 Springfield Avenue • Maplewood, NJ 07040

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## LIFESTYLE MODIFICATIONS IN HYPERTENSION CONTROL

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# I.C.E. HITS NEWARK BUSINESS IN NATIONAL DETENTION SWEEP

Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, elected officials, and community organizers respond to the ICE raid at a press conference. Photo Courtesy Newark Press Office.

By Walter Elliott



NEWARK - If anyone believed that President Donald J. Trump's Second Administration would limit his post-Jan. 20 deportation of undocumented or illegal persons to those who have been convicted of violent crimes as a priority, there are workers, business owners and public officials here, since Jan. 23, who will dissuade you of that notion.

"They didn't have a court order or, I mean, I didn't even ask," said the owner of an Ironbound food wholesaler to a reporter the afternoon up to 12 U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents entered his premises unannounced at about 11:30 a.m. that Thursday.

A video later aired by Univision 41 showed the uniformed agents enter the Ocean Seafood Depot here at 331 Adams St. that Thursday morning. The agents, said the owner, then asked everyone there to show them their identification cards or papers.

(Continued on page 7)

## NEWARK OFFICER PARTNERS WITH STUDENTS TO HONOR DR. KING THROUGH ART AND ACTION

Photo Courtesy Richard Greco



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## DOOMSDAY CLOCK SET AT 89 SECONDS TO MIDNIGHT

Photos Courtesy Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists



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

**Hello Readers,**

President Trump is starting his term with a low approval rating. According to ABC News, his approval rating is 50% and his disapproval rating is 43%. I think the biggest voting block for disapproval is LGBTQ groups.

Trump has made a few announcements. He paused all federal grants and loans, which will impact many nonprofit organizations. However, a federal judge blocked his attempt. Meals on Wheels and a few other organizations sued the Trump administration and sought restraining orders.

The Trump administration

and ICE are cracking down on undocumented immigrants who have criminal records. Colombia originally did not allow planes to land with deported immigrants. However, when Trump threatened to hit them with tariffs, they changed their stance and took the migrants back. When President Biden said, "Don't" it fell on deaf ears, but when Trump speaks, it leads to action.

So far, six of Trump Cabinet picks were already confirmed. The likes of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. and Tulsi Gabbard will be difficult. Pete Hegseth got the Secretary of Defense job after Vice President JD Vance broke a 50-50 tie.

Per the Center for Presidential Transition: "Once nominations are made and a new Senate session begins, the next step in the process is for nominees to undergo additional vetting, background checks and paperwork

before the relevant committees of jurisdiction schedule formal confirmation hearings. Traditionally, a new Congress convenes around Jan. 3, with confirmation hearings for nominees starting in the week or two after the commencement of the new session. Trump in his first term and George W. Bush had the most hearings prior to Inauguration Day with 12 hearings. They were followed closely by Obama with 11 nominee hearings before Jan.20."

On January 28th, the White House revealed that some of the drones seen flying over New Jersey and other parts of the country in November were authorized to be flown by the Federal Aviation Administration. However, they have not revealed why the FAA was flying drones over New Jersey, New York and other parts of the country. At least it is clear that no other country was spying on us.

Last week's snow and cold impacted business in our area, the northeast and many parts of the United States. However, it is good that the weather is a little better for this coming week.

There is rain in the Los Angeles area, which helped in fighting the fires. However, there will be muddy roads in some areas. Many of the residents do not have fire insurance, so it will be very difficult for those homeowners to protect their homes. However, the local and federal government is aware of the problems, and may help the communities to make it even better. Trump and Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass had a spirited conversation, which led to people being able to remove the debris.

*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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## The Doctor Is In



OP-ED By Dr. Adil Manzoor

### The Role of Lifestyle Modifications in Hypertension Control

I know we doctors never fail to mention the risk of hypertension (high blood pressure) to adults, but I still don't think that does enough justice to the condition. Hypertension affects close to 120 million adults in the United States. The total adult population in the country is around 260 million, which means hypertension affects around half the adults in the country. That is bonkers. Like, unheard of in the history of health conditions.

With a condition this prevalent, you would expect that a lot of adults would have detailed information about its management and control. You will be wrong. For many, the treatment of hypertension is medications and just medications. I cannot deny the benefits of medications in managing hypertension, but I must state clearly that they are only a part of managing hypertension, you still need lifestyle modifications for comprehensive control of hypertension.

Of course, some know that you should be physically active and not eat salty and junk foods, but those are only a few of the many lifestyle modifications for hypertension control. Considering the devastating effects hypertension can have - from heart failure to stroke to kidney disease - and the sheer number of people who have it, it is essential to consider the lifestyle modifications necessary for the full management of hypertension.

Number one - Get active. Yes, I know again that this is

advice that we doctors never fail to mention, but trust me, it is perhaps the most important lifestyle health advice anyone can give. The benefits of physical activity extend far beyond hypertension, as it positively influences virtually every system in the body, but I will focus on just hypertension.

Physical activity makes the heart stronger. A stronger heart is more efficient in pumping blood, which reduces the force and pressure on the blood vessels. Eventually, the blood pressure falls. And, according to scientific studies, reducing systolic blood pressure by 5 mmHg can reduce stroke-related deaths by 14% and death from coronary artery disease by 9%. Those are mighty numbers for a single lifestyle modification.

According to the CDC, regular physical activity is 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise a week. If you are unsure of what constitutes moderate and vigorous exercise, use this rule of thumb. Any activity that causes your heart rate to increase but you can still talk just fine is moderate-intensity. On the other hand, vigorous-intensity exercise increases the heart rate and you can't say more than a few words before having to take a break.

The second lifestyle modification I'd touch on is to quit smoking and limit drinking. Both of these activities can increase blood pressure and also interfere with the normal functioning of blood pressure medications. Smoking in particular can damage the blood vessel and raise the risk of virtually all of the common heart conditions. Don't smoke at all.

With drinking, there is a greater leeway, or should I say there used to be. In the past, doctors could forgive one standard drink a day for women and two for men, with the limit in a week being 14. However, newer evidence totally discourages drinking entirely, especially in women, because of the risk of cancer.

I'd say this, though, if you can avoid drinking, please do. If not, ensure you are responsible for it. With smoking, however, you need to totally avoid it - no compromise here.

Moving on to the third. Before I proceed, please note that



the modifications on this list are not entirely in the order of importance. The exact impact these modifications have on heart disease is difficult to estimate, so for all I know, the number 3 modification can be more important to you than the number 2. So, what's number 3? It is your weight.

Your weight is related to your blood pressure. In men, weight variation over 2 pounds a year is associated with a 5.5 mmHg increase in systolic BP. Systolic blood pressure is denoted by the first figure in the blood pressure reading. In women, the figure stands at a 3.3 mmHg increase in systolic BP. If you haven't already, I want you to do a quick mental math of how much your BP can actually increase over a year. You see now how important weight management is?

This opens the door to the fourth point - diet. Your diet plays an important role in your weight. You will want to cut off fatty foods, sugary foods, and junk foods generally from your diet in favor of more plant-based and fiber-rich foods. Don't be stingy with your fruits, too. Diet can also modify various health parameters that can improve overall heart health. A healthier heart is correlated with lower blood pressure. Of course, reduce your sodium intake, as well.

Other useful lifestyle modifications are stress management, quality sleep, and avoiding cocaine and other sympathomimetic agents. All of these lifestyle modifications alone can greatly increase the chances of preventing hypertension altogether, but they can also help control hypertension among people who al-

ready have it. Remember to carry your doctor along if you have to make any drastic changes to your diet or lifestyle. Stay safe.

*This article was written by Dr. Adil Manzoor, DO, a Board-Certified Internist; Board certified Pediatrician who works as a Hospitalist and Emergency Room Physician. He is also the current President of Garden State Street Medicine, a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to provide free preventive and acute urgent care services for the homeless.*

*He is also the co-founder of his own unique medical practice, Mobile Medicine NJ; House Call Doctors. He is also currently pursuing an Executive MBA and a Master's of Science in Healthcare Leadership at Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management and the Weill Cornell Graduate School of Medical Sciences.*

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# NEWARK OFFICER PARTNERS WITH STUDENTS TO HONOR DR. KING THROUGH ART AND ACTION

Photos Courtesy  
Richard Greco



**NEWARK, N.J - January 22, 2025:** In a powerful tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy, Newark Public Safety's 9th/Metro Precinct Community Service Officer K. Felder partnered with students at Great Oaks Legacy Charter School's Downtown Elementary School on Friday, January 17, to lead a collaborative "Peace Tree" project. The event combined hands-on creativity with meaningful lessons about equality and unity, bringing Dr. King's legacy to life for young scholars.

The event was facilitated through the efforts of Ebony Howard, Great Oaks Legacy Charter School (GOLCS) Special Projects Coordinator, who played a key role in organizing the day's activities, and Brianna Mayers, Downtown Elementary School Director, who supported the coordination and ensured the event's success. Together with Officer Felder, they created a welcoming and impactful experience for students that brought Dr. King's teachings to life.

At the heart of the celebration was the creation of Peace Tree "leaves", which were colorful handprints crafted by students. Each handprint carried the phrase "I have a dream..." and showcased the children's personal hopes for the future. The Peace Tree will be displayed at the 9th/Metro Precinct, symbolizing the shared commitment between Great Oaks and local law enforcement to create and support a community rooted in empathy and respect.

"As a community service officer,

my goal is to support all ages and demographics within our community," said Officer Felder. "I've always felt welcomed by the staff at Great Oaks, and I wanted to return that kindness. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, I brought treats for the team and students while talking about the importance of equality. Dr. King's legacy reminds us to treat everyone with fairness and respect, no matter their background or identity. Let's continue to uplift each other and work together to create a community where everyone feels valued."

Officer Felder also led students in a brief "Equality Egg" experiment - demonstrating that while brown and white eggs look different, they are the same inside - to illustrate Dr. King's message that external differences do not define our inherent worth.

"It was so educational, and the scholars really enjoyed having a police officer in the classroom," said Ms. Parada, a Kindergarten Teacher at Downtown Elementary School. "We look forward to more events in the future."

This event underscores the strong partnership between Great Oaks Legacy Charter School and Newark's Department of Public Safety in creating meaningful opportunities for community engagement. By blending classroom learning with real-world examples of Dr. King's values, Officer Felder and the Great Oaks team aim to inspire students to dream big and make a difference in their communities.



# DOOMSDAY CLOCK SET AT 89 SECONDS TO MIDNIGHT

Photos Courtesy  
Bulletin of the  
Atomic Scientists



**WASHINGTON, D.C.** - January 28, 2025 - The DDoomsday Clock was set at 89 seconds to midnight, the closest the Clock has ever been to midnight in its 78-year history. The 2025 Clock time signals that the world is on a course of unprecedented risk, and that continuing on the current path is a form of madness. The United States, China, and Russia have the prime responsibility to pull the world back from the brink. The world depends on immediate action.

The DDoomsday Clock's time is set by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Science and Security Board (SASB) in consultation with its Board of Sponsors, which includes nine Nobel Laureates. Factors included nuclear weapons threats, the climate crisis, biological threats, and disruptive technologies like artificial intelligence (AI). The Clock's time changed most recently in January 2023, when the DDoomsday Clock was set at 90 seconds to midnight.

Daniel Holz, PhD, SASB Chair, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and professor at the University of Chicago said: "The purpose of the DDoomsday Clock is to start a global conversation about the very real existential threats that keep the world's top scientists awake at night. National leaders must commence discussions about these global risks before it's too late. Reflecting on these life-and-death issues and starting a dialogue are the first steps to turning back the Clock and moving away from midnight."

The 2025 DDoomsday Clock statement warns: "In 2024, humanity edged ever closer to catastrophe. Trends that have deeply concerned the Science and Security Board continued, and despite unmistakable signs of danger, national leaders and their societies have failed to do what is needed to change course. Consequently, we now move the DDoomsday Clock from 90 seconds to 89 seconds to midnight - the closest it has ever been to catastrophe. Our fervent hope is that leaders will recognize the world's existential predicament and take bold action to reduce the threats posed by nuclear weapons, climate change, and the potential misuse of biological science and a variety of emerging technologies.

Juan Manuel Santos, Chair of The Elders, former President of Colombia, and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, who participated in the 2025 DDoomsday Clock announcement, said: "The DDoomsday Clock is moving at a moment of profound global instability and geopolitical tension. As the hands of the clock get ever closer to midnight, we make an impassioned plea to all leaders: now is the time to act together! The existential threats we face can only be addressed through bold leadership and partnership on a global scale. Cada segundo cuenta. Every second counts."

## ***The Nuclear Outlook: Extremely Dangerous Trends Continue***

Manpreet Sethi, PhD, SASB

Member, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and distinguished fellow at the Centre for Air Power Studies in New Delhi and Senior Research Adviser, Asia Pacific Leadership Network, said: "The risk of nuclear use continues to grow due to capabilities building up and treaties breaking down. Russia has suspended compliance with the New START treaty and withdrawn ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. China is rapidly increasing its nuclear arsenal. And, the US has abdicated its role as a voice of caution. It seems inclined to expand its nuclear arsenal and adopt a posture that reinforces the belief that 'limited' use of nuclear weapons can be managed. Such misplaced confidence could have us stumble into a nuclear war."

## ***Disruptive Technologies To Watch In 2025***

Herb Lin, ScD, SASB Member, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and senior research scholar for cyber policy and security at the Center for International Security and Cooperation and Hank J. Holland Fellow in Cyber Policy and Security at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, said: "Proposals to integrate artificial intelligence into weapons of war raise questions about the extent to which machines will be allowed to make or support military decisions - even when such decisions could kill on a vast scale. Even if a human always make the final decision on the use of nuclear

weapons, how and when, if at all, should AI be used to support such decision making? How should we think about lethal autonomous weapons, which identify and destroy targets without human intervention? Meanwhile, ever-increasing dysfunction in the world's information ecosystem disrupts society's capacity to address difficult challenges, and AI has great potential to accelerate the chaos and disorder."

## ***Climate Change: Devastating Impacts And Insufficient Progress***

Robert Socolow, PhD, SASB Member, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and professor emeritus in the Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at Princeton University, said: "2024 was the hottest year on record. Extreme weather and other climate events - floods, tropical cyclones, extreme heat, drought, and wildfires - 4 devastated societies, rich and poor, as well as ecosystems around the world. Yet the global greenhouse gas emissions that drive climate change continued to rise. And investments to adapt to climate change and cut fossil fuel emissions were way below what is needed to avoid the worst impacts. There were formidable policy headwinds globally: particularly worrisome, electoral campaigns showed climate change to be a low priority in the United States and many other countries."

(Continued on page 8)

ICE (Cont. from page 1)

Some of the agents then entered the wholesaler's back offices and break rooms, wanting documentation from eight people and taking fingerprints on-site.

They then detained three people. Two, who were unable to provide documentation, were issued Notices To Appear at ICE's Newark office in the Peter Rodino Federal Building at 970 Broad St.

"A couple of the guys couldn't show their identification," added the owner. "Twenty-six years in the business - I've never seen anything like it."

The owner said that his manager tried to show the agents his military veterans identification card - but they refused. A video showed agents arresting the man - a U.S. citizen - outside the premises and taking him most likely to ICE's privately run Elizabeth Contract Facility at 625 Evans St.

Trump, from his third Presidential campaign and into his 12:10 p.m. Jan. 20 inauguration address, had pledged to immediately halt all illegal entry and "begin returning the millions and millions of criminal aliens back to the places to which they came." He would reinstate his Remain in Mexico policy from his first administration, "end the policy of catch and release and send troops to the southern border to repel the disastrous invasion of our country."

President Trump would later sign several executive orders that Monday afternoon, from among a wide-ranging blizzard of some 1,600, pertaining to unauthorized and legal immigration.

Although most of the orders had a Jan. 27 effectiveness date, there were reports as early as Jan. 21 that the illegals who were convicted of a crime were identified from among the 122 federal prisons and were being processed for deportation.

They were flown "back home" on military aircraft instead of the chartered commercial airliners used by the Joseph Biden and Barack Obama administrations. One video released on Jan. 27 showed chained men walking single file through the rear cargo doors of an olive drab USAF Lockheed C5A Galaxy.

That "convicts only" presumption was shaken in Newark that Thursday lunch hour. The anger was clear from Mayor Ras Baraka on two occasions plus U.S. Senators Cory A. Booker and Andy Kim, Congresswomen Mikie Sherrill and LaMonica McIver and other elected officials.

What was particularly upsetting was that the U.S. citizen manager is still being detained in Elizabeth as of press time.

"ICE agents invaded a local establishment, detaining undocumented residents as well as citizens, without producing a warrant," said the mayor late Jan. 23. "One of the detainees is a U.S. military veteran who

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suffered the indignity of having the legitimacy of having his military documentation questioned. This egregious act is in violation of the U.S. Constitution Fourth Amendment, which guarantees 'right of the people (to) be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures.'

"Newark will not stand idly by while people are being unlawfully terrorized," said Baraka, who added in his 11:30 a.m. Jan. 24 City Hall press conference, "The problem is that none of these people were rapists, or

murderers or criminals. ICE went in there without a warrant. Today, they'll go into a store and violate people's rights without a warrant and pull you out; tomorrow, they'll come into your house."

An ICE spokesman said that its agents, "may encounter U.S. citizens while conducting field work and may request identification to establish a person's identity as was the case during a targeted enforcement operation at a worksite today (Jan. 23) in Newark."

The action-reaction here in Newark is be-  
*(Continued on page 12)*

# SPORTS WRAP

By William Hathaway, Jr.

The Seton Hall women's basketball team continued their winning ways this week at a sold out Walsh Gym with a conference win over rival St. John's 57-48. Faith Masonius led SHU with 16 points and 8 rebounds. Savannah Catalon gave The Hall 12 points in her return after being out due to injury.

Freshman Jada Eads added 11 points. St. John's got 14 points on 7-14 shooting from Bernyah Mayo. While the Red Storm outrebounded the home team 37-27, the Pirates forced several turnovers on their way to the win.

This season, Masonius has been honored by the Big East six times for Conference weekly awards, while Eads was named on the Big East honor roll for another week.

On the other hand, the men's basketball team at Seton Hall has struggled all season. They took a tough loss on the road this past Saturday at Creighton 79-54. Seton Hall started off the game on all cylinders, but Creighton turned the tide during their pink out game. SHU got 12 points from Prince Aligbe and 10 points from Garwey Dual. The Pirates only shot 42 percent from the field in the loss.

In football, we now have the matchup for Super Bowl LIX, which will be a rematch from LVII. First, the Philadelphia Eagles defeated the Washington Commanders 55-23 to win the NFC Championship Game. For the third year in a row, the AFC Championship was won by the Kansas City Chiefs, who defeated the Buffalo Bills 32-29. Will the Chiefs become the first NFL team to win three Super Bowls in a row, or will former NY Giants running back Saquon Barkley cap off a 2,000 rushing season with a ring? Meanwhile, the New York Jets hired former Detroit Lions defensive coordinator Aaron Glenn as their new head coach. Glenn played several seasons for the Jets as their star cornerback.

In high school basketball, the annual Essex County Tournament will be starting this weekend. Seton Hall Prep sits as the #1 seed, Payne Tech will be the 3rd seed, East Orange will be the 6th seed, Newark Tech will be the 8th seed, and Orange will be 17th seed. The top 8 will receive a bye and will play Saturday. The others will play on Thursday. The winners advance to the traditional Essex County Tournament with the top 8, while the losers will go to the NIT Division of the tournament.

Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens



## New York Red Bulls II Acquire Defender Caio Ramalho Leite on Loan from Sfera Sociedade Anonima de Futebol

**HARRISON, N.J. (January 28, 2025)** - New York Red Bulls II have signed Brazilian defender Caio Ramalho Leite to a one-year loan from Sfera Sociedade Anonima de Futebol pending visa and registration approval, the club announced.

"Caio is a young, talented defender that has experience at a variety of levels" said Head Coach Ibrahim Sekagya "We are looking forward to adding Caio to the roster, and are excited to get him started with the club this season"

The 18-year-old defender most recently played with Brazilian side Sfera Sociedade Anonima de Futebol U-20's in

the 2024 Copa Sao Paulo de Futebol Junior, where he made five appearances, logging a total of 423 minutes played. He made his debut with the club on January 4, 2024, in a 1-0 win over Botafogo SP U-20.

Prior to Sfera Sociedade Anonima de Futebol, he featured for Serie A side Torino's U-18's in the 2024 Viareggio Cup, where the team advanced to the quarterfinals of the competition.

Leite logged two starts for a total of 170 minutes played, including a start in their 3-0 win over Lucchese Primavera U-19's in the quarterfinals.

### DOOMSDAY (Cont. from page 6)

#### Daunting Biological Threats

Suzet McKinney, DrPH, SASB Member, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, and principal and director of Life Sciences for Sterling Bay, said: "Infectious diseases are a constant threat to mankind, but unfortunately the collective experience with COVID-19 has increased skepticism about the recommendations of public health officials, especially the use of medical countermeasures to mitigate disease spread. Concern is also growing over the proliferation of pathogen laboratories around the world, as well as nefariously using AI in biological research and development. Collectively, leaders must establish knowl-

edgeable authorities to provide trustworthy information, increase reporting of changing disease patterns as the climate changes, decrease the number of high-containment laboratories, and curtail active biological weapons programs."

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was founded in 1945 by Albert Einstein, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and University of Chicago scientists who helped develop the first atomic weapons in the Manhattan Project. The Bulletin created the Doomsday Clock two years later to convey man-made threats to human existence and the planet. The Clock has become a universally recognized indicator of the world's vulnerability to global catastrophe.



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## ELECTED OFFICIALS SPEAK OUT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM IN SOUTH ORANGE

### Statement from Speaker Coughlin on Anti-Semitic Graffiti in South Orange

TRENTON - Speaker Craig J. Coughlin issued the following statement on the anti-Semitic graffiti defacing Oheb Shalom Synagogue:

“This kind of behavior is not only an attack on a religious community, but an assault on the values of respect, kindness, and tolerance that we hold close here in New Jersey.

“The fact that this incident occurred while students were attending school makes it even more egregious. No one, anywhere, should ever face hate or intimidation because of their faith or their identity, especially in places where they come to learn, grow, and feel safe.

“We cannot let intolerance take root here. I encourage everyone in New Jersey to reject hate and division, embracing in-

stead understanding, peace, and unity.”

### Senator McKeon Condemns Antisemitic Acts Targeting Congregation Oheb Shalom in South Orange

TRENTON - Senator John McKeon (D-Essex/Passaic) released the following statement in response to an antisemitic incident that occurred at Congregation Oheb Shalom in South Orange on Sunday, January 26.

“These hateful actions, including protestors shouting antisemitic chants and vandalizing synagogue property, have no place in New Jersey. In these challenging times, we cannot allow intolerance to take root, and we must boldly call it out whenever it surfaces. Every protest should remain peaceful and respectful, upholding the dignity of all people.

“Unfortunately, that is not

what occurred at Congregation Oheb Shalom this past weekend. As local leaders, we must unite in condemning these acts of hate and take concrete steps to safeguard the diverse, inclusive communities we cherish. I stand unwaveringly in solidarity with the Jewish community and strongly reject any form of discrimination.”

### Statement from Assemblywoman Tucker on Anti-Semitic Acts of Vandalism at South Orange Synagogue

TRENTON - Assemblywoman Cleopatra Tucker (D-Essex, Union) offered the following statement regarding the anti-Semitic acts of vandalism that occurred this weekend at Oheb Shalom Synagogue in South Orange:

“The actions of the protestors who defaced the sidewalk outside the Oheb Shalom Synagogue this weekend with hateful

anti-Semitic graffiti and shouted offensive and threatening remarks are absolutely reprehensible.

“Religious institutions should always be places of sanctuary, peace, and mutual respect. No person should fear intimidation walking into a house of worship. No child should be hesitant to walk into an educational setting because of their religious views. Regardless of political views, resorting to violence, hate speech, and intimidation only serves to deepen divisions and has no place in our community.

“At a time of so much division throughout the world, let’s instead remember that our neighbors deserve dignity and respect. New Jersey prides itself on its diversity and it’s more important than ever to lean into our differences, lean into our communities, and lean into peace.”



**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** - Four city teenagers, accused of kidnapping and trying to sexually assault another teen at a Hudson County hotel Dec. 29, have been spending the new year in that county's jail in South Kearny.

Newark police officers said that they got a call that Sunday morning that a 13-year-old girl was being held against her will in a Passaic Avenue hotel in Harrison. The girl, who was soon located by Newark and Harrison police, said that she was locked in a room by several acquaintances who had handguns.

NPD, HPD and the Hudson County Prosecutor's Office Special Victims Unit executed a search warrant on the hotel room at 100 Passaic Ave. - where they found the five youths, two handguns and hollow point bullets.

Kyle Green and Travin McCullough, both 18, have each been charged with endangering the welfare of a minor, possession of a weapon for an unlawful purpose, unlawful possession thereof and possession of prohibited devices - hollow point bullets.

Two 15-year-old girls are in juvenile detention. They have been both charged as juveniles for kidnapping, conspiracy thereof, simple assault, attempted sexual assault, unlawful possession of a weapon and possession of hollow point bullets. One girl was given a second set of attempted sexual assault and weapons possession charges.

100 Passaic Ave. is the address of the 2005-built Hampton Inn and Riverwalk lot. The lot, before the hotel's construction, was where three scenes of "The Sopranos" were shot.

**IRVINGTON** - At least one unnamed township man may be breathing easier since a street gang member had confessed in a Newark federal courtroom Jan.17 that he had ordered his murder.

Jason "Freak" Franklin, 41, said Acting U.S. Attorney-New Jersey District Vika Khanna that Friday, had pleaded guilty before federal district Judge Susan D. Wigenton to a Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization conspiracy charge going back to March 20, 2019.

Franklin, while in Irvington that 2019 date, directed other members of the Rollin 60s Neighborhood Crips "to kill an individual in retaliation for the murder of a Rollin' 60s member. He had also confessed that he "instructed associates to retaliate against rival gang members April 5, 2021, resulting in the shooting that left the victim with serious injuries."

Franklin, said Khanna, held a leadership role in the gang from 2015 through Sept. 22, 2022 and is responsible for ordering members and associates to commit violent acts. The Rollin' 60s Crips are deemed as a criminal enterprise "responsible for acts of violence and distribution of controlled dangerous substances in New Jersey and elsewhere."

He is set to go before Judge Wigerton at 11 a.m. May 21, where he may be sentenced for up to \$250,000 in fines and life imprisonment.

Khanna thanked 18 federal, state, county and municipal law enforcement agencies for their assistance. They include Irvington Public Safety Director Tracy Bowers, Newark Public Safety Director Eugene Miranda, Sr., East Orange Police Chief Phyllis Bindi, Bloomfield Public Safety Director Samuel DeMaio, ECPO Acting Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II, Essex County Sheriff Amir Jones and New Jersey State Police Col. Patrick Callahan.

Khanna is standing in for Philip Sellinger, who resigned Jan. 8 to make way for President

Donald J. Trump and the U.S. Attorney General's appointed successor.

**EAST ORANGE** - City and county fire investigators are searching for the cause of a Jan. 14 fire that heavily damaged two Third Ward houses and a pair of garages. The three-alarm blaze at 176 and 180 Oak St. needed mutual aid and station support from six neighboring fire departments and displaced four residents.

The first East Orange Fire Department crews, who responded to an alarm at 4:27 p.m. that Tuesday, found "heavy flames engulfing" the two-story house" The incident commander promptly called a second "all hands" alarm and a third for mutual aid. The four residents escaped unharmed.

Firefighters sought to contain the fire over the next 38 minutes despite the flames spreading to 180 Oak and two garages. Mutual aid from Newark, Orange and Bloomfield came to the scene. Units from Irvington, West Orange and Montclair covered the city's fire stations.

The fire was brought under control at 5:05 p.m. Both 176 and 180 Oak were built on identical .094-acre lots in 1930.

**ORANGE** - City, county and state fire investigators are probing the causes of two Jan. 24 predawn fires that damaged two residences and displaced 30 people.

At least five people had to be evacuated from the roof of a two-story mixed use building at 103 S. Center St. between 1:41 and 5:30 a.m. that Friday. Fire Chief Derrick Brown told News 12 and FreedomNewsTV that the first units saw the stranded residents and flames coming from the cockloft space between the roof and the second floor ceiling.

Brown added that Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Pastor Fr. Bernard Mary, neighbors and bystanders had already erected their own ladders and were helping in the evacuation. The chief said that the 20-degree weather and evacuating 103 S. Center's basement prolonged containment.

Mutual aid from the three-alarm fire included Montclair Ladder Company Truck No. 1's crew and West Orange firefighters. The displaced residents were

taken overnight to Our Lady of the Valley Church School building at 518 Valley St.

The 25 people who were evacuated from 138 North Day St. were there to greet them. Brown said his firefighters had responded to a two-alarm fire from that 2.5-story house at 1:05 a.m.

103 S. Center, built in 1908, was home to the HiTech Driving School and, in the 1970s, the Orange High School Key Club. 138 North Day was built in 1910. Brown's first anniversary as Orange's first African American fire chief was on Jan. 26.

**WEST ORANGE** - The Township Council may vote on hiring an outside lawyer concerning "the removal with cause of a municipal officer" as early as its Jan. 28 meeting.

The council, in a Jan. 14 special virtual meeting, voted to put the said resolution for introduction "at their next meeting agenda." West Orange's elders had discussed the matter at their Jan. 6 regular session.

The Jan. 28 meeting agenda had two resolutions to "approve a new township attorney." R 84-25 is to appoint Gregg F. Paster, of Ft. Lee, and 65-25 for "Friend & Wenzel, LLC," of Clifton.

What prompted the council's desire to go outside its law department had to do with Mark Moon, Esq. and longtime Township Attorney Richard D. Trenk. Moon, who had been advising the council, practices with the Trenk, Isabel, Siddiqi & Shahdanian P.C. firm, of Livingston.

Public speaker and attorney Micaela Bennett told the officials that Moon's advising on Trenk's status constituted a conflict of interest. Council President Joe Krakoviak said that he and his colleagues Jan. 6 had been looking at hiring Stephen Trimboli, Esq. to handle the matter and that Trimboli's maximum compensation has been set at \$117,499.

Trenk had been the township's top lawyer for 25 years and had his firm conduct specialized cases for West Orange. until January 2023, when then-Mayor Susan McCartney and that year's council disputed his retention. West Orange spent \$75,000 by April 15, 2024 over whether the

*(Continued on page 13)*

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# TWO NEWARK MEN CONVICTED FOR THEIR ROLES IN STEPHEN CRANE VILLAGE DRUG TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION

**NEWARK** - On Jan. 27, a Newark jury convicted two New Jersey men for their roles in a violent drug trafficking organization, Acting U.S. Attorney Vikas Khanna announced.

Michael Mayse, 38, of Newark, a leader of the Stephen Crane Drug Trafficking Organization, was convicted of murder, drug trafficking conspiracy, and related drug and firearms offenses.

Gary Shahid, 66, of Newark, a drug supplier of the Stephen Crane Drug Trafficking Organization, was convicted of drug trafficking conspiracy, distribution and possession with intent to distribute controlled substances, and firearms offenses.

Acting U.S. Attorney Vikas Khanna stated, "This Office's commitment to prosecuting violent crime and serious drug trafficking offenses is unwavering. This case demonstrates the strength of our partnerships with federal, state, and local law enforcement and ensures that serious consequences will follow for these defendants."

"ATF remains steadfast in identifying and apprehending those who are terrorizing our neighborhoods with violence and senseless disorder," ATF Special Agent in Charge L.C. Cheeks, Jr., Newark Field Division stated. "These guilty verdicts bring accountability to violent criminals whose actions disregard criminal law, human life, and public safety. We will continue to work alongside our law enforcement partners and secure the safety of our communities."

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court: Stephen Crane Village is a public housing com-

plex near Branch Brook Park, on the border of Newark and Belleville. Stephen Crane Village was the site of an open-air drug market controlled by a violent drug trafficking organization ("DTO") from at least February 2019 through February 2020.

Through numerous controlled purchases of narcotics, consensually recorded telephone calls and text messages, physical surveillance, electronic surveillance, and the analysis of telephone call detail records, law enforcement determined that the members of the DTO conspired to distribute narcotics, including heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine base, in and around Stephen Crane Village.

The DTO used a drug stash apartment in Stephen Crane Village to package and store their drugs for distribution. The DTO sold significant quantities of drugs to confidential sources and an undercover agent. On December 15, 2019, Mayse entered the DTO's stash apartment in Stephen Crane Village and murdered a member of the DTO over a monetary debt relating to the drug trafficking conspiracy.

The count of conspiracy to distribute at least 100 grams of heroin carries a minimum sentence of five years in prison, maximum penalty of 40 years in prison, and a fine of up to \$5 million. The counts of distribution of heroin, fentanyl, and cocaine each carry a maximum of 20 years in prison and a fine of \$1 million. The count for of possession with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl, 100 grams or more of heroin, and 500 grams or more of cocaine carries a minimum sentence of 10 years in prison, a

maximum sentence of life in prison, and a fine of up to \$10 million.

The count of murder during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime carries a maximum sentence of life in prison and a \$250,000 fine. The count of discharging a firearm during and in relation to a drug trafficking crime carries a minimum sentence of 10 years in prison, a maximum sentence of life in prison, and a \$250,000 fine. The counts of possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime carries a minimum sentence of 5 years in prison, a maximum sentence of life in prison, and a \$250,000 fine.

Acting U.S. Attorney Khanna credited special agents and task force officers with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Newark Field Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge L.C. Cheeks, Jr.; special agents and task force officers of the Drug Enforcement Administration, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Cheryl Ortiz; the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, under the direction of Prosecutor Theodore N. Stephens II and Chief Mitchell G. McGuire; the Newark Police Department, under the direction of Director Emanuel Miranda; and the Belleville Police Department, under the direction of Chief Mark Minichini. He also thanked the U.S. Marshals Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their assistance with this case.

The investigation was conducted as part of the Newark Violent Crime Initiative (VCI). The Newark VCI was formed in August 2017 by the U.S. Attorney's

Office for the District of New Jersey, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, and the City of Newark's Department of Public Safety for the sole purpose of combatting violent crime in and around Newark. As part of this partnership, federal, state, county, and city agencies collaborate and pool resources to prosecute violent offenders who endanger the safety of the community.

The VCI is composed of the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, the ATF, the DEA, the DHS/HSI, the USMS, the Newark Department of Public Safety, the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, the Essex County Sheriff's Office, New Jersey State Parole, Union County Jail, New Jersey State Police Regional Operations and Intelligence Center/Real Time Crime Center, New Jersey Department of Corrections, the East Orange Police Department, and the Irvington Police Department.

This case is also conducted under the auspices of the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF). OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF>.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Tracey Agnew of the Criminal Division in Trenton and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Goldberg of the Organized Crime and Gangs Unit in Newark.

**ICE** (Continued from page 7)

ing played against the finding and detention processing of non-violent unauthorized persons in ICE "field work" throughout the U.S.

ICE, on its X (formerly Twitter) account, said it has made 3,552 arrests Jan. 23-27 in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Its daily totals started with 538 on Thursday and went on to 503 on Friday, 286 on Saturday, 956 on Sunday and 1,179 on Monday.

The Trump Administration has asked ICE and other federal law enforcement agencies Sunday to make between 1,200 and 1,500 daily arrests. The Biden Administration, as of Sept. 30, 2024, made 310.7 aver-

age daily arrests.

The "field work" or raid locations ranged from New York City, Chicago, Detroit, Miami, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Denver, Seattle and "North Texas" to San Juan, PR. Some, including Newark and New Jersey, are sanctuary cities and some others not. One planned location is the Aurora, Colo. apartment complex Trump touted in his campaign as being controlled by a criminal immigrant street gang.

ICE agents were joined by U.S. Marshalls, US Department of Homeland Security, the DEA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the FBI and other federal-level law enforcement agen-

cies. Some sub-federal officials will have their police and sheriffs to fully or partially assist ICE and others not.

Some of the locations were high profile. "Dr. Phil" McGraw and his Merit Street Media platform were embedded with HHS Secretary Kristi Noem, and "Border Czar" Tom Homan were trailing agents on one Sunday raid. McGraw later said that ICE was not "sweeping through neighborhoods."

Noem joined ICE and company at 6 a.m. Monday on a raid of an apartment building in The Bronx's Highbridge neighborhood. They arrested a man, with ties to the Venezuelan Tren de Aragua gang, who has as-

(Continued on page 13)

**ICE** (Cont. from pg. 12)

sault, burglary and kidnapping charges against him. Mayor Eric Adams said that the NYPD is cooperating with ICE et. al. so long as arrestees are wanted violent criminals.

Back in New Jersey, Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh confirmed on Monday that ICE hit two locations in his city the day before. He said he was not sure if the feds were working "a proper investigation" with court-ordered warrants.

"We're receiving reports that people were not going to work or their children not going to school," said Sayegh. "I had a pastor calling me, saying that members of his church were coming to him crying."

The pastor has reason for concern. One of Trump's orders was to lift a 30-year-old DHS/ICE access ban on "sensitive" or sanctuary locations like houses of worship, schools and hospitals. It is not clear whether ICE will also detain or arrest people in courtrooms.

Thirty Philadelphia-based Society of Friends, or Quaker, groups have filed a suit against DHS in District Court-Maryland Monday. They are claiming that lifting the ban is in violation of the First Amendment and the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

Other New Jersey reports of local ICE presence include Asbury Park and Neptune police and witnesses. While Neptune police confirm the agents in their town Friday, Asbury Park Police Sgt Mike Casey referred inquiries to ICE.

It is becoming rapidly apparent, from "Czar Homan's" Monday comments, that deportation is not just for criminals only - and it would be best for some "illegals to self-deport."

"If you're in this country illegally, you've got a problem," Hohman said Sunday. "We're going to get the worst, first. Sanctuary cities lock us out of the jails. We've millions of people standing in line, taking the test, doing their background investigation, paying the fees, that want to come in the right way."

Homan's comment is ironic in the sense that Trump's orders including suspending or closing Temporary Protective Status and other legal immigration avenues - leaving some of those in an adjacent country or around the world and who were doing the "right way" in a vacuum.

The following advice on encountering ICE, etc. is from a combination of civil rights and advocacy groups:

1. If you do not have a governmental, school and/or work ID - get one. New Jersey is not one of the states who require individuals to present identification demanded by law enforcement. Twelve states - New York, Delaware, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Alabama, Florida and Utah - do. Consult those states for particulars before you go.
2. Find a trusted contact and make a plan with him/her/them. Those plans may include giving that contact the

**TOWN WATCH** (Cont. from pg. 10)

authority to retain Trenk rested with either the mayor or the council.

**SOUTH ORANGE** - The village, for now, is paying \$24,150.55 from its emergency fund to repair damage done by a burst water sprinkler pipe at the Baird Community Center Dec. 23.

The over \$24,000 appropriation is to have RestoPros, of Bloomfield, continue the remediation they had started that Monday night. Village Mayor Sheena Collum and Business Administrator Peter Travers are meanwhile filing a claim estimate with the municipal insurance carrier.

RestroPros were called in immediately after the burst pipe sprayed water at the

Baird center's main entrance at 6 p.m., prompting that facility's evacuation. Baird's main lobby, basement, the temporary South Orange Public Library area and part of the Baird gallery.

The contractor immediately removed water damaged materials like sheetrock, flooring and drop ceilings. They also ran dehumidifiers. Travers, however, said that more restoration work needs to be done by RestoPros before the affected areas can reopen.

The Baird Center had just completed a \$15 million renovation and expansion. SOPL's services are split between here and the former Jersey Animal Coalition shelter at 295 Walton Ave. until its own Scotland Road renovation and expansion is completed.

SOPL at Baird remains closed as of press

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

The Housing Authority of the City of East Orange (EOHA) is seeking proposals from qualified Attorneys and law firms for:

**GENERAL LEGAL SERVICES**

**Project # 25-LEGAL-RFP-01**

Proposals will be received at the EOHA's offices at 160 Halsted Street, 1st Floor, East Orange, NJ 07017, no later than 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 5, 2025. All proposals will be sealed in an envelope marked - "PROPOSAL - LEGAL SERVICES".

All proposals must be made in accordance with the proposal format included in the RFP. A copy of the RFP with the evaluation criteria to be used to select the successful proposer and complete instructions for submitting the proposal can be obtained at the EOHA's office at the above address by calling 973-766-8896 or email your request to dsimpkins@eoha.org.

Wilbert O. Gill, PHM  
Executive Director

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF EAST ORANGE  
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR AUDITING SERVICES**

The Housing Authority of the City of East Orange (EOHA) will receive sealed proposals for the following:

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS TO PERFORM SINGLE AUDIT  
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024**

Contract # 25-AUDIT-RFP-02

**DUE DATE: WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2025,  
NO LATER THAN 3:00 P.M.**

The Housing Authority of the City of East Orange is requesting sealed proposals from qualified Independent Auditors licensed in the State of New Jersey to perform a Comprehensive Financial Audit for the 12 month period ending December 31, 2024 in accordance with Generally Accepted Auditing Standards, Government Auditing Standards, GAAP, the auditing and reporting provisions of OMB Circular A-133, the electronic agreed-upon attestation procedures applied to the Financial Data Schedule (FDS) as required by HUD/REAC and in conformance with the State of New Jersey Statutes and Regulations, New Jersey Administrative Code 5:31.7.

Any Qualified Independent Auditor interested, please contact Duangrat Simpkins, E-Mail: dsimpkins@eoha.org, telephone number 973-766-8896, Extension 10 to obtain the Scope of Service.

Auditing firms are required to comply with requirements of PL 1975 C. 127. Small and minority auditing firms are urged to submit proposals.

The EOHA is an equal opportunity employer and in consideration for an award the Authority will not discriminate against any proposer because of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin.

The EOHA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any informalities thereto. For a period of sixty (60) days subsequent to the due date of the proposal, no proposals shall be withdrawn without the consent of the EOHA.

**WILBERT O. GILL  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

power of attorney and/or custody of relatives.

3. Know your rights.
4. Remain calm during the encounter and tell the truth.
5. ICE must furnish a search warrant signed by a judge - and no one else. If they do not have that warrant, do not open the door or let them in. They can be told to go away until they have the said signed warrant.
6. Document what they do. You

may record their activity so long as you do not interfere with their activity. You may take notes after they leave.

7. The Miranda Rights are applicable here. You may remain silent and only ask for a lawyer. Local law enforcement are required to allow you to make a phone call from detention.

time, its services transferred to 295 Walton Ave.

**MAPLEWOOD** - Last rites for Kenneth M. Simpson - who knew the township's sidewalks, buildings and people for at least 39 years - were a Jan. 4 Funeral Mass and entombment at Millburn's St. Rose of Lima Church and Cemetery. His remains were placed alongside his late wife of 65 years, Blanche, 87, who died on March 6.

Simpson, 88, had died in his Wykoff home Dec. 23 The Maplewood native and longtime resident had been a township police officer from 1959 until his retirement in 1986. He was PBA Local 44 vice president plus a state delegate for the local and for FOP Lodge 70.

(Continued on page 14)

# The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

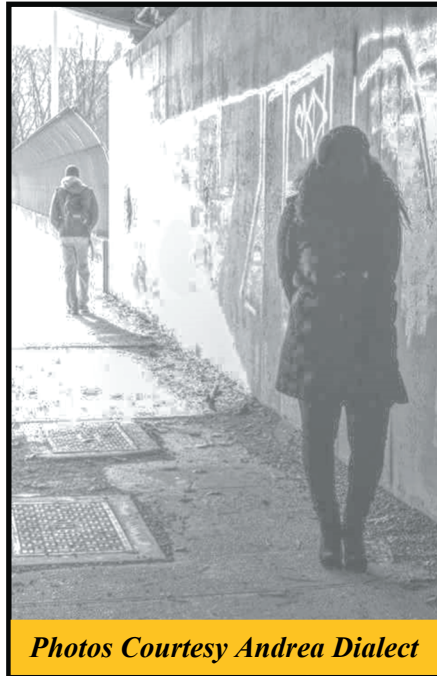
## COSMIC WAVES

My daughter and I went to the overlook last Sunday night in hopes of gazing at the bespoke planetary line dance that supposedly was to grace the skies. Unfortunately, we didn't have my other daughter's telescope, and when our eyes failed us, there was nothing to see besides all those other glorified star gazers peering from their cars, squinting like me.

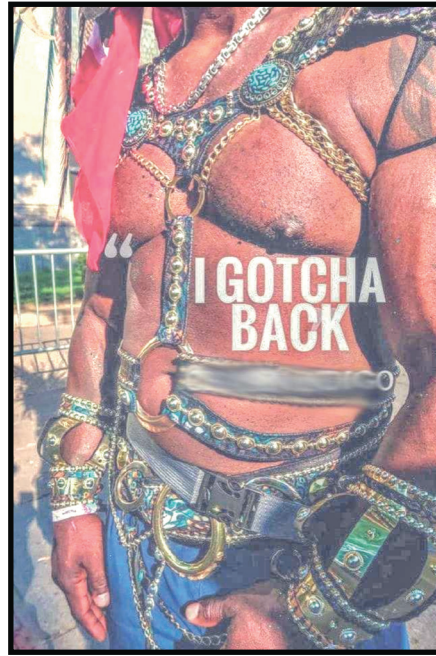
Had those planetary line dancers sat that one out, or was it the foggy skies - or perhaps our limiting eyes - that caused such a potentially amazing memory to slip by? Sadly, I'm told that it was my failing eyes that were the reason I hadn't seen that six-planet line-up.

This time they were (there), but they hadn't failed me when it came to peering at my boy Nate. That time, that Cosmic Wave was very clear, which means I got to wave back, making for an amazingly beautiful memory that I shall always cherish.

Check out the draft below and catch our wave. Visit Local-talkweekly.com to read the full story in the Entertainment section. While you're at it, check out the archives and get familiar with all things Andrea Dialect. You'll also want to come along on my Andrea Dialect Facebook Lab live session. Buried treasures turn up every morning. Come and join me live as I develop my daily "PORTAL" sessions. I'll see you between 5-6 a.m. Set those notifications. Remember, everything I do on social is raw, homegrown, and ex-



Photos Courtesy Andrea Dialect



perimental mockups. Follow my msdialect Instagram, and let's grow out loud together! Like, follow, and share.

## CASTING SHADOWS

*It is said that the jiva-soul is aware of its own body only, and the cosmic soul is aware of all bodies in past, present, and future. I say that the spirit man is aware of them all. Google Louis Armstrong's "What A Wonderful World," and let it play as you read what follows... In loving memory of Nate Meyers!*

When planets align in night skies, they cast shadows as bright white points of light—and I say so do we. It was around 5:45 in the morning that day, and the night skies engulfed all around us. The crew was there -

Millie and Nate - when I jumped out of that ride. How did I know? Because the beaming lights of those buses aligned in all those rows of yellow, and the roar of the engines' hum told me so.

Millie was in action and after our quick hello. We exchanged small talk as I stood in the roadway. Soon after, that bus whizzed by, did the dip, and then that beep sounded—that melodic demand for you to get out of the way during that back-in.

But I was safe in the front of the way, which gave much space when I threw him that wave. It was him - my boy. What up, Nate? As fast as that whip, in that shadow the bus made cast, as that hand waved. Peering at that shadow, I threw a smile back at Mr. Johnny-on-the-spot, said my goodbyes to him and Millie, and like any other morning, I jumped in Big Yeller. The heat was pumping, it was nice and warm, and I pulled out to start my day.

It being Friday made it all the better. All was well that day until I pulled on the scene - rows and rows of yellow buses, parked for the night behind an elongated gate. ...

*Read this article in its entirety at [www.localtalkweekly.com](http://www.localtalkweekly.com) and type The Observation Booth in the search bar. If you have any questions, send them to [localtalkandrea@gmail.com](mailto:localtalkandrea@gmail.com).*

## TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 13)

The 1936-born Simpson enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1955 and was stationed as a Military Police officer at Washington State's Ft. Lewis. He returned to Maplewood, after graduating from the Essex County Police Academy, to marry wife Blanche and to raise John, Lori and Jamie until the couple moved to Florham Park in 1984.

Kenneth and Blanche were Newark's Barringer High School Class of 1954 graduates. Blanche went to St. Michael's Hospital Nursing school while "Ken" was in the army and obtained a master's degree in nursing from Jersey City State College in 1968. She served Newark Public Schools as a nurse at the Lafayette Street School for 38

years. The retired policeman was far from finished serving Maplewood. He was appointed as the building department's code inspector 1987-99. He became a community captain for the annual Fourth of July fireworks exhibition and coaching youth baseball and basketball teams.

Six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren also survive them. Jacob A. Holle Funeral Home here made the arrangements. Memorial donations can be made to the Parkinson's Foundation and/or Covenant House.

**BLOOMFIELD** - Rehabilitating Bloomfield Center's commuter rail station has been scheduled for this year since the N.J. Historic Sites Council and NJTransit reached a compromise

in Trenton late last year. The council, which oversees all Garden State structures on the New Jersey and National historic site registries, green-lighted NJTransit's renovations with specific conditions Oct. 18 - two months after the state Department of Community Affairs division nixed the initial application.

The concrete canopies that came with the 1912 station will be replaced with steel canopies. The new canopies will be 60 percent shorter on the eastbound platform and 15 percent on the outboard platform.

Both boarding platforms will be raised four feet to meet federal ADA requirements and to avail itself of the transit carrier train car center doors. Ramps, including one to connect the \$1

million inbound waiting room reopened in 2000, will be installed. Inbound commuters will also get an all new elevator.

The outbound waiting outboard waiting room on the McCarthy Lackawanna Plaza street level and connecting underground tunnel to the inbound side will be reopened and renovated. That waiting room was a pizzeria and a florist's shop until a 1979 fire closed it. The former car pickup and drop off ramps to and from the outboard platform, however, will be closed to vehicles.

NJTransit and Stantec architects intend to spend at least \$48 million to catch up on decades-long neglect. Daily ridership has climbed to 2,000, in part by the 2002 consolidation of the former  
*(Continued on page 15)*

**TOWN WATCH**

(Continued from page 14)

Boonton Line and Montclair Branch and a pre-2020 commuter rail system wide 11 percent increase.

Most of the former Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroad stations were placed on the national register in 1984. The DLW-built Bloomfield, Madison and Lake Hopatcong stations are also distinctive by their Gothic architecture.

**MONTCLAIR** - The Township Council may announce the latest Town Manager finalist - and its fifth since 2022 - as early as one of its February meetings. A resolution to appoint a search finalist was not on its Jan. 28 regular meeting agenda.

The council had scheduled first-round interviews with three candidates to succeed Michael Lapolla, of Brielle, at a Jan. 10 closed door Zoom meeting plus at least one more candidate at another session between there and Jan. 30. The candidates were recommended by Jersey Professional Management, a Scotch Plains talent search consultant hired by the council for \$16,000 Aug. 13.

Lapolla, who was Union County's manager 1997-2002, was immediately hired as an interim part-time municipal manager Aug. 1, 2023 but was immediately called to service on Aug. 7. His status was later elevated to full-time temporary.

Lapolla took the interim town manager torch from the late Thomas Hartnett, who was the former manager here 2003-10. Hartnett, 75, who was hired July 19, 2023, suddenly died at his Normandy Shores home Aug. 6, 2023. One of the Rahway native's bequests was for donations to the Montclair Ambulance Unit.

Deputy Township Manager Brian Scantlebury was made acting manager to replace then-Town Manager Timothy Stafford at the council's July 19, 2023 meeting. Stafford was first put on paid administrative leave Oct. 26, 2022 and was terminated April 20, 2023. Stafford had been accused by several employees of and later found in a report to have created a hostile workplace environment and had retaliated against whistleblowers.

**GLEN RIDGE / BELLEVILLE** - Glen Ridge, Belleville and Montclair would figure prominently on a prospective lifetime passport stamp or steamer trunk sticker that the late Judith Chaiken Granick would have carried while she had traveled among 10 towns in four states in her 85 years on Earth.

Granick, who died Dec. 27 in Dan Diego, was born into a three generation

Chaiken family of six while in Belleville 1949-64 and, while in Glen Ridge, 1980-2020, raised two daughters with second husband Leonard.

The former Judith Nina Chaiken joined her grandmother, parents Lazar "Lou," mother Helen Miller and sisters Cynthia and Wendy from her 1949 birth at 179 Smallwood Dr. and at 87 Beech St. from 1950 until the family had moved to Clark and Woodbridge's Colonia section.

Chaiken and her family were Cong. Ahavath Achim members, and herself as a Women's Club member, when the temple was at Court St. Where the prospective high school class of 1967 graduate had done so here, or at Woodbridge or at Clark's Arthur L. Johnson Union County Regional High School remains unknown.

Chaiken came to Glen Ridge after she and Leonard Granick had met while studying at FDU-Teaneck in the 1970s and first moved to 352 Maolis Ave. in 1980 and, in 1982, 356 Maolis. It was from there where they raised daughters Jennifer (Glen Ridge High School Class of 1986) and Courtney (Class of 1990).

Judith was Montclair Public Schools Director of Planning, Research and Evaluation. She was part of the N.J. Department of Education's core team in the agency's takeover of Jersey City Public Schools. Len was Assistant Research Director at Newark's UMDNJ. They retired to Las Vegas in 2000 but kept their house here in Courtney's name.

Judith moved to be closer to Jennifer after Len had died in 2020. Her and Len's remains were reunited at the family's burial plot at Woodbridge's Beth Israel Memorial Park.

**NUTLEY** - The Nutley Irish Association's March 20 St. Patrick's Day Parade may double as a memorial for one of its own, Patrick Morris. Morris, 77, who died Jan. 9, was one of the parade's deputy grand marshals in 2000. Four grandchildren also survived him.

Morris had died of injuries he had suffered in a Garden State Parkway crash in Old Bridge. A State Police spokesman said that Morris' car was going north when his car left the road and struck trees a mile north of Exit 120-Laurence Harbor at about 10 a.m. Jan. 4. He died at a local hospital the following Thursday.

Morris, who was born in Newark June 26, 1947 to a family of eight, came to Nutley via the U.S. Navy during the Vietnam War era. He enlisted Aug. 1, 1964 and was honorably discharged as an E4 Dec. 1, 1968.

Morris was a 20-year bartender at the Nutley Pub at 229 Centre St. until it closed on Aug. 5, 2014. He then worked for the Original Mr. Bruno's Pizzeria in Lyndhurst.

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Son Stephen, daughter Kerrie, brother Kevin and sisters Helen Schedeman and Mary Davis are among his survivors. Wife Kathleen, brother Joseph and sisters Marion Vizzone and Charlotte Moncelsi predeceased him.

The family and Lyndhurst's Stellato Funeral Home are planning a future memorial service. Donations may be made to the St. Jude's Children's Hospital.



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