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VOLUME 25 • ISSUE 10 * JANUARY 9, 2025 - JANUARY 15, 2025

25¢

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

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER

ESSEX COUNTY • EAST ORANGE • ORANGE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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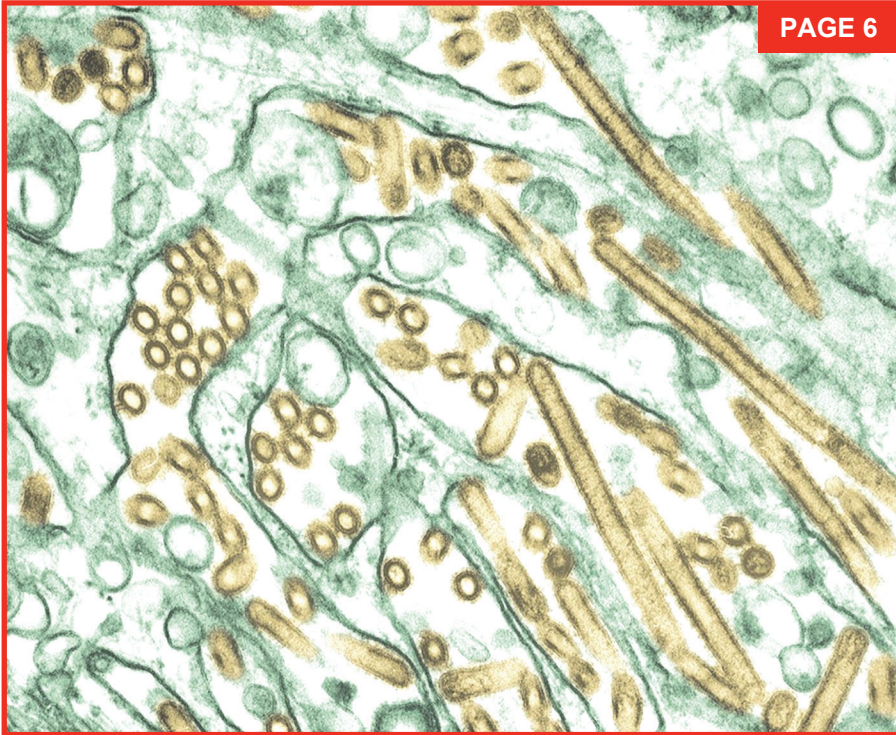
E-mail - Newspaper: localtalk@aol.com * Printing: localtalkprinting@gmail.com

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Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens



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EAST ORANGE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S BUDGET AND LABOR PAINS



By Walter Elliott

EAST ORANGE - Many of those in the East Orange School District community are hoping that the new year will turn the page on a difficult budgetary and personnel climate that had developed in the first half of the 2024-25 school year.

EOSD's workforce has been instructing and operating with 71 less people than when it had started with on Sept. 1. The overall 93 employees who were laid off or transferred Dec 15 to cut a \$25 million budget deficit to \$8 million.

Many of those employees are East Orange Education Association members who have been working without a new contract for two years. The teachers union and the district administration had been at an impasse since the rank-and-file members voted

down the contract around Thanksgiving Day.

Remaining employees are being paid from their contract that had expired on June 30, 2022.

District administrators are meanwhile looking to find the \$8 million to balance the 2024-25 budget. It is not known as of press time whether it will seek a loan from the New Jersey Department of Education.

The East Orange Board of Education Negotiations Committee and EOEA leadership had reached a tentative collective bargaining agreement on Nov. 15.

That CBA called for a 10.5 percent salary increase in steps over five years. It would have started out with a two percent increase on Dec. 31 had it been ratified and a 2.25-percent hike

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LOCAL TALK'S 2025 PRINTING SPECIAL

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Turn To **PAGE 16**



Editorial
Dhiren Shah
 Editor-In-Chief

Hello Readers,

A snowstorm made commuting in Northern New Jersey a little troublesome. However, it was not as bad as Southern Jersey, which was hit with several inches of snow.

District Judge Aileen Cannon blocked the release of Special Counsel Jack Smith's report on Trump's criminal case on January 7, 2025. Smith and the Justice Department want to release the case information. Why? I think they want to ruin Trump's image, but at the same time, Trump has to defend his side of the story, which will take his attention away from running the country.

On the other side, Trump's bid to appeal sentencing in the

hush money case was denied. He will be sentenced on January 10th. Although Judge Merchan said he would not sentence Trump to jail time, the conviction still stains Trump as the first convicted felon to take office as President of the United States.

President-elect Trump has been certified by the House and Senate's combined session as the next President of the United States. Kamala Harris, after losing against Trump, did not forsake her duty as Vice President and led the joint session, and was smiling as always, which shows good character. This certification of election results was much different than what happened four years ago.

When we went to Israel in 2007, we visited Yatzik Rabin's center to meet his daughter Dalia Rabin-Pelossof, a former politician. She was in an opposition party while Ehud Olmert, the then-Prime Minister of Israel, was running the show. We were on a mission to find out the facts in the Israel and Palestine con-

flict as Ambassadors For Peace. However, Dalia made sure that none of the representatives said a single word against Israel or its Prime Minister. I think that's the patriotism for Israel showing.

However, in the U.S., it's different. There are only two parties, but liberal and conservatives do not miss a chance to blame each other, and they do not care if it hurts the country. They all are confined to do the work for the benefit of their party and followers, and do not care about the real people and benefiting the country.

I had enough of the Democrats and Republicans. So, I finally became an independent to choose the right candidate in my opinion. Some said that by being a Democrat, I could still choose the right candidates of my choice. By being affiliated with one party, my mind always though more positive about that party. So, party affiliation does influence you to a point. Now that I'm independent, I can freely choose the candidates of my

choice.
 Local Talk Newspaper's motto is to improve the quality of life for the people we serve. The local area we serve has not improved drastically. It might have improved by way of some buildings in the neighborhood, but not the quality of life for the people who lived there for decades. The majority of them believe that they love their city.

Per CBS News: "A drug trafficking investigation in Bogalusa, Louisiana, has led to the arrest of the city's mayor, Tyrin Truong, and several other people, police said Tuesday.

The Louisiana State Police Narcotics/Violent Crime Task Force began a "comprehensive investigation" into a drug trafficking organization operating in the area in April 2024. Louisiana saw 2,456 drug-involved deaths in 2023, according to state health officials.

Have a wonderful week.

I'll talk to you next week.

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WEATHER FOR THE WEEK

<u>THURSDAY</u>	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>	<u>SUNDAY</u>	<u>MONDAY</u>	<u>TUESDAY</u>	<u>WEDNESDAY</u>
Partly Cloudy / Windy	Partly Cloudy	AM Snow	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
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LO 25	LO 27	LO 27	LO 26	LO 26	LO 20	LO 17

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The Doctor Is In



OP-ED BY DR. ADIL MANZOOR

Innovations in Hyperglycemia Management: Beyond Metformin

Glycemia refers to the concentration of glucose in the blood. Hyper means high. Therefore, hyperglycemia simply means a high concentration of sugar in the blood. You may recognize this condition by a more familiar name: diabetes. However, diabetes is not the only cause of hyperglycemia, although it is by far the most clinically significant cause.

When we eat, the blood sugar levels go up, which is absolutely normal and cannot be classified as hyperglycemia. However, if the blood sugar levels are still very high after two to four hours of eating, the person may have an underlying condition. Some people may also have elevated blood sugar levels before they even eat anything, which is another sign of hyperglycemia.

The most common cause is diabetes, which is a condition that arises when the body does not produce enough insulin or the body is not using insulin very well, causing high blood sugar. Other causes of hyperglycemia include stress, chronic conditions, hormonal disorders, and certain medications (like corticosteroids and beta blockers).

When the cause of hyperglycemia is non-diabetic in nature, treatment is majorly by identifying and addressing the root cause of hyperglycemia. For instance, if a prescriber suspects that a particular medication is causing a patient's blood sugar levels to spike, the prescriber may change to alternative treatments. Similarly, if the cause is high-stress levels or a

chronic condition, healthcare providers focus primarily on lowering stress levels and treating the underlying conditions.

In addition to addressing the root cause of hyperglycemia in a patient, healthcare providers recommend various lifestyle changes, like dietary modifications, increased physical activity, and weight loss. Usually, when the root cause is addressed, blood sugar levels go down to normal. This is not exactly the case in diabetic patients.

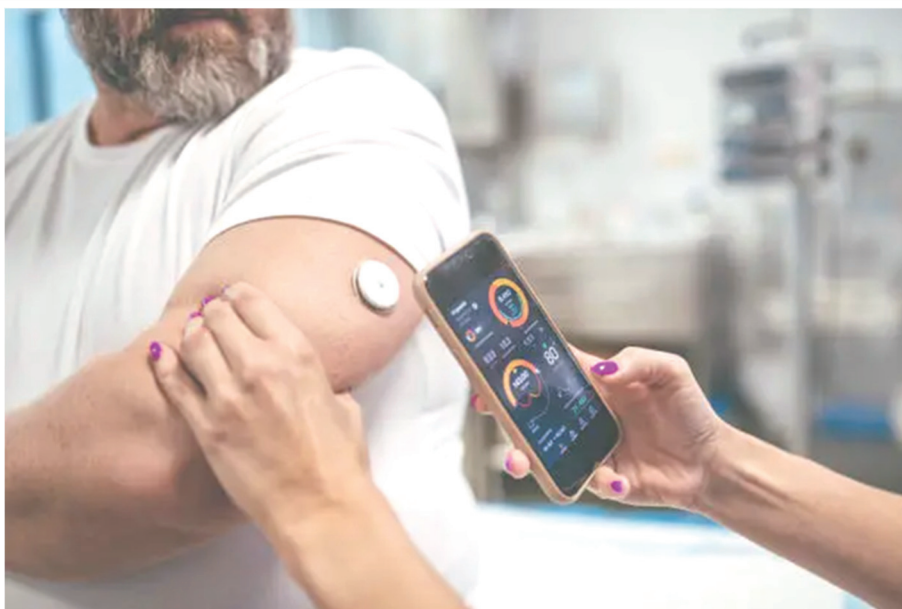
Diabetes (also called diabetes mellitus) is caused by problems in insulin production or problems with insulin usage. Insulin is the hormone that helps body cells absorb glucose from the blood. After eating, the pancreas (the organ responsible for producing insulin) releases insulin into the blood, allowing the body cells to absorb glucose. This leads to a fall in blood sugar levels.

If the body cannot produce enough insulin due to autoimmune pancreatic damage, it is known as type 1 diabetes mellitus (T1DM). Note that autoimmune conditions are those where the body attacks its own cells. On the other hand, if the body's cells become resistant to insulin and do not utilize insulin as well, it is known as type 2 diabetes.

The management of T1DM revolves around insulin. Since the body is not making nearly enough insulin, the patient takes insulin from external sources. For T2DM, management is not as straightforward and often includes medications and different lifestyle modifications. Of the several different types of diabetes medication, metformin has most gained the trust of health practitioners and is usually the first line of type 2 diabetes treatment. Metformin can even be used in the management of T1DM to improve glucose control.

There are quite a few reasons why metformin is a prescriber-favorite in the management of diabetes, including its glycemic efficacy, promotion of moderate weight loss, low risk of hypoglycemia (low blood sugar levels), low risk of adverse cardiovascular effects, low cost, and overall tolerability in the population. However, metformin is not a perfect drug.

Like all drugs, metformin has side effects, which can be relatively mild (stomach upsets, vom-



iting, nausea) or severe (a potentially life-threatening condition called lactic acidosis and vitamin B12 deficiency). As science evolves, there is always the quest for more effective and safer therapies, and this also applies to diabetes management. Simply put, metformin is a great drug for managing diabetes, but there are newer, potentially better innovations to effective diabetes management.

One such innovation is actually another medication: GLP-1 agonists. Sounds familiar? Okay, try Ozempic. Now, this should ring a bell. GLP-1 agonists are a class of drugs that mimic the hormone GLP-1, which helps increase insulin production, inhibit glucagon secretion (glucagon triggers the liver to release more sugar into the blood), and regulate appetite. Of course, you will know Ozempic (semaglutide) is frequently used for weight loss, and that's mainly because of its ability to reduce appetite, make patients eat less, and, by implication, reduce how much sugar a person consumes.

GLP-1 agonists may be the rave now, but they are not exactly new medications, with the first GLP-1 agonist discovered in the 1980s. However, one innovation that has only recently been used for the management of diabetes is nanotechnology. Basically, nanotechnology leverages nanoparticles to deliver insulin to the cells. This technology has the benefits of being less invasive (no need for insulin shots), which significantly increases compliance, and it also causes fewer plasma fluctuations.

Another innovation in diabetes management is gene therapy, especially for T1DM. This therapy can identify the genes associ-

ated with autoimmunity and alter them, potentially curing T1DM. Stem cell therapy is also being considered in managing diabetes. It works by replacing malfunctioning or damaged pancreatic cells with healthy stem cells. This therapy can also potentially be used in curing diabetes.

Diabetes affects more than 830 million people in the world today and can cause several health conditions and increase the risk of mortality. Therefore, its treatment is of the utmost importance. There are several treatment options available today; medications are the most typical option for managing type 2 diabetes, while insulin is the most typical for type 1 diabetes. However, both these current medications have their limitations, ranging from side effects to poor convenience.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of innovation in the medical world, and new treatment options are being developed to further improve the way we manage diabetes. However, nothing beats the recommendation of your healthcare provider, and you should follow their instructions about the right treatment for your condition. Stay safe, folks!

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, (Continued on page 15)



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NATION RECORDS FIRST BIRD FLU DEATH

The Louisiana Department of Health reports the patient who had been hospitalized with the first human case of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI), or H5N1, in Louisiana and the U.S. has died. The patient was over the age of 65 and was reported to have underlying medical conditions. The patient contracted H5N1 after exposure to a combination of a non-commercial backyard flock and wild birds.

LDH's extensive public health investigation has identified no additional H5N1 cases nor evidence of person-to-person transmission. This patient remains the only human case of H5N1 in Louisiana.

The Department expresses its deepest condolences to the patient's family and friends as they mourn the loss of their loved one. Due to patient confidentiality and respect for the family, this will be the final update about the patient.

While the current public health risk for the general public remains low, people who work with birds, poultry or cows, or have recreational exposure to them, are at higher risk.

The best way to protect yourself and your family from H5N1 is to avoid sources of exposure. That means avoiding direct contact with wild birds and other animals infected with or suspected to be infected with bird flu viruses.

Protecting yourself and others from H5N1 infection

- Do not touch sick or dead animals or their droppings and do not bring sick wild animals into your home.
- Keep your pets away from sick or dead animals and their feces.
- Do not eat uncooked or undercooked food. Cook poultry, eggs and other animal products to the proper temperature and prevent cross-contamination between raw and cooked food.
- Avoid uncooked food products such as unpasteurized raw milk or cheeses from animals that have a suspected or confirmed infection.
- If you work on poultry or dairy farms, talk to your provider about getting your seasonal flu vaccination. It will not prevent infection with avian influenza viruses, but it can reduce the risk of coinfection with avian and flu viruses.
- Report dead or sick birds or animals to the USDA toll-free at 1-866-536-7593 or the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry Diagnostic Lab at 318-927-3441.

If you have been exposed to sick or dead birds or other animals or work on a farm where avian influenza has been detected, watch for respiratory symptoms or conjunctivitis. If you develop symptoms within 10 days after exposure to sick or dead animals, tell your healthcare provider that you have been in contact with sick animals and are concerned about avian influenza. This will help them give you appropriate advice on testing and treatment. Stay home and away from others while you have symptoms.

MASS SHOOTING UPDATE

FINAL TALLY FOR 2024

Information from 12-31-2024

2024 Mass Shooting Stats: (Source: Mass Shooting Tracker, <https://www.massshootingtracker.site/data/?year=2024>)

- Total Mass Shootings: 573
- Total Dead: 693
- Total Wounded: 2363
- Shootings Per Day: 1.61

- Days Reached in Year 2024 as of December 31: 366



After 10 years of leading America's neighbor up north, the man in charge is pulling a Biden of sorts.

On Jan. 6, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced that he would be stepping down from his post, triggering a search for a new leader in an upcoming election.

Here now is a transcript of Trudeau's remarks in English.

"Every morning, I've woken up as prime minister, I've been inspired by the resilience, the generosity and the determination of Canadians. It is the driving force of every single day I have the privilege of serving in this office.

"That is why, since 2015, I've fought for this country - for you - to strengthen and grow the middle class, why we rallied to support each other through the pandemic, to advance reconciliation, to defend free trade on this continent, to stand strong with Ukraine and our democracy, and to fight climate change and get our economy ready for the future.

"We are at a critical moment in the world. My friends, as you all know, I'm a fighter. Every bone in my body has always told me to fight because I care deeply about Canadians, I care deeply about this country, and I will always be motivated by what is in the best interest of Canadians.

"And the fact is, despite best efforts to work through it, Parliament has been paralyzed for months after what has been the longest session of a minority parliament in Canadian history.

"That's why... I advised the Governor General that we need a new session of Parliament. She has granted this request, and the House will now be prorogued until March 24.

"Over the holidays, I've also had a chance to reflect and have had long talks with my family

about our future. Throughout the course of my career, any success I have personally achieved has been because of their support and with their encouragement.

"So last night, over dinner, I told my kids about the decision that I'm sharing with you today.

"I intend to resign as party leader, as prime minister, after the party selects its next leader through a robust, nationwide, competitive process. Last night, I asked the president of the Liberal Party to begin that process.

"This country deserves a real choice in the next election, and it has become clear to me that if I'm having to fight internal battles, I cannot be the best option in that election.

"The Liberal Party of Canada is an important institution in the history of our great country and democracy. A new prime minister and leader of the Liberal Party will carry its values and ideals into that next election. I'm excited to see the process unfold in the months ahead.

"We were elected for the third time in 2021 to strengthen the economy post-pandemic and advance Canada's interests in a complicated world, and that is exactly the job that I - and we - will continue to do for Canadians."



With less than a month to go, the countdown is on for 5.4 million customers who still need to complete and pay their Self Assessment and avoid penalties, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) warns.

Thousands of taxpayers have already done so by completing their tax returns before the fizzle was barely flat on New Year's Day. HMRC can reveal more than 24,800 people filed on January 1. A further 38,000 had even squeezed theirs in before the bells on December 31, with 310 filing between 23:00 and 23:59.

Filing your tax return and paying on time plays an im-

(Continued on page 7)

WORLD NEWS (Cont. from page 6)

portant role in supporting public services and the government's Plan for Change, which is delivering economic stability and investment across the UK. Anyone who is yet to file their tax return can do so online, via GOV.UK.

Anyone required to file a tax return for the 2023 to 2024 tax year who misses the January 31, 2025 deadline could face an initial late filing penalty of £100.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said, "We know completing your tax return isn't the most exciting item on your New Year to-do list, but it's important to file and pay on time to avoid penalties or being charged interest.

"The quickest and easiest way to complete your tax return and pay any tax owed is to use HMRC's online services - go to GOV.UK and search 'Self Assessment' to get started now.

"Some 97% of customers now file online and one benefit is that they don't have to complete it all in one go - they can save what they have done and pick it up again later."

Once a tax return is filed, payments can also be made quickly and securely through the HMRC app. Customers can set up notifications in the app to remind them when payments are due, so they don't need to worry about missing deadlines or penalties. Information about the different ways to pay, can be found on GOV.UK.

For people who can't meet the tax return deadline, HMRC will treat those with reasonable excuses fairly if they tell us before January 31.

The penalties for late tax returns are:

- An initial £100 fixed penalty, which applies even if there is no tax to pay, or if the tax due is paid on time
- After 3 months, additional daily penalties of £10 per day, up to a maximum of £900
- After 6 months, a further penalty of 5% of the tax due or £300, whichever is greater
- After 12 months, another 5% or £300 charge, whichever is greater

There are also additional penalties for paying late of 5% of the tax unpaid at 30 days, 6 months and 12 months. If tax remains unpaid after the deadline, interest will also be charged on the amount owed, in addition to the penalties above.

If someone regularly sells goods or provides services through an online platform, they may need to pay tax on their income. Customers can find out more about selling online and paying taxes on GOV.UK by searching 'online platform income' or by downloading the HMRC app. The guidance will help them decide if their activity should be treated as a trade

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- ETC.....



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and if they need to complete a Self Assessment tax return.

You also may need to file a return if you:

- Are newly self-employed and have earned gross income over £1,000
- Earned below £1,000 but wish to pay Class 2 National Insurance Contributions voluntarily to protect your entitlement to State Pension and certain benefits
- Are a new partner in a business partnership
- Have received any untaxed income over

£2,500

- Receive Child Benefit payments and need to pay the High Income Child Benefit Charge because you or your partner earned more than £50,000

Criminals use emails, phone calls and texts to try to steal information and money from taxpayers. Before sharing personal or financial details, people should search 'HMRC tax scams' on GOV.UK to access a checklist to help decide if the contact received is a scam.

SPORTS WRAP



Photos By Felicia Laguerre Owens



By William Hathaway, Jr.

The Seton Hall women's basketball season is doing well so far. Their biggest game yet this year has seen the Lady Pirates win a big Jan. 4 game at Walsh Gym over the Georgetown Hoyas. Seton Hall is 12-3 overall this season and leading the Big East at 4-0.

The Hoyas built a 30-22 lead at the half despite 13 turnovers in the first half. Nonetheless, the SHU women were up to the challenge. Freshman Jada Eads drained a go ahead three-pointer with 52 seconds left that lifted Seton Hall towards a 74-71 overtime victory. Eads had 27 points, 7 assists and 4 rebounds in the win. Teammate Ya Ya Lops had 17 points, 3 boards, and 3 steals, scoring her 1,000th point as well.

This wasn't the only clutch win the Pirates have had as of late, as The Hall beat Villanova on the road thanks to a Faith Masonius reverse layup at the buzzer for a 56-55 win. Masonius, who is scoring over 17 points per game, was honored before the Georgetown for scoring her

1,000th point a few weeks ago. She was also named as one of the United States Basketball Writers Association (USBWA) National Players of the Week.

In other women's college basketball action, USC came to the tri-state area along with star guard JuJu Watkins to play Rutgers. In front of 7,356 people, the largest crowd ever for a women's game at Jersey Mike's Arena, the Trojans blew away the Scarlet Knights 94-42. Watkins led her team to victory with 23 points and 14 rebounds.

In New Jersey high school basketball, The East Orange Campus boys team defeated Passaic County Tech and Hackensack to win the Quad 2 championship at the Jingle Bells Jubilee at the old Paterson Catholic High School. This was the second year in the row in winning the Christmas tournament.

Finally, in the NFL, the Giants and Jets finished out their disappointing seasons. Big Blue lost their final game on the road to the Eagles 20-13. Philadelphia rested key players like Saquon



Barkley, stopping his bid to break Eric Dickerson single season rushing record. Despite going 3-14 and getting the third pick, the Giants are expected to keep their head coach and general manager.

As for the Jets, they won their season finale at home over

the Dolphins 32-20. The only highlight of the 5-12 season was Aaron Rodgers connecting on his 500th career TD pass. He currently sits at 503, with uncertainty about his future with the team, as well as the head coach and GM situations.

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EAST ORANGE (Cont. from pg. 1)

in 2025-26.

The proposed act included the EOSD offering "an enhanced dental plan" and kicking in 25 percent of the improved benefit. The district was to have boosted the hourly pay rate for extracurricular activities preschool, after-school and on weekends or holidays.

The proposed CBA was approved by the EOSD Nov. 15 and was put to the union membership - and was later voted down. The labor contract agreements and denial were made while the 71 people were in the midst of being laid off.

EOBOE voted to send 60-day layoff notices to 93 people at its Oct. 16 meeting. That vote was to reduce a \$25 million 2024-25 budget deficit that was discovered in September.

EOSD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Christopher Irving came aboard July 1 after the previous school board had approved the 2024-25 budget in May. The

sending plan passed NJDOE and Essex County Superintendent of Schools' muster before June 30.

Dr. Irving, in a rare Oct. 22 interview, said that he noticed around Labor Day that the new school year's payroll was off. He said that the budget would be short in June 2025 "if all expenses remained where they were."

The workforce reduction was approved by the board Oct. 15 and took effect Dec. 15. The first 71 teachers, aides and related employees were to be let go. Another 18 were reassigned to positions at lower pay. Part of the cuts were in Dr. Irving's anticipation of 20 percent increases in food service, transportation and out-of-district student placements in January.

A volume of EOSD members called out sick Oct. 17-18 was large enough for EOSD to hold only half-days.

Some of the laid off EOSD employees may be working in other districts as of Jan. 1.

It is not clear as of press time whether the district had ap-



proached NJDOE about a loan along the lines that the state agency gave to Nutley last spring and Belleville in 2014.

The Nutley BOE discovered a \$7 million deficit last February and adopted an NJDOE loan in May. Belleville's school board trustees discovered a \$3.7 million deficit in 2014 and appealed to the state that year. Nutley and

Belleville received their budget plugs from Trenton - but on conditions.

NJDOE said that affected school districts have to repay the loans over 30 years; Belleville and Nutley did so through municipal bond issues. Their budgets will be subjected to state auditor scrutiny.



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 - Newark Police Division Sgt. Victor M. Ortiz III has been remanded to home confinement in Hillside pending his next pre-trial hearing, since his Jan. 1 surrender to the Essex County Prosecutor's Office and being arraigned in the Dec. 11 vehicular death of his colleague.

Ortiz, 34, has been charged during Jan. 2's remote court hearing from the Essex County Correctional Center with first-degree vehicular manslaughter and second-degree vehicular homicide in the death of Jairo Juan Rodriguez. He was also issued several motor vehicle summonses, including one for DWI. He is only to leave home for church and court.

Essex County Prosecutor Theodore "Ted" Stephens II's Jan. 2 announcement of Ortiz's arrest and charge was met later that Thursday with a "Justice for Jairo" rally at City Hall steps. The 15 protestors, many of whom are Rodriguez' relatives, ask why it took 21 days from the Broad and Lafayette Street incident to Ortiz's surrender.

Ortiz is accused of striking Rodriguez, 53, with his personal vehicle while at that intersection. Rodriguez, as an NPD Traffic Control Officer, was assigned to that corner to assist traffic leaving a Prudential Center concert at 11:43 p.m. Dec. 11.

Rodriguez was rushed to University Hospital - where he was declared dead at 1:37 a.m. Dec. 12. While the off-duty Ortiz had cooperated with fellow po-

lice and received medical attention at the scene, it is not known whether he was in his uniform. Ortiz' attorney said he is in the case's discovery stage.

IRVINGTON - Dec. 19's ceremony here at the Irvington Fire Headquarters was more than the retirement of 34 year IFD dispatcher "Captain John" Santos Velez.

The presence of Velez, 60, here at the D. Bilal Beasley Civic Square headquarters goes back 53 years. Velez himself said that he started coming here as early as seven years old.

That fascination continued during his attending the nearby Irvington High School. The IHS Class of 1984 graduate eventually joined "Irvington's Bravest" full-time after 10 years in the neighboring Irvington Rescue Squad and the Office of Emergency Management.

Velez's specialty was with communications hardware and "software." While he officially maintains the department's radio equipment, he frequently gave incoming mutual aid departments directions to the township's incidents.

"Captain Jon's" informal title - given by area colleagues - was "retired" Dec. 19 by Mayor Anthony "Tony" Vauss, Sr. The mayor named Velez an Honorary deputy chief and handed him that rank's white dress shirt.

The Irvington native now spends full-time at his Union Vauxhall section home.

EAST ORANGE / SOUTH ORANGE - Village attorney James H. Davis III, from his office Dec. 29, that the daughter of city resident and actor John Amos family has retained him regarding the circumstances of his August 2024 hospital admission and death.

The Aug. 21 death announcement of Amos, 84, who lived here during his 1950-54 and 1957-65 formative years, was made by son and caretaker Kelly "K.C." Amos and the actor's publicist Oct. 1. The East Orange High School Class of 1958 cartoonist and football player was best known for his television roles in "The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Good Times," "Roots" and "The West Wing."

Davis said that daughter and estate co-trustee Shannon Amos

wants him to get several answers from Inglewood, Calif. Centinela Hospital Medical Center, where Amos' son had admitted him.

The questions include:

- Who was the woman with Amos who misidentified herself as his daughter.
- John Amos' health and condition upon admission and admission date.
- Why was son/caretaker Kelly not with him at admission.
- Did the LAPD and Adult Protective Services review the actor's previous condition and death? S. Amos had filed elder abuse complaints with APS going back to February 2024.

K.C. Amos, in a Dec. 27 statement, said that no foul play was involved with his father's admission and death. He has hired Homeland Security Services' Operation V.P., Kevin Faller to investigate "two years of civil and criminal wrongdoing" regarding missing money and valuables in Colorado and "connected incidents in Memphis, New Jersey and Los Angeles."

ORANGE - City, county, state fire inspectors plus a private investigation firm are probing the cause of a Dec. 13 daylight East Ward residential blaze that left one house uninhabitable and a second damaged. The fire injured one firefighter and displaced 14 people from three families.

OFD Deputy Chief Rivera and the first units arrived at 213 Snyder St. just after 11 a.m. to find heavy flames coming from the first floor that were extending to the second. They also found Orange police officers at the scene; they found the fire first and had evacuated the residents. An OPD officer was taken to a local hospital for smoke inhalation.

OFD called for on-scene mutual aid from East Orange, West Orange, South Essex, Montclair and Livingston. Support services from the city's fire and building officials, OEM and Older Adult departments, OFD Chief. Derrick Brown, Essex County's OEM and fire coordinator, University Hospital EMS and PSE&G had also arrived. 219 Snyder suffered melted vinyl

siding on its east side. A yellow-green "Investigation" notice from Sommerville's O'Neil Associations remains affixed to 213's front door since Dec. 20.

Parking Space Lottery Held

Winners for the parking space lottery here at 416 Highland Ave, according to a Dec. 15 city announcement, will be contacted by the Parking Office Jan. 10. Those who had registered with the office by Dec. 20 and did not win a space will be part of a waiting list.

Those who were selected get the privilege of using the gated garage on The Highland by Peek for \$50 a month. The Highland is a five story, 138-unit apartment building - with 136 parking spaces - on the southeastern corner of Highland and Lincoln avenues since 2024. Being short two parking spaces was built into the city's planning regulations as a means for residents to rely less on private passenger automobiles.

It appears that the Orange Parking Office is trying to redress a growing curbside parking space shortage, in light of recent new residential construction in the Orange Valley, with this lottery. It is not known whether other lotteries for new spaces will be offered in the future.

WEST ORANGE - A lawsuit by a township couple against three "forever chemical" corporate producers has been circulating in federal court since its Nov. 20 filing in Newark.

Marcia and Elihu Feldman, both 77, through their lawyers, have filed a wrongful product suit in U.S. District Court against 20 respondents - including 3M, Chemours and DuPont. They and the 17 other companies have produced PFAS from the 1960s to before its recent discontinuance.

PFAS is known for its waterproofing, fire extinguishing and nonstick applications from raincoats and frying pans to airport runway foam. It is classified as a "forever chemical" for its persistence in bodies of water. They have been linked to cancer and other health problems.

The Feldmans believe that the existence of PFAS in West Orange's water supply for decades
(Continued on page 13)

LOCAL TALK



NEW YEAR SPECIAL: \$25 off any order \$100 & up

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January 2025						
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New Jersey Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy Revokes License of Massage Therapist for Alleged Sexual Misconduct Against Client

TRENTON - Attorney General Matthew J. Platkin and the Division of Consumer Affairs announced Jan. 2 that the New Jersey Board of Massage and Bodywork Therapy (“Board”) has permanently revoked the license of an Essex County massage therapist amid allegations he engaged in inappropriate and unwanted sexual contact with a female client during a massage session.

Peter Petrovic, a/k/a Jagadisha Peter Petrovic, is permanently barred from working as a massage therapist in New Jersey under an agreement he entered into with the Board to resolve allegations he groped and digitally penetrated a female client during a massage session in his office in Verona in 2020.

In a Final Consent Order filed with the Board on December 23, 2024, Petrovic agreed to immediately surrender his license to practice massage therapy in New Jersey, with such surrender to be deemed a permanent revocation with no possibility to reapply for licensure in the future.

“No client should ever have to fear being sexually exploited or abused while interacting with a licensed professional in New Jersey,” said Attorney General Platkin. “We take allegations of sexual misconduct by professionals very seriously and will rigorously investigate and hold accountable licensees that prey on the clients who trust them.”

“While the majority of massage therapists conduct themselves professionally and follow

strict standards, the actions of a rogue few can cause immeasurable harm to clients and adversely impact the profession as a whole,” said Cari Fais, Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs. “By permanently barring this licensee from practice, we’re not only protecting the public, we’re sending a clear message that this conduct will not be tolerated.”

According to documents filed in the case, the alleged victim, identified as “Client 1,” was receiving therapeutic massage from Petrovic to assist with chronic pain management. During a massage session in July 2020, Petrovic allegedly inappropriately touched Client 1 while she lay on a massage table unclothed with a blanket over her.

Following an investigation into Client 1’s allegations, the State filed a Verified Complaint with the Board seeking to revoke Petrovic’s license. The Verified Complaint alleged, among other things, that Petrovic’s treatment of Client 1 violated the rules of professional conduct, including those prohibiting licensees from engaging in sexual contact with a client; engaging in activities that serve their own prurient interests or sexual gratification; and engaging in gross negligence, malpractice, or incompetence that endangers the safety and well-being of a client.

Under the terms contained in the Final Consent Order, Petrovic must immediately cease and desist from holding himself out as a massage and bodywork therapist and refrain from practice in New Jersey. He also must immediately cease and desist all client contact in any location, and is prohibited from charging, receiving, or sharing in any fee for massage or bodywork services rendered by others.

The State was represented in this matter by Deputy Attorneys General Cristina E. Ramundo and Yudelka Felipe, under the supervision of Section Chief Doreen A. Hafner, of the Professional Boards Prosecution Section, with-

in the Affirmative Civil Enforcement Practice Group of the Division of Law. Investigators with the Enforcement Bureau within the Division of Consumer Affairs conducted the investigation.

Patients who believe that they have been treated by a licensed professional in an inappropriate manner can file an online complaint with the State Division of Consumer Affairs by visiting its website or by calling 1-800-242-5846 (toll free within New Jersey) or 973-504-6200.

FDA Issues Draft Guidance on Including Tissue Biopsies in Clinical Trials

On Jan. 6, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued a draft guidance with the Office for Human Research Protections that, when finalized, will provide recommendations for including tissue biopsies as part of clinical trials.

The draft guidance is intended, when finalized, to assist industry, clinical investigators, institutions, and institutional review boards in understanding considerations for tissue biopsies in adults and children as part of clinical trials that evaluate investigational medical products and/or that are conducted or supported by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

“Tissue biopsies in clinical trials are often needed to determine eligibility or to understand the effect of the medical product being studied in the trial,” said Richard Pazdur, M.D., director of the FDA’s Oncology Center of Excellence and acting director of the Office of Oncologic Diseases in the FDA’s Center for Drug Evaluation and Research. “This new draft guidance builds on the agency’s ongoing efforts to enhance clinical trials by providing recommendations to improve participant safety and further clinical research.”

This draft guidance focuses on considerations for when a tissue biopsy, which involves tak-

ing tissue from a trial participant, is included in a clinical trial protocol. All biopsy procedures have a certain amount of risk, but biopsies can be necessary for obtaining information important to the trial, such as to determine clinical trial participant eligibility, to ensure enrolled trial participants have the intended target medical condition the trial is evaluating, or to evaluate primary or key secondary endpoints.

In a clinical trial protocol, a tissue biopsy may be described as a required biopsy that is a condition of trial participation, or an optional biopsy that is not a condition of participation. The draft guidance discusses considerations for determining if a tissue biopsy should be required or optional for both adults and children participating in clinical trials. The draft guidance also addresses risk and benefit considerations specific to tissue biopsies conducted in clinical trials involving children.

Additionally, the draft guidance reinforces the importance of obtaining informed consent from participants, including parental or guardian permission for children and, when appropriate, assent from children. The draft guidance also has recommendations for information to include about biopsies as part of informed consent.

The draft guidance, “*Considerations for Including Tissue Biopsies in Clinical Trials: Guidance for Industry, Investigators, Institutions, and IRBs*,” was developed by the FDA’s Oncology Center of Excellence, Office of the Chief Medical Officer, Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, Center for Devices and Radiological Health, and Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, in collaboration with the HHS Office for Human Research Protections. Comments on the draft guidance must be submitted within 60 days after publication in the Federal Register to Regulations.gov to ensure the agency considers them.

US DOT PENALIZES JETBLUE FOR CHRONIC FLIGHT DELAYS

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced today a \$2 million penalty against JetBlue for operating multiple chronically delayed flights. The penalty marks the first time DOT has fined an airline for chronic flight delays - a prohibited unrealistic scheduling practice which can harm both passengers and fair competition across the airline industry.

Half of the penalty is going to compensate JetBlue customers affected by the airline's chronic delays or any future disruptions caused by JetBlue within the next year. DOT has ongoing investigations into other airlines for unrealistic flight schedules.

"Illegal chronic flight delays make flying unreliable for travelers. Today's action puts the airline industry on notice that we expect their flight schedules to reflect reality," said U.S. Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg. "The department will enforce the law against airlines with chronic delays or unrealistic scheduling practices in order to protect healthy competition and ensure passengers are treated fairly."

DOT rules prohibit airlines from promising unrealistic schedules that do not reflect

actual flight departure and arrival times. Unrealistic scheduling is an unfair, deceptive, and anticompetitive practice that disrupts passengers' travel plans, denies them reliable scheduling information, and allows airlines to unfairly capture business from competitors by misleading consumers.

Chronically delaying a flight for more than four consecutive months is one form of unrealistic scheduling. Under DOT rules, a flight is chronically delayed if it is flown at least 10 times a month and arrives more than 30 minutes late more than 50 percent of the time. Cancellations are included as delays within this calculation.

DOT's investigation uncovered that JetBlue operated four chronically delayed flights at least 145 times between June 2022 through November 2023. Each flight was chronically delayed for five straight months in a row - or more. Despite DOT warning JetBlue about the chronic delays on its flight between John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) and Raleigh-Durham, N.C., the airline continued to operate three more chronically delayed flights between Fort Lauderdale and Orlando, Fla. and JFK, and

between Fort Lauderdale, Fla. and Windsor Locks, Conn.

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics estimates, based off of data submitted to DOT by JetBlue, that the airline was responsible for over 70 percent of the disruptions for the four chronically delayed flights. Regardless of the cause of the disruption for any specific flight, DOT rules provide airlines adequate time to fix their schedule after a flight becomes chronically delayed to avoid illegal unrealistic scheduling. JetBlue failed to do so.

DOT's order requires JetBlue cease and desist its chronic flight delays and pay a \$2 million penalty. JetBlue must pay half of the penalty - \$1 million in cash - directly to the U.S. Treasury. The other half of the penalty goes to compensate JetBlue passengers harmed by either the chronically delayed flights covered by the DOT's order or any future flight cancellations or delays of three hours or more caused by JetBlue within the next year. The future compensation must be valued at a minimum of \$75 for each harmed passenger.

TOWN WATCH (Cont. from pg. 10)

ades has led to Marcia's contracting kidney cancer. Since her November 2020 diagnosis, she has found "elevated levels" of PFAS in the drinking water as supplied by New Jersey American Water. (Neither NJAW nor the township are not respondents in the filing.)

The couple claim that the 20 defendants knew about PFAS' cancer link since the 1960s but neglected to warn or act on the elevated levels. Florida attorneys Madeline E. Pendley and J. Caleb Cunningham filed on the Feldmans' behalf.

The N.J. Department of Environmental Protection placed a maximum content limit of PFAS and PFOA to 14 parts per trillion in a liter of water in 2021. It is the most stringent limit in the nation.

MAPLEWOOD - A Dingmans Ferry, Pa. driver may be making an appearance at the South Orange Maplewood Municipal Court this month to answer to five motor vehicle summonses involving the striking of a "juvenile pedestrian" near Columbia High School Dec. 16.

The Maplewood Police blotter records police officers responding to a car-pedestrian strike at the corner of Academy Street and Parker Avenue early that Monday. Officers found a youth who said he was hit by a van at that corner.

An investigation had found that the van driver was attempting to make a left-hand turn onto Academy when the boy was struck. The driver got out to check on the youth - who waved him off, saying he was late for school - got back in and drove away. CHS is about a block away from that intersection.

It was not recorded how the out-of-state driver was found and ticketed. The unidentified man has been charged with failure to yield to a pedestrian, careless driving, leaving the scene of an accident and failure to report thereof.

Three New SOMSD Leaders

The South Orange-Maplewood School District's board of education selected and installed Nubia DuVall-Wilson as its president and Will Meyer and Regina Eckert as first and second vice presidents at their Jan. 2 reorganization meeting here at its administration building.

DuVall-Wilson, of South Orange and Maplewoodians Meyer and Eckert were unanimously elected by their peers. While all three are into their first board member terms, DuVall-Wilson was 2024's first V.P. Their selection came after Nov. 5 election winners Jeffrey Bennett, of South Orange, Deirdre Brown, of Maplewood, and Bimal Kapida, of South Orange, were inaugurated by new Board Attorney Patrick Carrigg.

BLOOMFIELD - The Bloomfield High School community entered the Holidays mourning two scholar athletes who played five decades apart but had died within 24 hours Dec. 11-12.

Last Rites for Tyiana Sears, 42, who died Dec. 11, was held here at the New Light Baptist Church and Glendale Cemetery Dec. 20. The township native scored 1,922 career points and an 87-15 win-loss record while helping the Bengals girls basketball team to four straight New Jersey Interscholastic League Championships 1998-2001. She was

named to the All- NJIL First team plus the Essex County First or Second teams those four years. Sears - who was promoted from Demarest Elementary and Bloomfield Middle schools - was also an All-Essex team volleyball player.

Tyiana Simone Sears continued her basketball career with the St. Peter's College Peahens, attaining the 2001-02 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference Rookie of the Year by scoring 18 double points that freshman season.

Sears, who was named to the BHS Athletic Hall of Fame in 2015, moved to Newark, where she raised Jason Elijah Cadesrin and Ta-Marrae Elizabeth Sears. Companion Kiel Williams and sister Tamisa Covington are also among her survivors.

News then came from the Heller, Pa. Funeral Home that William E. Van Riper, 81, of nearby Berwick, had died Dec. 12. The BHS Class of 1961 graduate was shortstop and co-captain of that year's Bengals baseball team.

Born March 3, 1943 in Glen Ridge, Van Riper served as a U.S. Army medic in Italy and Vietnam. He returned to Bloomfield to work for CE Lummus, then Newark's Prudential Insurance and eventually retiring from R.R. Donnelly in Maryland. His last address was at Berwick's Celebration Villa.

Brothers Gerard and Kevin are among his survivors; sister Carol predeceased him. The family has requested no public services. Recollections may be sent to Condolences@HellerFuneralHome LLC.com.

MONTCLAIR - Some scholar-athletes here at Montclair State University and MUS at Bloomfield College are deciding whether
(Continued on page 15)

The Observation Booth



OP-ED By Andrea Dialect

AIN'T BUYING THAT

*Religious themes discussed.
Reader discretion is advised.*

Check out the draft below and visit Localtalkweekly.com to read the full story in the Entertainment section. The photo accompanied here is a pic of my Granny's child. I bought the hat for her, and when her mom put it on her, she went right into pose mode. At 6 months, she is such an actress. I told my daughter that she looks like D Dog from D Block, who's promoting that golden grill. By the looks of that pic, she ain't buying it, and neither am I.

Don't forget to check out my daily portal session on my Andrea Dialect Facebook lab page.

JOIN THE COLLECTIVE - ENTER and FIND BURIED TREASURE THAT KEEPS TURNING UP every morning. See ya at around 5 or 6 a.m. perhaps. Also, follow my msdialect Instagram. Like, follow, and share and check out my FINE ART photography!

URGENT CARE

Welcome to this written puzzle. The beginning of this story draft has been placed below. In this ending in which we now speak, we are nearly at the end of the live marketing free workshop that I attended, and two very important things popped up for mental purchase that I just ain't buying from the moderator of this big-ticket platform.

Number one: when she said, and I quote, "Don't mess with those industries; we want to make money. Your stuff will remain on folk's desks too long, and you will be waiting for this person and that person. You don't want to do that. We want to make big money."

The woman's joy of service as she initially candidly spoke of her enjoyment of creating workshops for people in prison and for schools, pouring into the education of children and humanity, was apparent. By the time she finished with that discussion after being unmuted, as the so-called guru spoke, I could hear the wind being sucked out of her sail and the sailboats of all those

Photo Courtesy Andrea Dialect



others in attendance redirected from the shallow waters perhaps into the gushing winds of those high tides.

Lastly, this other person who had the opportunity to dawn the mic after the unmute was quite mind-boggling. On four different occasions, she had been muted and reminded of the mission of her statements. The questions asked had to be pertinent to the subject matter - things like money, coaching, sales, and once again, money. Our facilitator had been coaching as fishing for sales from jump, and we all hung in there, serving on those boards for around 45 minutes of the 90-minute wade. But this was only to be a synchronized swim, as with most of those business or

political pool parties.

But each time she clicked that woman back on with that powerful unmute button because that woman stood her ground and continued her pleas for help, I LOVED HER. Undoubtedly, God was telling me at the time that He'd rather I listen to her pleas on that Sunday than His listen once again to mine.

Finally, the 4th time, in saving face, Missy gave her the floor and asked her what she wanted. I quote, "I got so much going on. They're trying to ruin me at my job. I need help. I need y'all to pray for me." Those were the two times that I wish I could've teleported into that woman's posh executive space, snatched the mic, and unmuted all.

I mean, that was the only two times when, in that space - not meaning when I am out there in space in our world, our countries, our states, our towns, our communities, our homes - the question is SHOULD WE CARE OR SHOULD WE NOT? Which I'm not buying into because, for me, it's not a question. Oh my word, I AIN'T BUYING THAT! (This is where it starts)...

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 have any questions, comments or concerns, send them to localtalkandrea@gmail.com.

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK LAUNCHES JUBILEE YEAR 2025 WITH HOPE-FILLED OPENING MASS

NEWARK - The Archdiocese of Newark inaugurated the Catholic Church's Jubilee Year 2025 with an Opening Mass celebrated by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark, on Dec. 29 at Newark's Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart. The celebration marked the beginning of a holy season proclaimed by Pope Francis, uniting Catholics worldwide under the theme "Pilgrims of Hope."

The well-attended Mass began with Cardinal Tobin greeting the assembly at the transept for the Introductory Rite, followed by a reading of the first Gospel (John 14:7) and the Jubilee Bull of Indiction, "Spes non confundit" ("Hope does not dis-

appoint"). Cardinal Tobin then led a procession from the side transept door to the Cathedral Basilica's main entrance, where he invited the faithful to venerate the raised Jubilee Cross of Hope carried throughout. The procession returned to the Cathedral Basilica, where Cardinal Tobin led prayers for the blessing and the sprinkling of holy water, reminding the congregation of their baptism.

Reflecting the diversity of the Archdiocese, the rest of the liturgy featured prayers and readings in several languages used by the faithful, including Creole, Italian, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Tagalog, and American Sign Language.

During his homily, Cardinal Tobin reminded the assembly that all Christians are pilgrims journeying together with a clear destiny - the Kingdom of God.

"The Pope inaugurates this Jubilee Year as a time of hope and renewal, opening the 'door of hope' to everyone," Cardinal Tobin said. "Pilgrims are called to embrace this hope, actively pursuing God's promise and spreading light amid the world's darkness."

A Jubilee Year is a period for Catholics to re-establish their relationship with God, each other, and creation through prayer and reconciliation. The yearlong celebration will feature special liturgies, pilgrimages, and chari-

table initiatives focused on hope and healing. Catholics in the Archdiocese of Newark can receive a Jubilee Indulgence by visiting one of four designated pilgrimage churches during the Jubilee Year: the Cathedral Basilica in Newark, St. Pius X Church in Old Tappan, St. Joseph of the Palisades Parish in West New York, and St. Helen Church in Westfield. The Jubilee Indulgence can also be granted by undertaking spiritual works of mercy and penance outlined in the Archdiocese's indulgence guidelines.

For more information about the Jubilee Year 2025, visit the Archdiocese's website at www.rcan.org/jubilee-2025.

TOWN WATCH

(Continued from page 13)

to stay here without their NCAA Division II and III sports teams or transfer to schools and continue playing.

MSU's Board of Directors, in what President Jonathan Koppel said was "a difficult decision," will have its men's and women's lacrosse and women's flag football teams trade levels as of Fall 2025. The flag football club will be elevated to Division III. Both lacrosse teams will remain but as club squads.

The directors meanwhile dropped MSU at Bloomfield College's NCAA Division II baseball and women's volleyball teams to club status. The public Division III MSU brought aboard the private Division II Bloomfield College in a July 2023 merger.

The changes are to take effect pending approval from the NCAA after the Division II and III seniors have graduated in June 2025. The lead time will allow underclass student-athletes to decide whether to stay or transfer. Students who were enrolled on said sports' scholarships will have those scholarships honored should they stay at MSU or BC.

Elevating women's flag football, said an MSU release, would allow more players to compete in one of the nation's fastest growing sports. It is another step in aligning both schools' athletic programs.

MSU's men's lacrosse team won the Skyline Conference 2009-2017 with a 53-1 win-loss record those years. The Red Hawk women won six of eight championships 2006-13.

The BC Bears baseball team had advanced to the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference second round and junior Andres Varas was named to the CACC All Star Team last year. The women's volleyball team had advanced to the CACC state sectional final round in 2021.

GLEN RIDGE - The Dec. 22 car accident response and apprehension of its driver here at Bloomfield Avenue by Clark Street missed ending in Bloomfield by several yards.

Glen Ridge and Montclair police officers caught the driver - identified by local law enforcement as "an 18-year-old man from Newark" - after a brief foot chase. It was then when MPD officers explained to their borough colleagues that they were pursuing the suspect, and the 2023 Kia Sportage he had taken from Montclair's Bloomfield Avenue Business District.

The first MPD officers met the Kia's owner along Church Street earlier that Sunday. He said that he was unloading the Sportage while it was running. He said he had left his SUV unattended for a moment - and saw it leave east towards Bloom-

field Avenue.

MPD has charged the suspect with theft by unlawful taking, theft of motor vehicle, unlawful taking thereof, motor vehicle burglary and resisting arrest by flight.

There were no reported injuries. The Glen Ridge-Bloomfield boundary crosses eastbound Bloomfield Avenue some 25 feet east of Clark Street.

BELLEVILLE - The Belleville Planning Board may continue considering on Jan. 9 the proposed replacement of "Old Belleville Hall" and adjacent Elks Lodge on Washington Avenue with a five story, 108-unit apartment building as was introduced at their Dec. 12 meeting.

Belleville Ventures LLC, in its Dec. 12 introduction, wants to replace the three-story hall at 258-60 Washington Ave. and the single-story lodge at 254-56 Washington with the said new building holding an overall 110 units. Those extra two units are for street level commercial-retail.

The replacement of the structures, which goes back 79 to 174 years, has been a long time coming. While the Belleville Elks had moved to merge with Kearny, "Old Belleville Hall," which is surrounded by perimeter fencing, has been vacant for decades.

Belleville Hall, believed to have been built in 1850 and was used as a meeting place by various groups into the 1940s. It was Belleville's municipal building until the current Town hall opened in 1913. It continued as a place for sports and recreational teams since 1930 but was eventually rezone for commercial/retail use.

The Township Council had received the overall 254-60 Washington Ave. "Area in Need of Redevelopment" designation from the Township Council in 2023. It is part of the larger Washington Avenue Redevelopment Area created in 2022. 258-60 was bought for \$800,000 in 2021. Belleville Ventures' application also includes the vacant lot at 143 Valley St. behind it.

NUTLEY - Those who attend the to-be-announced memorial service for LSCW Theodora "Teddie" Blume McKee, who died after a short illness Dec. 28, will probably have as likely come from here as Montclair.

The Brooklyn-born McKee was a longtime Nutley Family Service Bureau social worker who fully retired in 2021 after "semi-retiring" in 1992. McKee commuted from her just as lengthy residency in Montclair.

Brooklyn's Abraham Lincoln High School Class of 1947 graduate came to the Nutley-Montclair area by way of New York University and marriage. The then-Theodora Blum had earned a bachelor's degree in social work from NYU and was pursuing her masters there when she met

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Elmore "Mike" McKee. They married in 1957 and moved to Montclair to raise Seth and Daniel.

McKee more than threw herself into her NFSB social work when Mike died in 1999. The Montclair Adult School and YMCA regular ran book discussion groups at the Montclair Public Library into early 2024.

Three grandsons, a daughter, brother Henry Blum and sister Susan Linder are also among her survivors. Sister Frances Lewin predeceased her.

THE DOCTOR IS IN

(Continued from page 4)

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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