



# CLARION

SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW COMMUNITY NETWORK

Volume 32 — Issue 1 ~ January 2015

## New NCC Clinic Welcomes First Patients, Officials Cut Ribbon



Officials gathered to cut the ribbon of New Community Commons Senior's new health clinic. From left: Sharon Pleasant-Jones, NCC Director of Health and Social Services, Lisa Block, Senior Program Officer at The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, Marsha Atkind, Executive Director at The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, Richard Rohrman, New Community CEO, and Kathy Spivey, NCC Chief of Staff.

There's nothing like a real life emergency to serve as an urgent reminder of the importance of accessible health care. Such was the case during the recent grand opening of NCC Commons Senior's new Visiting Physician Clinic.

Officials from New Community and The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey gathered at

140 South Orange Ave. in Newark with residents for the ceremonial ribbon cutting of the new health clinic. But mere moments before NCC Health and Social Services Director Sharon Pleasant-Jones began the program, a resident at the event became disoriented and unresponsive.

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## NCC Founder Honored With Lifetime Achievement Award



Frances Teabout, right, NCC Director of Mission, accepted the award on behalf of Monsignor William J. Linder, founder of New Community, at the gala on December 8. Teabout is standing next to Henry Rawls, founder of the Nubian Cultural Center.

New Community founder and board chairman Monsignor William J. Linder was presented with a lifetime achievement award by the Nubian Cultural Center and Unity Missionary Investors for his decades of service to inner city residents.

For Henry Rawls, founder of the Nubian Cultural Center, conferring the Gus Heningburg Lifetime Achievement Award on Monsignor was a particularly special occasion. Rawls' ties to Queen of Angels parish, where Monsignor started off as a young priest, stretch multiple family generations. In 1969, Rawls said he worked as a seminarian at the parish under Monsignor and other leaders. He recalls the seeds of community development that Monsignor planted there and the beginning stages of New Community's formation.

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## The Christmas That Never Came

Editorial

By Monsignor William J. Linder

They lived in the town of Chibok in Nigeria, comprised mostly of families who traditionally celebrate Christmas according to the scriptures. But for more than 200 Nigerian girls still missing after being kidnapped last April from a boarding school by home-grown extremists, Christmas never really came.

How could it?

Just imagine sending your child off to school and then finding out later that he or she has been kidnapped, along with dozens of their classmates. As a parent, you would experience a range of emotions, but would no doubt hold out hope that your son or daughter would one day be returned.

When days turn into weeks and weeks into months, however, that hope starts to fade. For the record, dozens of the girls did in fact escape in the days following their capture, but more than 200 remain missing.

The leader of the Boko Haram, the Nigerian terrorist group responsible for the kidnapping, has even claimed that the girls have converted to Islam and been married off to group leaders. There have even been reports of a few parents of the girls' dying from health problems that some suggest were triggered by the trauma. This horrific situation has to wear on these parents. There are no easy answers here, for reasoning with extremists never works.

Whether one is dealing with the Boko Haram or terrorist groups like ISIS, this is sadly the case. Recently, there were even reports of Isis beheading four Christian children in Iraq who refused to renounce their faith and embrace Islam.

I commend those in Nigeria who have continued to protest the kidnapping and plead for the girls' safe return. As we start another year, let us not forget these Nigerian school girls.

And as you reflect on your own Christmas and the time spent with your family, just remember that for these girls and their families, Christmas never really came.

## The New Community Clarion

The New Community Clarion is published as a community service. The editor reserves the right to withhold articles and photographs once they are submitted. Opinions expressed in columns are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the view of the newspaper.

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### OUR MISSION

To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.

New Community is recognized as:

- The largest and most comprehensive community development organization in the United States
- A large-scale deliverer of comprehensive programs and services
- A leader in affordable housing and economic development
- A model among non-profit, social entrepreneurship, and CDC communities
- Having beneficial partnerships on the local, national, and global level.

## NCC Accepts Books, Joins City In Literacy Campaign



The New Community network received a donation of books last month from the City of Newark as part of Mayor Ras Baraka's city-wide literacy campaign called "Read and Believe," which launched Oct. 6, 2014. NCC was among a group of community-based partners in Newark that received several boxes of books, each labeled by reading level. The books, a sampling shown by Care Coordinator Jasmine Sawh-Ramroop, will go to NCC Health and Social Services, Youth Services, Harmony House and both early learning centers. New Community received the books based on responding to a survey from Newark Chief Education Officer Lauren Wells, which gathered information on an agency's literacy services and the barriers it faces, according to Richard Cammarieri, New Community Director of Special Projects.

## Around The Network

### College Student Club Donates To NCC Food Pantry



Students from the Essex County College Physical Therapist Assistant Club recently delivered 18 bags of food to New Community's Emergency Food Pantry at 220 Bruce St. in Newark. The student group, which is comprised of 26 members, collected more than 100 canned and nonperishable items, including canned vegetables, cereal and pasta. Seven members, including club Secretary Danielle Cahanap, far left, and President Alisone Alcordo, second from left, documented the visit for their school service project by taking a photo with NCC Health and Social Services staff, from left, Tahisha Chambers, standing in back fifth from left, Angeli Martinez and Jasmine Sawh-Ramroop.

### CHELC Hosts Scholastic Book Fair



It was the perfect way to stuff Christmas stockings but avoid the holiday shopping crush. The week before Christmas, Community Hills Early Learning Center hosted the Scholastic Book Fair, where students brought money to shop for books. Talya Smith, seated center, teaches pre-kindergarten in Room 3 at CHELC and brought four students to the book fair. Ishmeal Winston, 4, hands money to Administrative Assistant Nelly Payen to purchase three books. School Director Cheryl Mack stands next to the bookshelves, which featured a wide range of reading material, from history and science books to baking and picture books and even a selection of popular children's books translated into Spanish.



### Seconds, Please: Holiday Parties At NCC Keep Kitchen Bustling



Out of sight for the regular passerby, the New Community Extended Care Facility kitchen was another bustling site during Christmas as special orders for holiday parties streamed in from around the NCC network. Executive Chef Joseph Rodriguez, on left slicing a roast for the party at Extended Care that evening with the family members of residents, said that he and his five-member staff catered 20 parties during the first three weeks of December. "We manage, we get it done," said Rodriguez, who has worked at NCC for about three decades. On right, kitchen staff hustle as cornbread cools.

## Employee Of The Month: Rhonda Johnson



Security Officer Rhonda Johnson says that during her time at NCC, she has grown with the company.

When the phone rings, Rhonda Johnson knows that a crisis may be waiting on the other end of the line.

Johnson works as a Security Officer at New Community and when she is working dispatch, she says she's "constantly on the phone."

"No call is ever taken for granted," said Johnson, who receives calls for everything from public safety matters to general inquiries.

NCC Director of Security Prentiss Thompson said simply that what makes Johnson stand out from the crowd are two important qualities: honesty and dedication.

Johnson has worked in the Security Department since February of 2000, according to Thompson.

Last year, Johnson faced a potentially dangerous situation on the job. An individual who was banned from visiting an NCC residence became angry and charged at Johnson. Fortunately, her boss was next to her and Thompson pushed Johnson out of the way and prevented the attacker from harming her or anyone else.

Over the years, Johnson says she's worked at several sites around the NCC network and covered every shift. (She currently works 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) Her first assignment was working at Community Hills Early Learning Center. Later she covered the Extended Care Facility. While stationed at Harmony House, a transitional housing facility, Johnson said she personally witnessed the challenges that homeless families face. "It was an experience for me, too," she said. "I got to realize

how precious my own life is."

As NCC has

evolved over the years, Johnson feels that she's also personally grown.

"I grew with the company," she said.

Johnson says she's also become attached to the seniors who live in the buildings she patrols. "I call them 'little grannies,'" Johnson said. "We're here to protect them—they're first, we're second."

Years ago, Johnson recalled an incident at NCC Commons Senior where a fire that started in a fourth floor apartment caused all elevators to be shut down. Johnson marveled as she recalled how the security officers transformed the Community Room into a makeshift waiting area and kept the scene calm and orderly. Several hours later, when the elevator was functioning, they escorted groups of five up the elevator back to their homes. That's when Johnson really felt like she was part of a team—a sentiment she still holds today.

"We're more or less like a family," she said of the Security Department.

Born and raised in Newark, Johnson is a single parent and has one daughter. She graduated from Central High School in 1978 and studied business administration at Bloomfield College. Johnson previously worked in security at Newark Liberty International Airport and at Woodbridge Developmental Center as a Human Services Assistant.

### Students From Pingry Donate Gifts To Harmony House Youth



Twelve fourth grade students from The Pingry School spent an afternoon with children from Harmony House, a transitional housing facility for homeless families at 278 South Orange Ave. in Newark. The group gifted Harmony House with brand new games and toys for the children and also donated household items like towels, blankets and cleaning supplies as well as snacks, according to Patricia Casey, a teacher at Pingry, a private school where the Lower School is based in Short Hills. The youth enjoyed each other's company as they ate snacks and played games in the recreation room of Harmony House.



#### New Community Corporation

St. Joseph Plaza

233 West Market St. Newark, NJ 07103

(973) 242-8012 | [www.newcommunity.org](http://www.newcommunity.org)

### Where the Music Comes Alive

#### JANUARY 2015

#### Live Entertainment & Music Calendar

Every Friday from 7 PM to 11 PM ~ Food or Beverage Purchase Required

JANUARY 2<sup>nd</sup>

STRATEGY #1

JANUARY 9<sup>th</sup>

YASKO KOKO'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

JANUARY 16<sup>th</sup>

SPIRIT OF LIFE ENSEMBLE & DWIGHT WEST ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CELEBRATION

JANUARY 23<sup>rd</sup>

JAMES GIBBS III & THE BRICK CITY SOUL COLLECTIVE

JANUARY 30<sup>th</sup>

CARLOS FRANCIS & OPEN SPACE BAND



Our Mission: To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.

## New NCC Clinic Welcomes First Patients, Officials Cut Ribbon

Continued from page 1



Commons Senior Tenant Association President Larry Coley, right, prepares to have his blood glucose and blood pressure checked by Care Coordinator Jasmin Lopez before heading into the clinic to see Dr. Nicholas Guittari.

Immediately, Pleasant-Jones, a registered nurse, and Dr. Nicholas Guittari, who will regularly staff the new clinic, were both by the elderly resident's side. They checked the resident's vital signs on the spot and assessed any immediate needs. Then Guittari and Health and Social Services staff wheeled the resident into the clinic as they waited for EMS to arrive.

When Pleasant-Jones took to the podium, she began with a prayer and reminded the audience of the crucial services the new clinic provides for the elderly and disabled.

"This is what we do every day," Pleasant-Jones said. She later confirmed that the resident returned from the hospital stabilized and is in the care of a family member.

The grand opening celebrated a milestone for NCC, which has expanded its Visiting Physician Clinic program, thanks to a grant from The Healthcare Foundation. NCC now boasts four on-site health clinics in eight of its senior buildings.

"I firmly believe health care is a basic human right," Richard Rohrman, CEO of New Community, said.

Marsha Atkind, Executive Director of The Healthcare Foundation, said she was excited to partner with New Community to expand its Visiting Physician program.

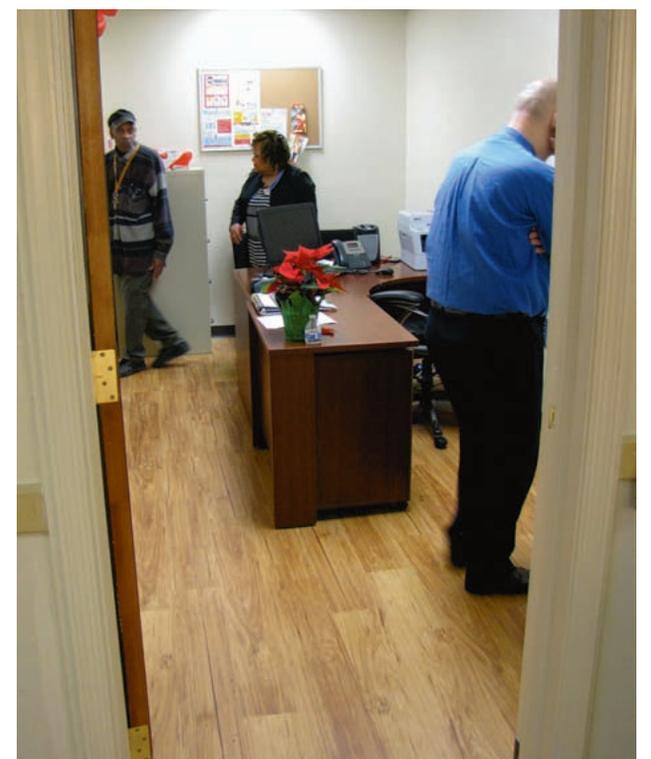
"We knew this would be a great match," said Atkind, who awarded NCC a grant of up to \$120,527 to set up the clinic.

Attendees like Lisa Block, Senior Program Officer at The Healthcare Foundation, toured the 300-square-foot clinic, which features a fully

outfitted doctor's office with brand new equipment including an examination bed, electrocardiogram (EKG) machine, scopes to examine eyes and ears, blood pressure monitor, digital scale, and medical

supplies, as well as a separate room for the nurse. "This is gorgeous," Block said after walking through the clinic, which is located on the ground floor adjacent to the Community Room.

Resident Raymond Hopkins is especially grateful that he can receive his primary care services just steps from his apartment. He was among 18 people who were signed up to see the doctor that day. "We don't have to run around," he said. Afterwards, Hopkins and all new patients received a complimentary brown bag lunch prepared by Paul Hsu of Guardy's Pharmacy in Newark. The health clinic at Commons Senior is open Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and the office number is 973-585-9608.



Touring the clinic, from left: Larry Coley, Tenant Association President, Sharon Pleasant-Jones, NCC Director of Health and Social Services, and Dr. Nicholas Guittari.

 <p><b>New Community Adult Learning Center</b> 563 Orange Street, Newark, New Jersey 07107 <b>(973) 558-5536</b> www.newcommunity.org</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Available Courses</b></p> <p><b>English for Speakers of Other Languages</b> Mondays through Thursdays: 10 AM to 12 PM or 6 PM to 8 PM</p> <p><b>Citizenship</b> Saturdays: 9 AM to 12 PM</p> <p><b>Computers</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Basic &amp; Intermediate Levels Saturdays: 9 AM to 12 PM or 12 PM to 3 PM</p> <p><b>ABE, Pre-GED, &amp; GED (English only)</b> Mondays through Thursdays: 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM or 5:30 PM to 8 PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Free Services</b></p> <p><b>Health Screenings</b> Physicals, Mammograms, Cholesterol, Nutrition, etc.</p> <p><b>Open Community</b> Free workshops conducted by private institutions and/or volunteers for the general public</p> <p><b>Other Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community organizing</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Community rooms</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social services referrals</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Cursos Disponibles</b></p> <p><b>Inglés para Hablantes de otras Idiomas</b> Lunes a jueves: 10 AM a 12 PM o 6 PM a 8 PM</p> <p><b>Ciudadanía</b> Sábados: 9 AM a 12 PM</p> <p><b>Computadora</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Nivel Básico e Intermedio Sábados: 9 AM a 12 PM o 12 PM a 3 PM</p> <p><b>ABE, Pre-GED, &amp; GED (Ingles solamente)</b> Lunes a jueves: 9:30 AM a 1:30 PM o 5:30 PM a 8 PM</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Servicios Gratuitos</b></p> <p><b>Exámenes Médicos Gratuitos</b> Físicos, Mamografías, Colesterol, Nutrición, etc.</p> <p><b>Comunidad Abierta</b> Talleres gratuitos conducidos por instituciones privadas y/o voluntarios para el público en general</p> <p><b>Otros servicios</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Organización de la comunidad</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sala de reuniones</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Referidos a servicios sociales</li> </ul>

## O Come All Ye Faithful: University Hospital Donates To Food Pantry



Officials from the Public Affairs Department at University Hospital in Newark visited the week of Christmas to make a special donation to the Emergency Food Pantry. The Public Affairs Department decided to forgo a holiday party and instead donated funds to the food pantry to help fill its shelves in the coming months. From left: Thaddaeus Diggs, Director, Government Relations, Stacie J. Newton, Director, Marketing Communications, NCC Home Friends Director Tahisha Chambers, Kitty Donohue, Manager, Employee Communications, MerrySue Baum, Principal Public Relations Specialist, and Tiffany L. Smith, Manager, Communications.

**Our Mission ~ To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.**

## NCC Thanks Our Holiday Donors



Students from St. Rose of Lima Academy in Short Hills filled the truck with gifts and surrounded Madge Wilson, seated first row.

### Former Harmony House Residents Share Testimonials



Harmony House is New Community's transitional housing facility for homeless families and former resident Robin Williams recently reminded families living there that Harmony House is not their final destination—just a stop along the journey. "Whatever obstacle you face, there's a light at the end of the road," said Williams, 48, now a dispatcher for the Newark Police Department. She stayed at Harmony House from 2001 to 2002.



Fatima Williams (no relation to Robin Williams) also stayed at Harmony House in the past but now she is in the Navy, stationed in Virginia, and works on the flight deck of aircraft carriers. Williams, 22, stayed with her mother at Harmony House in 2009, and recalled how staff such as Case Worker Linda Washington was "loving and caring."

Supporters of New Community donated more than 1,000 toys to families in need this 2014 Christmas season. We are deeply grateful to the following groups and individuals for your generosity:

- St. Paul's Abbey of Newton - Fr. Odilo Yi
- St. Catherine of Sienna, Cedar Grove - Eileen Rendeiro and parishioners
- Mr. & Mrs. Mark Carelli and family, Maplewood
- Weichert Realty, Maplewood - Rebecca Berenson, office staff
- Our Lady of Sorrow Parish, South Orange - Mark & Sarah Duggan and parishioners
- Millburn Fire Department - Chief Michael Roberts and staff
- Mr. Frank Consentino
- St. Helen's Catholic Parish, Westfield - Marilyn Ryan and parishioners
- Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child, Summit - Kathleen Lynch, Sarah Denaro and Brian Toppin
- St. Rose of Lima Academy, Short Hills

- Patty Nascone, Barbara Bradshaw and parishioners
- Our Lady of the Lake, Verona - Joyce Swatt and parishioners
- Notre Dame Catholic Parish, North Caldwell - Donna Zarros and parishioners
- Seton Hall University School of Law - Fr. Nicholas Gengaro and the Thomas More Society
- St. Thomas Parish, Bloomfield - Lorraine McMillan and parishioners
- St. Andrews Catholic Parish, Westwood - Gail Stamatopoulas and parishioners
- Team Hope at Glenwood School, Short Hills - Penina Barr, teachers, and students
- Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Forlini, Newark
- St. Theresa of Avila Parish, Summit - Margaret Strong, coordinator, and parishioners
- Church of the Assumption Parish, Emerson - parishioners and the Social Concerns Committee
- New Community employees

## Spreading Joy By Delivering Toys



The Rev. Nicholas Gengaro, left, chaplain at Seton Hall University School of Law, displays about \$3,000 worth of toys and gifts collected by SHU law students next to NCC Board Member Madge Wilson, who heads the annual toy drive.

'Tis the season for sharing gifts and spreading Christmas joy and Madge Wilson has been doing so in spades. Wilson, NCC Outreach Coordinator and Board Member, gears up starting in September, reaching out to local parishes, schools, businesses and private donors to drum up toy donations that are distributed to needy families in the days before Christmas. This Christmas, more than 1,000 gifts were donated, according to Wilson.

"Everybody is in the giving spirit this year," she said. "I get more than 100 calls a day."

Wilson personally makes each trip to pick up the toys, accompanied by staff from Environmental Services and its truck. True to her nature, 81-year-old Wil-

son warmly greets each person with a hug, helps load toys onto the truck, and makes sure to send thank you notes afterwards. Administrative Assistant Helen Abraha works closely with Wilson to organize, prepare and distribute the gifts each December.

"It's like 'oh, you thought about my family you thought about my child,'" Wilson said of how parents react to receiving the presents, all carefully wrapped and labeled. "The children get so excited—that's what drives me," she added.

In addition to the toy drive, Wilson also has a longstanding tradition of picking up donated Christmas trees for the NCC network from St. Paul's Abbey in Newton. About 20 fragrant Colorado blue spruce trees graced various departments around NCC, which added a festive touch for the holidays.



Tree delivery: NCC Environmental Services staff and Madge Wilson, right, picked up about 20 Christmas trees donated by St. Paul's Abbey in Newton.

## Social Security News Frequently Asked Questions

By Ammy Plummer  
Social Security District Manager  
Springfield Avenue, Newark NJ

**Q: I'm creating my budget for 2015. How much will my benefit increase at the beginning of the year?**

**A:** The monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income benefits for nearly 64 million Americans will increase by 1.7 percent in 2015. This annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) is tied to the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. This New Year, you can enjoy your COLA starting in January. Read more at [www.socialsecurity.gov/news/#!/post/10-2014-2](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/news/#!/post/10-2014-2).

**Q: I'd like to change the health care coverage that I signed up for through Healthcare.gov. How can I do that?**

**A:** The open enrollment period for Affordable Healthcare coverage takes place from November 15, 2014 to February 15, 2015. During this four-month period, you can enroll in a new plan or change current plans using the Affordable Care Act's Marketplace. To continue health coverage in 2015, simply renew the current health plan, or choose a new plan through the Marketplace between now and February 15, 2015. Once the open enrollment deadline passes, the only way to get coverage for 2015 is to qualify for a "Special Enrollment Period" due to a qualifying life event as specified by HealthCare.gov. You have four months to decide what type of coverage you want, but the sooner you act, the sooner you will enjoy the security of affordable healthcare. Find out more about HealthCare.gov's open enrollment period at [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov).

**Q: I have been receiving my Supplemental Security Income by direct deposit for years, but I need to change my bank account. How can I do that?**

**A:** The most convenient way to change your direct deposit information is by logging in to your personal my Social Security account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount). This is the safest and most secure method for updating and verifying your information. And, it's more convenient than visiting a local Social Security office. With your account, you can also track your earnings, estimate future benefits, and get a letter with proof of your benefits. Think of my Social Security as your hub for all Social Security-related information.

### Want To Support New Community In 2015?

Visit [newcommunity.org](http://newcommunity.org) and click "Donate" or contribute by mail:  
New Community Corporation, Attn:  
Annual Giving Campaign, 233 West  
Market Street, Newark, NJ 07103.

## SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Cynthia Sears



Cynthia Sears is "a born leader," according to the staff at NCC Manor Senior, where she's lived for 16 years.

Cynthia Sears says she prefers working behind the scenes rather than being in the spotlight.

Her low key attitude is concisely summed up in the understated way that Sears views her third term as President of the Tenant Association at New Community Manor Senior: "I don't mind doing it," she says, matter of factly.

A member of NCC's Senior Advisory Council, Sears has gained a reputation for championing a harmonious relationship between the staff and residents of Manor Senior, where Sears has resided for 16 years.

"It's supposed to be a collaboration. You're supposed to work with New Community and New Community will work with you," she said. "I like where I live and I'd like to see it be the best it can be."

Care Coordinator Sister Inocencia Emenogu said that Sears "looks after the residents." As head of

the Tenant Association, Sears listens to issues that residents bring up, plans meetings and advocates for a spirit of cooperation between the residents and staff of the Health and Social Services and Management departments.

"If anything happens, she takes charge," Sister Inocencia said.

Sister Mary Prisca, Assistant Care Coordinator, added, "She's a born leader."

A New York City native, Sears grew up under the care of her grandparents in St. George, S.C. At age 10, she moved to Newark to join her mother. As an adult, Sears said she worked jobs ranging from a case manager at the Department of Social Services in South Carolina to being a certified food handler. Her favorite job by far, she says, was performing data entry at Prudential as a microfilm technician. "When you like doing something, it's not a job," she said, recalling how she photographed, edited, and spliced documents.

However, life took a sudden turn on a chilly morning in 1992 when Sears slipped and fell on a patch of black ice outside her office. She suffered several injuries and at one point she feared she may not walk again. Eventually, she had to leave her job. "I was devastated," Sears said. Six years later, Sears was walking again and had moved into Manor Senior. Within a few years, she was elected by her fellow residents to her first term as President of the Tenant Association.

"She is so eager and willing to assist," Sister Inocencia said of Sears, whose son lives in Newark and mother and sister live in Irvington and East Orange, respectively.

"We're all here to help someone else," Sears said.



### Wellness Tips

## January is Glaucoma Awareness Month

**Glaucoma is a disease of the optic nerve. The optic nerve is responsible for carrying images from the eye to the brain. If glaucoma is not diagnosed and treated it can cause vision loss or even blindness.**

#### *What should you know about Glaucoma and eye care?*

- People over the age of 60 and those with a family history of glaucoma, heart disease or high blood pressure are considered to be more at risk for glaucoma.
- Being aware of the risk factors. Get medical treatment early to avoid permanent damage to your vision.
- Elevated eye pressure
  - Elevated eye pressure
  - Age – over 60
  - Ethnic Background - Afro-Americans, Mexican-Americans and Asian Americans increased risk
  - Family history
  - Medical Conditions - diabetes or hypothyroidism increase risk
- Eye conditions – such as detached retina, increased eye pressure, eye tumors, eye injuries
- Nearsightedness
- Prolonged use of corticosteroids
- Visit your eye doctor regularly, every other year is recommended.
- Visit your eye doctor immediately if you experience:
  - Loss of peripheral vision
  - Tunnel vision
  - Severe eye pain
  - Blurred vision
  - Halos around lights

**It's important to take care of your eyes, especially as you age, in order to maintain a healthy, independent lifestyle.**

*If you would like to learn about in-home and community programs and services provided by Visiting Nurse Association Health Group, please call 800-862-3330 or visit [www.vnahg.org](http://www.vnahg.org)*

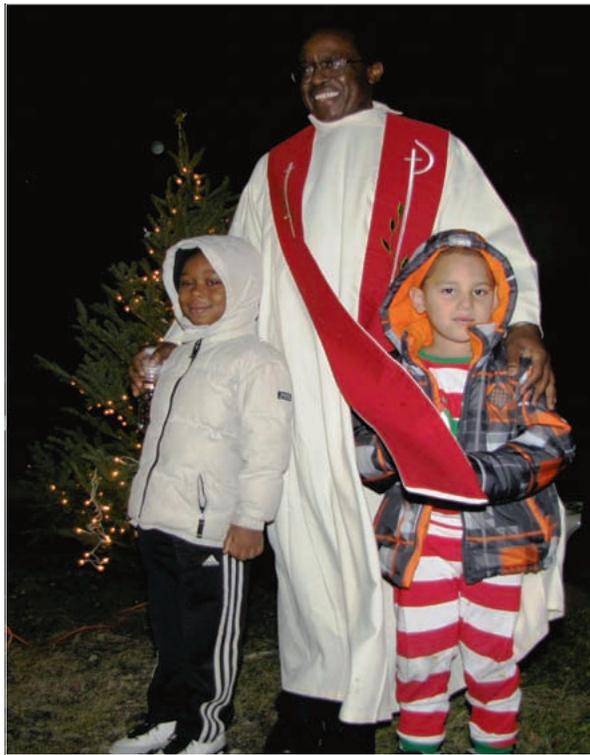
## Keeping NCC Traditions Alive: Crib Blessing And Tree Lighting



From left: Sister Theresia Hhayuma, Sister Mary Prisca and Father Beatus Kitururu gathered with residents of NCC Manor Senior for the crib blessing at the nativity scene displayed in front of 545 Orange St. in Newark.



The New Community Gospel Choir led the singing of Christmas carols at NCC Commons Senior's annual tree lighting at 140 South Orange Ave. in Newark. Building residents and the NCC Health and Social Services Department also participated.



Father Beatus Kitururu, standing center, blessed the Christmas tree and reminded those in attendance of the spiritual symbolism of light. "Where there is light, there is love and forgiveness," he said.

## NCC Senior Buildings Deck The Halls

Gardens Senior



Orange Senior



Douglas Homes



Manor Senior



## Hark! NCC Board, Officials Make Merry This Season



Board members, from left: Edgar Nemorin, Barry Baker, Madge Wilson, NCC Founder and Board Chairman Monsignor William J. Linder, Director of Property Management Fonda Porter, and Dr. A. Zachary Yamba gather for a holiday party at St. Joseph Plaza.



O Christmas Tree! From left: Anna Sing-King, Manager of Human Resources, Jackie Andrews, Program Manager of SAIF, Lisa Chavis, Senior Case Manager at Harmony House, and Cristhian Barcelos, Director of the NCC Adult Learning Center.

## Breakfast With Santa



A family enjoys a hot meal at the annual Breakfast With Santa hosted by NCC Youth Services.



Left: More than 200 children and their parents came to the Neighborhood Center on Hayes Street on the Saturday before Christmas for a complimentary breakfast and family photograph with Santa. Each child also received a gift.

# OPEN ENROLLMENT DAYS

## Having Trouble Choosing A New Health Plan?

### GET ANSWERS FROM OUR FINANCIAL COUNSELORS

#### We're Happy to Help.

Simply walk into our Financial Counseling Department and sit down with one of our certified Financial Counselors. We'll review your options and help you select a plan that is just right for you.

*\* Individuals eligible for Medicare do not qualify.*

#### Date

Saturday, January 31, 2015

#### Location

University Hospital  
 150 Bergen Street, Newark N.J. 07103  
 Room C203 - (Right off the Main Lobby)

#### Time

8:30 am - 1:30 pm

#### **NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY**

Please bring these items for all members of your household:

- Social Security Numbers  
(or document number for legal immigrants)
- Driver's License, Birth Certificate or Passport
- Last 4 pay stubs or W-2 forms, or "Wage and Tax Statements"
- 2 recent bank statements prior to date of service if applicable
- Information about additional income  
(Social security benefits, unemployment, etc.)
- Policy numbers for any current health insurance plans
- Information about any health insurance you or your family could get from an employer
- Proof of residency



## A Lesson In The Art Of Gift Giving



A group of autistic students from John F. Kennedy High School in Newark brought Christmas gifts to Harmony House Early Learning Center as part of a lesson in giving gifts, community service and generosity.



Tah-Aisa Brown, standing center, is a 20-year-old student at JFK who handed out a gift prepared for a boy. The beautifully wrapped items also came with new gloves and hats.



Malik Jones, 3, eagerly receives a gift from one of the JFK students. Janet Mino, the teacher at JFK's Autistic Program, said she wanted her students to learn how to give back because "they're always on the end of receiving," as individuals with special needs.



A young man from JFK, standing on left, hands a gift prepared for a girl to a HHELCC student. Mino and the JFK staff also prepared a large box of gifts for the early learning center to use in the classrooms as well as cookies for HHELCC staff.

## Jingle All The Way For Extended Care, Day Care Staff



The staff of NCC Extended Care Facility and Adult Medical Day Care joined together to celebrate the season with a holiday party hosted at the Culinary Cafe. Rafaela Made, left, Housekeeping Aide, and Delores Bynum, right, Receptionist.



Extended Care staff enjoying a festive meal, from left: Bunmi Shadeko, Sr. Sophy Mwachofi, Julia Ngari, and Sr. Domitila Lorri.

## From James Caldwell High: We Wish You A Merry Christmas!



Students from James Caldwell High School Student Council spent the morning doing various activities with Harmony House Early Learning Center students, like decorating Christmas cookies.



Student Council Secretary Kris Schneider, kneeling on right, has visited HHELCC for three years. "It's just a great thing and I love coming back every year," Schneider, 17, of West Caldwell, said.



Three high schoolers, on right, join a group of toddlers and their teachers on the carpet for a time of singing.

As part of a longstanding tradition, the James Caldwell High School Student Council donated gifts to Harmony House Early Learning Center the week before Christmas. The students organized a school-wide gift drive, where each homeroom collected money to purchase a gift for the children at HHELCC. The children and teens spent the morning in their classrooms singing Christmas carols, creating pictures with glitter and tissue paper and playing dress up.

Kris Schneider, 17, serves as Student Council Secretary and visited Harmony House Early Learning Center for his third year. "It's just a great experience to interact with the children," he said. In the weeks leading up to the visit, Schneider said that the entire school, located in West Caldwell, gets excited to participate. "Everyone gets so enthusiastic," he said.



The teens arrived by school bus and delivered loads of wrapped Christmas gifts—each marked for a specific child whose family had requested items such as clothing, educational games or other toys.

## FAMILY SERVICE BUREAU OF NEWARK

### Santa Swings By New Start



What would you like for Christmas? Antionette Langyin, 6, tells Santa Claus that she hasn't made up her mind about what she wants for Christmas. Parents and their children participating in the Family Service Bureau's New Start Program gathered for a special holiday luncheon at FSB. New Start is a boarder baby prevention program that provides assistance to at-risk mothers and babies in need. Participants receive infant supplies, referrals for substance abuse treatment and parenting workshops, among other services. For more information, call 973-286-2835.



## Tucked Away In His Studio, Homegrown Artist Flourishes At NCC



John Aytch, a resident of NCC Gardens Senior, holds a portrait of U.S. Sen. Cory Booker that he painted during Booker's earlier years as mayor of Newark.

The doorway to John Aytch's apartment looks like any other on his floor at New Community Gardens Senior. But step inside and you'll find yourself transported into a colorful, paint-soaked world.

Aytch, 79, welcomes you in but apologizes for the fact that his bed occupies what would traditionally be used as a living room in his one-bedroom unit. He urges you to look past the clutter.

His fretting fades, however, as he watches your eyes widen to absorb the feast of artwork that covers the walls, shelves and floor. A majestic gorilla, spotted in her natural habitat, dances across a canvas. Oversized art books spill from bookcases. A pile of magnifying glasses sits under one of his many work stations.

"It's my life. Art is me. It's something I was born with and depended on to survive," Aytch said.

Welcome to the laboratory of an artistic genius.

When Ozella Williams heard of Aytch's talent, she wanted to see it for herself and handed him

a photograph of herself receiving her diploma at Central High School in Newark in 1959.

Williams, who also lives at NCC Gardens Senior, was amazed at Aytch's life-like rendering of her graduation photo. "That's when I had him do eight" portraits of other family members, she said.

But for the majority of his life, Aytch has struggled with a different mode of creative expression—putting pen to paper to read and write.

"I pick up a book and I look at it and I'd wish, wow, I wish I knew what it said," said Aytch, who grew up in Green County, N.C., as the son of a sharecropper. He briefly attended school but spent most of his time working the fields picking cotton and tobacco. His entire family was illiterate, according to Aytch. "We thought we were only going to be farmers," said Aytch, who is now surrounded by brushes, sponges, palettes, painting knives and perhaps hundreds of tubes of Liquitex acrylic paint.

In 1955, Aytch joined the Army and served for three years. He moved to New Jersey in 1962 and soon began working for an industrial company, where he learned to extrude plastic, earning 85 cents an hour. He quickly became an expert but said he couldn't progress upward at the company due to his lack of literacy.

"It was totally embarrassing," Aytch recalled. "If you're illiterate, they treat you like that," he added.

Meanwhile, Aytch continued to hone his craft. Each day, he pulled out his sketch pad and practiced drawing. "The hand and the mind (are) just not one," he said, describing the process of how an artist fine-tunes a skill. "You have to be

able to concentrate. I can focus and I can eliminate everything else," he said.

Over the span of a decade, Aytch gradually taught himself to read. He says he studied the dictionary two hours daily, pouring over the spelling of each entry. "It was a tremendously slow, agonizing process," he admits.

Angelique Christopher stumbled across Aytch's artwork in her first month on the job as Care Coordinator at Gardens Senior.

"Nobody warned me before I went there," she said of her first home visit to Aytch's apartment. "I wasn't expecting anything like that. I was totally blown away," she added. "He likes showing off his work. He's very proud of what he does."

And that's exactly what Aytch wants to do—gain a higher profile to display his art. He wants others to be inspired by his work and also wants to pass along what he knows through teaching. For instance, how do you start drawing a portrait of a person?

"You have to be structured, you have to build a frame," Aytch said.



His bedroom is wholly converted into an art studio where he was recently working on various portraits.

## Black History Notes

### J. Ernest Wilkins, Jr., Scientific Genius

Researched by James E. Du Bose



Courtesy of the University of Chicago website

Jesse Ernest Wilkins Jr. was an American nuclear scientist, engineer and mathematician. He was also the youngest student ever to enter the University of Chicago at age 13. Born Nov. 27, 1923, Wilkins was labeled at the time as a “negro genius.”

During WWII, Wilkins contributed to the Manhattan Project and gained fame for conducting nuclear physics research in academia and industry. Wilkins wrote many scientific papers and served in a number of important positions that earned him several awards. He also helped in recruiting minorities into the field of science. Over seven decades, his career included major contributions to applied mathematics, civil and nuclear engineering and science dealing with light and vision. During much of his studies and careers, Wilkins was deeply moved by the prevalence of racism that he encountered for most of his education.

Born in Chicago, Wilkins completed his Bachelor of Science degree at age 17 in 1940 and received his Master of Science degree at age 18. He earned his doctorate in mathematics at the University of Chicago at age 19, graduating in 1942. To improve relations with the white engineers who reported to him, Wilkins continued his education receiving both Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees in Mechanical Engineering from New York University in 1957 and 1960, respectively, earning five science degrees in his lifetime. Wilkins taught mathematics at Tuskegee University in Alabama after he was unable to land a research position at the University of Chicago.

However, he returned to the University of

Chicago in 1944 where he served as an Associate Mathematical Physicist and then as a physicist in its metallurgical laboratory, which was part of the Manhattan Project. Wilkins researched the extraction of fissionable nuclear materials, but was not told of the research group’s ultimate aim until after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, Japan.

When his team was about to be transferred to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Oak Ridge, Tenn., which was called site “X” because of Jim Crow laws, Wilkins was nearly prevented from working there. When Edward Teller was told about this, he wrote a letter on Sept. 18, 1944 to Harold Urey, who was the Director of War Research at Columbia at the time of Wilkins’ service and told him about the problems of Wilkins’ race and recommended him for a new position. Teller wrote, “Knowing that men of high qualifications are scarce these days, I thought that it might be useful that I suggest a capable person for this job. Mr. Wilkins is doing excellent work. He is a colored man and since the Wigner group is moving to “X”, it is not possible for him to continue work with that group. I think that it might be a good idea to secure his services for our work.”

From 1974 to 1975, Wilkins served as President of the American Nuclear Society. In 1976, he became the second African-American to be elected to the National Academy of Engineering. Wilkins lived in Atlanta, Ga., from 1990 to 2003 where he worked as a Distinguished Professor of Applied Mathematics and Mathematical Physics at Clark Atlanta University, where he retired in 2003. The father of two children with his first wife, Gloria Louise Steward, who died in 1980, he married Maxine G. Malone in 1984. Wilkins was married a third time to Vera Anderson in 2003. He died on May 1, 2011 in Fountain Hills, Ariz.



## Start Off Clean In 2015

By Lesley D. Leslie

The anticipated start of a new year generally brings about the desire to make things right in the minds and hearts of individuals. The end of the year is a time to reflect on the past and give considerable thought to one’s immediate future. Many people will vow to do things differently as a result of poor decisions made during the year. Meanwhile, others will commit to challenge themselves in a way they never imagined they would do. Most people do this in the form of a New Year’s resolution or perhaps a S.M.A.R.T goal—a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

In the case of people who make a New Year’s resolution annually, they, like many others, may be looking to improve upon a particular quality about themselves. Someone who struggles with cigarette smoking or another addictive habit, may decide to focus on their health and go “cold turkey” in the new

year. In other words, the person will give up his or her habit old addiction at a single moment, rather than by gradually easing the process through tapering off.

Another effort that many individuals will engage in at the start of the New Year is the “clean slate” approach to addressing life’s circumstances. The clean slate allows people to start over without prejudice from the past. For this reason, many people choose this time of year to seriously work towards getting out of financial debt.

Another reality that people often consider during this time of year is one that revolves around lost friends and loved ones. When you consider that death occurs in everyone’s life, you see individuals examine the relationships that they have and desire to make them better. “Life is short” is a common phrase that people use to justify living their life to the fullest and spending time with those that they care about.

Whether you made a New Year’s resolution, a short-term goal or a S.M.A.R.T goal for yourself this year, enjoy your life because, “You only live once!” Happy New Year!

## NCC Founder Honored With Lifetime Achievement Award

Continued from page 1



Honorees from left: Terrence McKnight, WQXR Radio Musicologist and evening host, David Ushery, NBC news anchor, keynote speaker Dr. Teena Shetty, Shirell Gross, an attorney, NCC Director of Mission Frances Teabout, who accepted on behalf of Monsignor William J. Linder, and Stephen Powell, Executive Director of Mentoring USA.

“This was the time in which New Community was being organized and great attempts were being made throughout the City to stabilize the black community and provide critical services for its survival and ultimate growth,” Rawls said. “Bill Linder was and is the glue that put it all together for thousands of people, fostering dreams where there were none and building hope from ashes. He’s truly one of the great men of Newark,” he said.

Monsignor said he deeply appreciated the honor. “I thank the Nubian Cultural Center and Unity Missionary Investors for this award and applaud you for your own advocacy work,” he said.

The Nubian Cultural Center and its sister organization, Unity Missionary Investors, honored Monsignor at their annual Chasing Stars Gala. The elegant evening affair took place at Gallaghers Steakhouse in New York where Frances Teabout, NCC Director of Mission, accepted the award on Monsignor’s behalf.

Named in memory of another towering figure in Newark’s history, the Gus Heningburg Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed upon Monsignor for his work empowering “communities by example and selfless contributions,” according to the Nubian Cultural Center.

The gala was a fundraiser hosted by the two organizations to benefit the Anthony Fund, a program of the Unity Missionary Investors that provides advocacy for young minority men who suffer from traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and helps fund medical programs that seek to understand and reduce the instances of TBI. Dr. Teena Shetty, a neurologist at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York, delivered a keynote speech on the importance of treating head injuries, particularly among youth contact sports, as serious injuries.

Four other honorees received the Nubian Union Legend Award for expertise and service to the community: David Ushery, NBC news anchor, Shirell Gross, an attorney, Terrence McKnight, WQXR Radio Musicologist and evening host, and Stephen Powell, Executive Director of Mentoring USA.

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## Family, Friends Join Extended Care Resident Dinner



Extended Care Facility resident 75-year-old, Eunice Bey, seated center, enjoyed a special holiday dinner joined by her granddaughter, Felicia Teabout, left, and great-granddaughter, Aaliyah Teabout, right.



Robert Smolin, far right, Administrator of Extended Care, helps to serve dinner, which included a roast, chicken, stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn, macaroni and cheese, green beans and salad.



Shereak Freet, standing left, a Social Worker at Extended Care, serves residents in the Adult Medical Day Care room.



Activity Director Elizabeth Brookins, standing center, serves cornbread during dinner.

## NCC Sees The Rockettes Live



A group of New Community seniors, accompanied by the Health and Social Services staff, took a bus into New York City to take in the Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes. NCC Board Member Madge Wilson, who went on the trip, said that the performance was enjoyable. "The whole show was magical. So many things are happening before your eyes," Wilson said.