

WBGO (88.3 FM) ASCERTAINMENT: ISSUE-RESPONSE PROGRAMMING FROM WBGO

For the Period: July 1, 2021 to September 30, 2021

TOPICS ADDRESSED

Arts and Culture

Business and Economy

Health Care

Crime

Education

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Technology

Race and Ethnicity

Arts and Culture

Legendary Documentarian Ken Burns brings "Muhammad Ali" to PBS

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-07-27/legendary-documentarian-ken-burns-bring-muhammad-ali-to-pbs>

Award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns has given us an emotional, enlightening, educational and entertaining pathway back into history and provided a mirror and window for us to understand stories of why we are created equal. Since his Academy Award nominated *Brooklyn Bridge* in 1981, Burns has reached historical status as the director and producer of some of the most acclaimed documentaries ever made. Among them, *The Civil War* (1990), *Baseball* (1994) and *Jazz* (2001).

Burns' latest four-part PBS documentary series *Muhammad Ali* premieres September 19. He once again succeeds in his goal of touching something distinctly American with each of his amazing projects.

Burns joined *SportsJam with Doug Doyle* to talk about the new series that took six years to complete. *Muhammad Ali* was also written and co-directed by Ken's daughter Sarah Burns and her husband David McMahon, whose previous collaborations with Burns include *The Central Park Five* (2012), *Jackie Robinson* (2016) and *East Lake Meadows: A Public Housing Story* (2020).

6th Annual Indie Street Film Festival in Red Bank Begins September 8 with In-Person and Virtual Events

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-09-08/6th-annual-indie-street-film-festival-in-red-bank-begins-september-8-with-in-person-and-virtual-events>

The [6th annual Indie Street Film Festival](#) in Red Bank, New Jersey begins Wednesday, September 8.

The direct of the 2021 Indie Street Film Festival and artistic director of the Indie Street Institute Jay Webb and acclaimed filmmaker Talia Lugacy joined host Doug Doyle on the WBGO Journal to talk about the event.

Woman in Media-Newark Celebrates its Annual Film Fest with a Retrospective Look Back at the Best from the past 11 years

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-07-30/woman-in-media-newark-celebrates-its-annual-film-fest-with-a-retrospective-look-back-at-the-best-from-the-past-11-years>

The 2021 [**Woman In Media-Newark Film Festival**](#) is celebrating its 12th year thanks to its Executive Director Pamela Morgan. This year's event that runs through August 1 will be a combination of in-person and virtual screenings of the festival's favorite films from the last 11 years.

Pam Morgan, jazz bassist and filmmaker Mimi Jones and the founder and President of Paradox Films Carol Bash chat with WBGO's Douglas Doyle about this year's festival that begins later this month. Jones' "Seeking Hope" and Bash's "Mary Lou Williams: The Lady Who Swings the Band" are part of the lineup.

Jazz Musician Brian Newman is Enjoying the Return of Live Concerts with the likes of Lady Gaga

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-28/jazz-musician-brian-newman-is-enjoying-the-return-of-live-concerts-with-the-likes-of-lady-gaga>

Venue owners & promoters have been scrambling to revive the flow of live entertainment as the summer comes to an end. Whether it's the delta variant, government restrictions or nationwide reluctance to be amongst people, everyone's moving with caution. I spoke with American jazz musician, singer, and trumpet player Brian Newman about how it feels to perform for a real audience again.

Business and Economy

How being Misdiagnosed led to a Natural Skin Care Line and a Pandemic-Proof Business Model

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-07-29/how-being-misdiagnosed-led-to-a-natural-skin-care-line-and-a-pandemic-proof-business-model>

Vice President Kamala Harris reported that one third of the small businesses in the United States have closed due to the pandemic. At this time there's no way to officially confirm that number but, the impact COVID has had on entrepreneurs cannot be denied. I had the opportunity to speak with New Jersey native and founder of Pooka Pure and Simple Dawn Fitch about her pandemic proof approach to business.

WBGO partners with MENDNJ to help battle Food Insecurity in Essex County

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-09-15/wbgo-partners-with-mendnj-to-help-battle-food-insecurity-in-essex-county>

As part of Hunger Action Month, WBGO is partnering with MENDNJ to make a difference and address food insecurity on our community.

MEND supports and strengthens a network of 22 food pantries: 11 pantries are in Newark and 11 are in Bloomfield, East Orange, Irvington, Maplewood, Montclair, Orange, South Orange and West Orange. MEND provides fresh and healthy food, funding, volunteers, and a collaborative forum for member pantries to share ideas and resources, all with the mission of alleviating hunger, addressing the root causes of food insecurity, and improving the health and well-being of the community.

During the "Feeling Good" Fall Fund Drive when listeners contribute to support the music they love on WBGO, they'll have the opportunity to give an additional \$5 or more to benefit MEND New Jersey.

N.J. approves first set of rules for recreational weed sales. Here's what you need to know

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-19/n-j-approves-first-set-of-rules-for-recreational-weed-sales-heres-what-you-need-to-know>

New Jersey's Cannabis Regulatory Commission has approved the first set of [regulations for the recreational marijuana market](#).

These are rules that will govern the businesses, at least where municipalities haven't either adopted their own rules or opted out completely ahead of an Aug. 21 deadline. Some municipalities, [like Camden](#), are opting out only to take time to craft their own rules for the cannabis market.

Healthcare

Delta Surge Sparks Vaccine Mandates and Return to Masks

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-07-31/delta-surge-sparks-vaccine-mandates-and-return-to-masks>

WBGO reporter Bob Hennelly chats with host Doug Doyle about the Delta variant of the coronavirus and how it's sparking vaccine mandates and a return to wearing masks indoors.

DOYLE: A dramatic spike in the Delta variant of the coronavirus has caused infections to soar here and around the nation and prompted a wave of vaccine mandates for both public and private sectors in just the last week. At the same time, the CDC has reversed itself on its guidance from May that vaccinated individuals no longer needed to wear masks in indoor public settings. It is now suggesting people wear masks based on local conditions.

With us now is WBGO's Bob Hennelly, who is also the City Hall reporter for the Chief-Leader.

N.J. officials encourage use of monoclonal antibodies as hospitalizations rise

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-24/n-j-officials-encourage-use-of-monoclonal-antibodies-as-hospitalizations-rise>

With hospitalizations on the rise since the summer, New Jersey health officials are encouraging residents with mild COVID-19 symptoms to consider seeking treatment with monoclonal antibodies. However, they and other health experts say it's not a substitute for getting vaccinated against the virus.

"The goal of this therapy is to help prevent hospitalizations, reduce viral loads, and lessen symptom severity," said state Health Commissioner Judy Persichilli, noting that vaccination offers better prevention against severe illness.

Hospitalizations in the state reached their lowest point this year on July 2, with 267 patients. New Jersey has reported more than 1,000 hospitalizations each day since Aug. 24, peaking on Sept. 7, when it reported 1,186 people hospitalized with COVID-19. As of Wednesday, there were 1,152 COVID patients in hospitals.

NYC Students Will Get Mental Health Screening

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-22/nyc-students-will-get-mental-health-screening>

When New York City students head back to the classroom next month, they will all get a mental health screening.

The City is hiring more than 600 social workers, psychologists and family support workers in what's a huge expansion in the area of mental health. First Lady Chirlane McCray says this comes as many students experienced a rough school year because of the pandemic.

"Some will be grieving. Some will be excited to see classmates again yet others may feel shy and uncomfortable. Some may feel just fine but they will be lonely and want someone to talk to."

All students through 12th grade will get a mental health screening at the start of the academic year and then be referred to a support staff team if needed

Crime

New Jersey Hosting Four Gun Buybacks This Weekend Across the State

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-07/new-jersey-hosting-four-gun-buybacks-this-weekend-across-the-state>

The New Jersey Attorney General's office will host gun buybacks in four cities on Saturday as the state sees a rise in gun violence.

While [there is limited evidence](#) that paying people to take their weapons helps prevent shootings, buybacks are a frequent tool used by law enforcement and public officials.

New Jersey's new Acting Attorney General Andrew Bruck said it's part of an overall strategy for addressing shootings, which also includes holding perpetrators of gun violence accountable and keeping dangerous weapons away from people likely to use guns for crime.

Governor Signs Criminal Justice Reform Legislation, Eases Overcrowding At Rikers

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-17/governor-signs-criminal-justice-reform-legislation-eases-overcrowding-at-rikers>

A new law in New York State will keep more people out of prison and help the overcrowded Rikers jail in New York City. Governor Hochul signed the Less Is More Act which will prevent parolees from returning to prison for technical violations. Criminal Justice Reform Advocate Donna Hylton says this will mean physical freedom.

"It's also about the mental freedom of knowing that your family won't be ripped apart and your success won't be erased because you make a mistake or you need help."

Hochul ordered nearly 200 prisoners released right now from Rikers under this act. She's also sending another 200 inmates from Rikers to state jails. State lawmakers recently toured the facility and saw an overcrowded, understaffed and poor conditioned jail.

Rutgers Professor Approves of Biden Approach to Reducing Gun Violence

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-06/rutgers-professor-approves-of-biden-approach-to-reducing-gun-violence>

Michael Anestis, who is also the director of the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center, likes the data-driven approach to stopping the pipeline of guns into cities.

The Biden administration is working on ways to control the explosion in gun violence in recent months in a number of major US cities.

Rutgers Public Health Professor Michael Anestis, who is also director of the New Jersey Gun Violence Research Center, likes the approach.

“The focus on tracing the sources of crime guns offers a lot of potential to better equip states and law enforcement agencies to be able to shut down the pipelines that cause firearms to go across state lines and then be trafficked into cities,” he said.

Anestis said guns also make their way into cities by simply being bought. He said there’s been a surge in sales during the pandemic.

Education

The Executive Director of Newark Trust for Education is Hoping Lessons Learned during the Pandemic are part of the New School Year

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-28/the-executive-director-of-newark-trust-for-education-is-hoping-lessons-learned-during-the-pandemic-are-part-of-the-new-school-year>

There’s a new COVID-19 vaccine mandate for teachers and staff in New Jersey. How is that going to impact the new school year? WBGO's Doug Doyle spoke with Ron Chalusán, the Executive Director of the independent non-profit [Newark Trust for Education](#), about the challenges ahead.

Chalusán explained the current mission for the Trust.

New Jersey Governor Murphy says Masks are Required in K-12 Schools this September

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-07/new-jersey-governor-murphy-says-masks-are-required-in-k-12-schools-this-september>

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy announced Friday that all students, educators, staff and visitors will be required to wear a mask when schools reopen in a few weeks.

The governor made the decision “due to the recent and rampant spread of the delta variant, the fact that no child under the age of 12 is yet eligible to be vaccinated, and the reality that too many older students and their parents remain unvaccinated.”

Murphy added that the mandate will not be permanent. If conditions change, then the mask requirement will be lifted. He added that no school district will be able to opt out.

The announcement was made at Memorial Elementary School in East Brunswick, Middlesex County, where dozens of people, some with their children, stood outside of the school to protest the governor's decision.

Weeklong Anti-Eugenics Online Gathering runs through October 2

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-09-27/wbgo-journal>

Eugenics is a long discredited set of beliefs and practices aimed at improving the genetic quality of the human race. On Sunday a weeklong on-line international gathering begins to examine the legacy of eugenics and a Rutgers history professor has played a key role in organizing it.

The Anti-Eugenics Project began its virtual convening September 26 called "Dismantling Eugenics: Legacies, Reckonings, Futures" and it runs through October 2.

WBGO Jon Kalish reports "Dismantling Eugenics" is a free, online convening that reckons with the history of eugenics and dares to imagine an anti-eugenics future. Over the course the week, more than 150 artists, activists, cultural workers, critical thinkers, and others will engage in conversation and offer short presentations, readings, and artistic interventions, geared toward collective learning and re-imagining a more just future.

Environment

Series Of Clean Energy Initiatives Announced For NYC

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-26/series-of-clean-energy-initiatives-announced-for-nyc>

New York City is taking more steps towards renewable energy.

The de Blasio administration has put together a 191 million dollar offshore wind vision plan that includes creating thousands of jobs to help make the city a national leader in wind power. Rachael Loeb is the city's Economic Development Corporation President.

"We're going to develop best in class sites and infrastructure. We are going to prepare local businesses and New Yorkers to enter this workforce and we are going to promote innovation in the offshore wind industry."

The administration is also pledging to get electricity from clean and renewable energy for all government buildings by year 2025. It's also pumping 75 million dollars into swapping out more gas powered vehicles for electric ones.

Advocate wants health screenings for Camden neighbors near two-story illegal dump site

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-07-21/advocate-wants-health-screenings-for-camden-neighbors-near-two-story-illegal-dump-site>

Cleaning up [the two-story high pile of illegally dumped waste](#) at 7th and Chestnut streets in Camden is only the first step to righting a wrong that has plagued the neighborhood for two decades, according to Roy Jones.

"That is just one aspect of what has to happen," he said.

Now, the environmental justice advocate and executive director of the National Institute of Healthy Human Spaces wants testing of the air and groundwater quality done immediately in the vicinity of the site. He also wants health screenings for residents who live within five blocks.

Government and State Agencies

Strict Anti-Hazing Law Signed in New Jersey

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-25/strict-anti-hazing-law-signed-in-new-jersey>

New Jersey joins Pennsylvania in having some of the toughest laws against hazing in the country.

Tuesday, Gov. Phil Murphy signed [Timothy J. Piazza's Law](#) at Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg, not far from where Piazza grew up in Hunterdon County.

The measure requires all public and private middle and high schools, as well as colleges and universities, to draw up anti-hazing policies, along with penalties for violations that could include withholding of a diploma, suspension, or expulsion.

Murphy appoints first openly gay attorney general in New Jersey history

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-06-30/murphy-appoints-first-openly-gay-attorney-general-in-new-jersey-history>

New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy announced Wednesday that Andrew Bruck would be appointed acting attorney general for the remainder of Murphy's term.

Bruck, who is first assistant attorney general, has been part of the office's executive leadership since outgoing Attorney General Gurbir Grewal was confirmed in January 2018. The announcement comes one day after the Securities and Exchange Commission named Grewal the new head of its enforcement division. Grewal's last day with the state is July 16.

Murphy also noted that Bruck will be the first openly gay attorney general in state history.

"A lot of hurt in New Jersey": Residents Evacuated, Homes Destroyed in Ida's Wake

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-03/a-lot-of-hurt-in-new-jersey-residents-evacuated-homes-destroyed-in-idas-wake>

Remnants of Hurricane Ida tore through the Garden State overnight, bringing torrential rainfall, at least three tornadoes that touched down in Mullica Hill, Princeton, and Edgewater Park, and leaving at least 23 residents dead.

Roughly 93,000 homes and businesses in New Jersey were without electricity during the height of the storm, Gov. Phil Murphy said Thursday evening.

Here's what you need to know as city and state officials begin to assess the aftermath of the storm.

Politics

Murphy, Ciattarelli spar in first debate of 2021 N.J. governor's race

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-29/murphy-ciattarelli-spar-in-first-debate-of-2021-n-j-governors-race>

New Jersey Democratic Gov. Phil Murphy and his Republican challenger Jack Ciattarelli met for their first debate Tuesday night, in which the two candidates drew clear contrasts on a range of pressing issues.

Topics in the debate, hosted at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, included Murphy's response to recent storms spurred by remnants of Hurricane Ida, the treatment of women, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The jabs came swiftly, with Ciattarelli blaming the deaths of 30 New Jersey residents in the aftermath of the storms on Murphy's failure to declare a state of emergency until that night — roughly 12 hours after Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf had done the same and after parts of the state were already grappling with severe flooding and tornado damage.

GOP Team Set for New Jersey's Gubernatorial Election

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-07/gop-team-set-for-new-jerseys-gubernatorial-election>

Governor Murphy is being challenged by Republican and former state Assemblyman Jack Ciattarelli in November. Earlier this week, he chose former state assemblywoman and former Philadelphia TV news anchor Diane Allen to be his running mate.

Just like Ciattarelli, Allen came out swinging against incumbent Democrat Phil Murphy on unemployment, motor vehicles services...and the treatment of women in his administration.

N.J. coronavirus update: Judge denies request to block school mask mandate; Trenton vaccine mandate for city workers

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-09-15/n-j-coronavirus-update-judge-denies-request-to-block-school-mask-mandate-trenton-vaccine-mandate-for-city-workers>

Masks are still required in New Jersey schools.

A federal judge has denied a request from a group of New Jersey parents to block Gov. Phil Murphy's mask mandate for schools.

U.S. District Judge Kevin McNulty on Friday denied a request from the group Free NJ Kids for a temporary restraining order against the mandate.

Technology

New High-Tech Knee Brace Could Help Millions

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-07/new-high-tech-knee-brace-could-help-millions>

A California robotics company has developed a high-tech knee brace that could help millions of people in this country with osteoarthritis of the knee. That's what happens when the protective tissue at the ends of bones wears down. It can be quite painful. The device will be covered by Medicare and is expected to reach patients later this year.

WBGO's Jon Kalish has the story of Roam's Ascend knee brace.

Montclair Architect Submits Winning Design for Harriet Tubman Monument in Newark's Washington Park

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-05/montclair-architect-submits-winning-design-for-harriet-tubman-monument-in-newarks-washington-park>

A new monument will be coming to Washington Park in Newark next summer. It is a tribute to Harriet Tubman called Shadow of a Face, designed by Montclair architect Nina Cooke John.

"One thing that was really critical for me was that this space was not only like a typical monument that you come to learn about Harriet Tubman and her life but also it was a space in which you felt that you could stay for a while," said John.

The circular monument will guide visitors through a multisensory experience. It replaces the statue of Christopher Columbus that was removed by the city in June 2020.

NYC Coronavirus Vaccine And Test App Debut

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-01/nyc-coronavirus-vaccine-and-test-app-debut>

New York City is launching a coronavirus vaccine and test phone app today.

The app is called NYC COVID Safe. A person can upload a vaccine card or a recent coronavirus test. This can come in handy if an employer is requiring employees to get vaccinated or frequently tested for coronavirus. The City's Commissioner of Information Technology Jessica Tisch says coronavirus test results expire on the app after seven days to meet the city's weekly testing requirement for unvaccinated employees.

"From a privacy perspective, all the data that is uploaded into the app lives on the person's device. So, it lives on their phone. It doesn't get sent anywhere."

She says the app is similar to the state's Excelsior Pass App, but that app will not accommodate the city's testing requirement.

Race and Ethnicity

Mildred Antenor Commentary: Racism and Its Effects on Health

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-08-07/mildred-antenor-commentary-racism-and-its-effects-on-health>

Mildred Antenor: Growing up in the immigrant community of Brooklyn, New York, I often would hear the adults around me lament about the stress that they were enduring on a daily basis. Sometimes their protests were about their children, at other times it was about their spouses, but most of the time it dealt with the lack that they experienced as immigrant Black men and women and the discrimination and lack of resources that they were forced to live with constantly.

Another major observation that I noticed was that a good majority of the Haitian immigrants that I grew up around all seemed to suffer from similar ailments. Those diseases for the most part were almost always hypertension and diabetes.

On the Cusp of a Historic Met Premiere, Terence Blanchard Reflects on an Opera That "Doesn't Belong to Me"

<https://www.wbgo.org/show/wbgo-journal/2021-09-26/on-the-cusp-of-a-historic-premiere-terence-blanchard-reflects-on-an-opera-that-doesnt-belong-to-me>

Terence Blanchard has made his mark in more than one arena: as a multiple-Grammy-winning jazz artist, as a music educator, and as the prolific film composer best known for his work with Spike Lee.

He has also entered the realm of opera, in a big way: [*Fire Shut Up in My Bones*](#), his latest work, opens the Metropolitan Opera's new season. It will be the Met's first presentation of an opera by a Black composer, a historic honor that Blanchard took with utmost seriousness.

The trumpeter and composer recently spoke with Nate Chinen in a WBGO Members event, during a break in rehearsals at The Met. Speaking over Zoom, he described the origins of the opera, adapted from a book by the same title — the [heralded memoir](#) of *New York Times* columnist Charles Blow.

The Next Edition of Newark Today Focuses on Back to School

<https://www.wbgo.org/news/2021-08-17/the-next-edition-of-newark-today-focuses-on-back-to-school>

On the next *Newark Today* host Michael Hill will be joined by Mayor Ras Baraka Superintendent of Newark Public Schools Roger Léon and Dr. Chris Pernell with University Hospital for our special Back To School broadcast to talk about everything from mask mandates to how to keep kids and staff safe as children return to the classroom in the largest school district in New Jersey.