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The Jaffe Briefing - December 20, 2018

1 message

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The Jaffe Briefing begins holiday break on Monday, Dec. 24, returning Wednesday, Jan. 2

STATEWIDE - It's every kid's dream. First, there's no more romaine lettuce served at the salad bar. And now? Cauliflower is off the table as well, with word that it is being recalled "out of an abundance of caution." All the recalled produce was harvested between Nov. 27 and 30 in California, potentially smothered with E. coli, shipped 2,500 miles or so and somehow ended up on your plate. The FDA suggests you swiftly dispose of your red leaf lettuce, green leaf lettuce and cauliflower, and refrain from ordering it at your local restaurant. Kids seem to be handling the latest news with grace, as long as the ban does not extend to macaroni or cheese. Then, obviously, it is serious.

STATEWIDE - 565 towns in New Jersey. With property taxes so high, and climbing by the moment, perhaps it is high time we knock out those itty-bitty towns and eliminate some redundancy. Sen. Vin Gopal agrees, pushing a bill that requires towns with less than 1,000 residents to consolidate with their neighbors. The consolidation issue is nothing new, but progress has been painfully slow over the years. The latest *Jaffe Podcast* episode examines all the municipal madness and

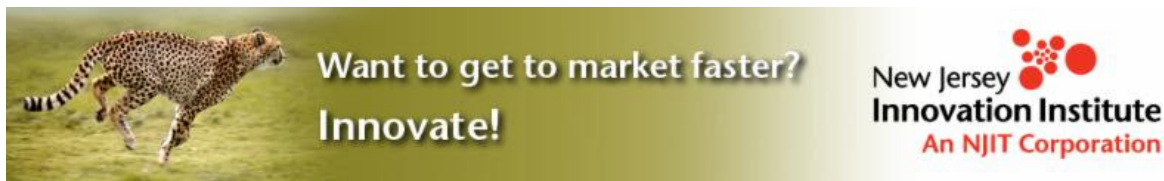
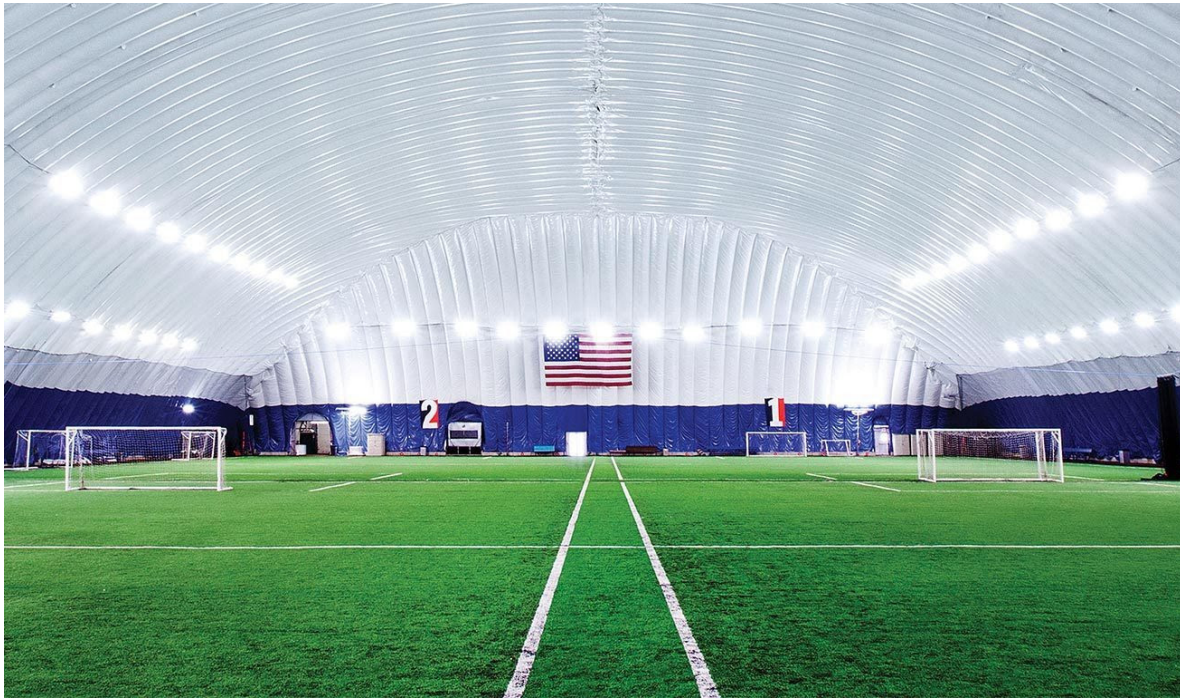
poses the age-old question: What will it take for New Jersey to change? [Click here to listen.](#)



NEWARK - Gov. Phil Murphy is closing in on his first year as governor. So how did he do? Well, according to him, there are a host of glorious policy accomplishments. He ticked them off during an event at St. James AME Church in Newark yesterday that his office billed as a review of "first-year achievements." There are new gun reforms, toughened state gender pay-equity regulations and increased funding for public education. *NJ Spotlight* was in the pews to report about what was highlighted and what wasn't. The year will end, for example, without passing the \$15 minimum wage or legalizing marijuana, and there is the nasty, ongoing issue of hiring a campaign official who had been accused of rape. [Read NJ Spotlight's coverage here.](#)

NEWARK - TAPinto Newark was also in those pews, with a more parochial question: Does the governor drink the tap water in Newark? The answer, apparently, is "Yes." Even though there's widespread worry that the public water supplied to as many as 15,000 homes has unsafe levels of lead, the governor vows he drinks it, "100 percent," as he sipped from a label-free bottle of water. "I have a second office in Newark, and I frequently don't have any bottled water, so I will take something out of the tap." (Really?) Anyway, the city received three noncompliance notices for exceeding lead levels since 2017. Newark officials declared there was no need to be concerned about lead levels. Yet, in October, the city announced that 40,000 lead filters would be handed out because the chemical used to prevent lead from dissolving into pipes wasn't working. Poland Spring, anyone?

BRICK - Ending years of anticipation, frustration and litigation, it seems a multi-sport "Superdome" is coming to a sprawling Route 70 site, vacant since 2002. The planning board has OK'd a restaurant and stores on part of the ol' Foodtown-Bradlees tract. And, Manhattan-based HFZ Superdome got a thumbs up for a domed complex featuring soccer and lacrosse fields, basketball courts, dance and yoga studios, a jogging track and a wave pool for indoor surfing. The *Asbury Park Press* says this facility will have a food court, an arcade and space for corporate outings and children's parties. The developers' lawyer says "Bricktown has a very long and storied sports history. We feel that it's going to be a big hit." Game on.



GARFIELD - Welcome to America! You have the right to remain silent. That's how federal agents greeted a 38-year-old local lawyer at JFK Airport upon returning from a nice vacation to his native Columbia. Authorities were acting on warrants from the Bergen County prosecutor who, according to *The Record*, charged the Garfield attorney with pocketing \$100,000 from clients in a July real estate deal. His next vacation could be all-expense-paid by the state to such beautiful vistas as Rahway, Trenton, Leesburg or Fort Dix. But, of course, that depends on the outcome of a trial.

IN OTHER IMPORTANT NEWS

RIDGEFIELD PARK - Here's a holiday tip: If you get invited to a party, don't come back later to burglarize it. Why? Just ask an 18-year-old village man who attended a recent party on 4th Street and then returned at Tuesday 2 a.m. He fought

with the 49-year-old homeowner before fleeing with the victim's wallet, containing a reported \$400. The *Daily Voice* says the injured victim told detectives that he recognized the gun-wielding intruder as a recent party guest in his home. The suspect is in the Bergen County jail awaiting arraignment. Meanwhile, keep an eye on Aunt Martha during Christmas. She looks shady.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

There was a fleeting moment of good taste on MTV on this day in 1997, its sensors pulled the video "Smack My Bitch Up," by Prodigy.



WORD OF THE DAY

Tchotchke - [CHOCH-kə] - *noun*

Definition: A knickknack or trinket of nominal value

Example: Will Aunt Martha steal your tchotchkes?

WIT OF THE DAY

"If you put the federal government in charge of the Sahara Desert, in 5 years there'd be a shortage of sand."

- Milton Friedman



WEATHER IN A WORD

Changing



THE NEW 60

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