



Sign in to nj.com »
Not a member? Register Now »

Site Search

Search Local Business Listings

Go

Brought to you by:



- Home
 - News
 - Weather
 - Sports
 - Entertainment
 - Living
 - Interact
 - Jobs
 - Autos
 - Real Estate
 - Classifieds
 - Shop
 - Place an ad
- News
 - Business
 - Columns
 - Education
 - Forums
 - National
 - Obituaries
 - Opinion
 - Politics
 - Star-Ledger
 - Weird news
 - More news

Local news & conversation: [North](#) | [Hudson](#) | [Essex](#) | [Union](#) | [Morris](#) | [Middlesex](#) | [Somerset](#) | [Hunterdon](#) | [Warren](#) | [Mercer](#) | [Shore](#) | [South](#)

New Jersey Real-Time News

Breaking Local News from New Jersey

Sponsored By:



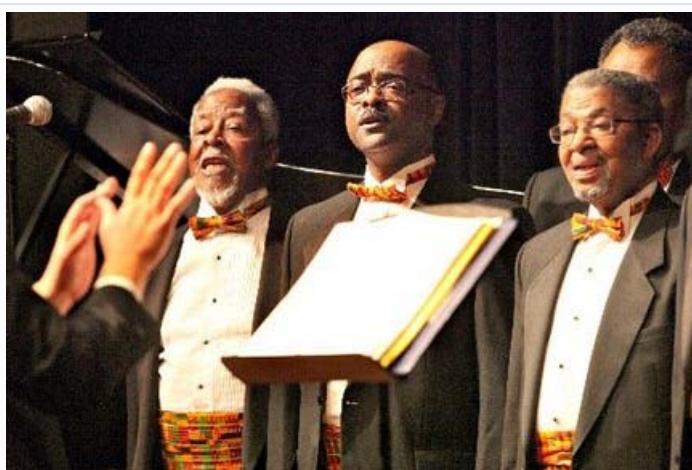
[Education, Essex County, Must-See Stories »](#)

N.J.'s Martin Luther King Jr. Day events focus on Haiti earthquake disaster

By [Rohan Mascarenhas/The Star-Ledger](#)
January 18, 2010, 6:48PM

The disaster in Haiti inspired impassioned pleas for action and renewed donation drives across the state today, transforming the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday into a much-needed chance to spotlight relief efforts in the devastated Caribbean nation.

"It's definitely resonating," said John Sowell, 43, of Irvington, who attended a holiday event at Newark Museum today. "People are asking to keep Haiti in prayer, for help to the Red Cross. Haiti was the first black nation, after all."



Jerry McCrea/ The Star Ledger

Members of the North Jersey Philharmonic glee Club, from left, Leroy Gibson; Ron Williams; and Carl Milton; follow the conductor, Philip H. Field; while singing during the Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration at the Newark Museum.

Traditional homages to King, who would have turned 81 Friday, mingled with moments of silence for the earthquake's victims, while nonprofits sought to reach collection goals for donations to Haiti and activists focused on the country's humanitarian crisis.

The disaster converged with the holiday because it highlighted the connection many African-Americans feel with Haiti, the first independent black republic in the Western Hemisphere, said Wayne Glasker, an associate professor of history at Rutgers University in Camden.

A slave rebellion in Haiti eventually led to independence from the French in 1804, a source of inspiration for abolition movements around the world.

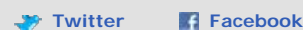
"Haiti holds a special place of honor for African-Americans," Glasker said. "Our

Real-Time News Headlines

- [N.J. unemployment rate rises to 10.1 percent](#) 11:34 a.m. ET
- [Woodbridge mayor touts 22 percent drop in crime](#) 11:44 a.m. ET
- [Long Hill Township pharmacist indicted on drug theft avoids trial via program](#) 11:21 a.m. ET
- [Stocks slide on China credit worries, housing starts decline](#) 11:20 a.m. ET

More: [Real-Time News »](#)

Follow NJ.com News



TODAY IN NEW JERSEY
with **The Star-Ledger**

• [Send tips, photos, video](#)

- [Real-Time News](#)
- [New Jersey Politics](#)
- [Business](#)
- [Entertainment](#)
- [NJ Voices](#)
- [Real-Time Sports](#)
- [Comics](#) | [Puzzles](#)

POPULAR NEWS TOPICS

- [New Jersey corruption](#)
- [New Jersey traffic](#)
- [New Jersey transit](#)
- [Weird New Jersey news](#)
- [New Jersey shootings](#)
- [New Jersey plane crashes](#)

JERSEY NEWSPAPERS

Browse today's news:

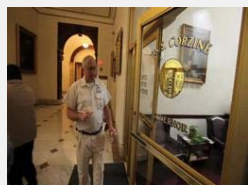
Select a paper

Browse by week:

Select a date

GO ▶

STAR-LEDGER VIDEO



[Corzine's name is scraped off of the governors office](#)

Popular video categories:

Got something to say? »

We have new ways to discover & interact

- [News videos](#)
- [Entertainment videos](#)
- [HS sports videos](#)
- [Sports videos](#)

[WATCH ALL STAR-LEDGER VIDEOS »](#)

[WATCH LEDGER LIVE: NJ'S NEWS WEBCAST »](#)

PHOTOS



[01-19-10: The Star-Ledger's Photos of the Day](#)

[MORE STAR-LEDGER PHOTOS »](#)

[ARCHIVED STAR-LEDGER PHOTOS »](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

- [Stir things up at the Melting Pot this winter! Click here for specials.](#)
- [Kings Family Restaurant For The Finest Halal Food in Town](#)
- [Rutgers University offers one of the largest winter programs](#)
- [Pallisade Jewelers - The right price to buy, sell, trade, repair and pawn](#)

ancestors all came from Africa, so there's a sense of solidarity."

A significant number of the more than 10,000 service projects across the nation changed plans to help Haiti's relief efforts, said Nicola Goren, the acting head of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The agency oversees charity efforts during the holiday.

MORE HAITI COVERAGE:

- [Full Star-Ledger coverage of the Haiti earthquake](#)

- Updated [photos](#) and [videos](#)

&bull [How to help](#)

At the inaugural day of service in Scotch Plains today, volunteers for the Rotary Club found wallets opening freely as they collected money for relief efforts in Haiti.

"This was a huge and terrific response today," said Janet Strunk, president of the Rotary Club of Fanwood-Scotch Plains. "We've received a lot of donations...the response to Haiti has been huge from our community and business leaders."

The Rotary collected money to buy shelter boxes for Haitians who lost their homes. The boxes contain a 10-person tent, a stove, cooking utensils and other necessities a displaced family needs. The boxes cost about \$1,000 each, and the chapter has already sent four.

"Our goal is to send 10 from our chapter," Strunk said. "I think we at least received enough donations today to send one more box."



Jerry McCrea/ The Star Ledger

Gladian Rivera of Jersey City, a martial arts instructor (right); shares a laugh with Ryan Adams of Jersey City age 5; as the two made decoupage decorations for "Teach for Social Justice" lunch tables while participating in a community volunteer service day in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King at P.S. 38 in Jersey City.

Speakers also highlighted local concerns as they reflected on King's message of peace.

At a breakfast in Franklin Township today, Felipe Luciano, an Emmy award-winning journalist, spoke on the Oct. 23 melee that erupted between students and police after officers would not allow a student to re-enter the township high school's homecoming dance. When it was over, four officers and one student were injured and 12 people were arrested.

In King's spirit of forgiveness, mutual respect and healing, Luciano encouraged officials and residents to identify their goals and work towards realizing them.

"Let us hope that because of the forgiveness we have, Franklin flourishes," he said.

For others, like Catherine Santilien, who lost several family members to the

Check out new community tools on NJ.com!

[Learn about new features](#) | [Read FAQs](#)

Existing user? [Sign in to view & edit profile](#)
New user? [Register now for free in seconds!](#)

Learn more, register & get started now! ▶

Most Commented on NJ.com

The stories you're talking about

131
comments

[N.J. medical marijuana law is signed by Gov. Corzine](#)

84
comments

[Mass. GOP candidate Scott Brown scores upset victory in U.S. Senate election](#)

71
comments

[N.J. gun owners file suit to overturn one-handgun-a-month purchase limit](#)

47
comments

[NY Giants sign tight end Carson Butler for 2010 season](#)

42
comments

[Elizabeth man is charged in shooting death of 17-year-old girl](#)

Post Free Classifieds in print or on NJ.com ▶

COLUMNISTS

Bob Braun

- [Haitians offer to share food, water and stories with American journalists after earthquake](#)

Mark Di Ionno

- [Jerry Izenberg's new book, like its author, keeps it real](#)

Paul Mulshine

- [Could Gov. Chris Christie just drop the cliches for a change?](#)

[ALL COLUMNS »](#)

blue nile

Make hers skip a beat



FIND THE PERFECT GIFT ▶

blue nile

Free FedEx Shipping & 30-day Returns

rubble in Port-au-Prince, the holiday was an occasion to reflect after an emotionally wrenching week.

"Martin Luther King gave us a voice and platform to continue to fight for freedom," said Santilien, who organized a workshop on King's legacy at the Jefferson Park Ministries in Elizabeth. "This is a new birth and it's up to us to mobilize everyone to say we can rebuild."

Tiffani N. Garlic, Veronica Slaght and Tracee Herbaugh of the Local News Service contributed to this report.

2009 New Car Pricing
Buying a New Car, SUV or Hybrid? Find Discount Prices in Your Area!
www.WhyPaySticker.com

Super Cheap Car Insurance
Get Super Cheap Auto Insurance Quotes - You Won't Believe the Rates!
www.usinsuranceonline.com

findday
day
www.organic-food-for-everyone.com

Sponsored Links

Recommend (0)

Print this

Email this

Share this:

Previous story: [Newark is among 10 cities to receive \\$200K for volunteerism efforts](#)

Next story: [Edison law office explosion rocks neighborhood, destroys building](#)

Story tags: [haiti](#) | [jersey-city](#) | [newark](#)

Comments (1 total)

[RSS](#)

[Post a comment](#)



Posted by **fatray**
January 18, 2010, 8:09PM

This is it!!!! What about DR. King. The blacks don't care just a day off from work. What a joke. He fought for them and they don't care. Don't ever wonder why you don't advance as a race. Just keep selling and using drugs. At least the white communities respected and honored Mr. King.

[Inappropriate comment? Alert us.](#)

[Reply to this comment](#) | [Post a new comment](#)

You must sign in to post a comment.

Sign in to NJ.com

Username

Password

Sign In

Don't have an account?

Register Now!

We've upgraded our community features on NJ.com

[Learn more! >>](#)



Site Search

Search Local Business Listings

Go

[Site Map](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Contact](#)
[Make us your home page](#)

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Weather](#) | [Sports](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Living](#) | [Interact](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Autos](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

• [Your Photos](#)
• [Your Videos](#)

• [Post a Job](#)
• [Post a Free Classified Ad](#)





• [Business](#)
• [High School Sports](#)

[Subscribe to our content \(RSS\)](#)
 [Sign up for news alerts](#)

- [Blogs](#)
- [Forums](#)
- [NJ Shore](#)
- [NJ Weddings](#)

- [Sell Your Car](#)
- [Sell/Rent Your Home](#)
- [Apartments & Rentals](#)
- [Claim Your Business Listing for Free](#)

- [NJ Lottery](#)
- [New Jersey Politics](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Pets](#)

-  [NJ.com Twitter feed](#)
-  [Ledger Live vodcast](#)
-  [View NJ.com mobile site](#)
-  [View mobile product offerings](#)



Special home delivery offers!

[The Star-Ledger](#) | [The Times, Trenton](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#) | [Gloucester Co. Times](#)
[The News of Cumberland County](#) | [Today's Sunbeam](#)

© 2009 New Jersey On-Line LLC. All Rights Reserved ([About Us](#)). Use of this site constitutes acceptance of our [User Agreement](#). Please read our [Privacy Policy](#). [Community Rules](#) apply to all content you upload or otherwise submit to this site. [Contact interactivity management](#).