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Merry Christmas from The Prince George's Post

PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT EREAN, MORGUEFILE

Maryland Environmental Advocates Hopeful for Renewal of Support Under Biden

By RACHEL CLAIR
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (Dec. 15, 2020)—Maryland lawmakers and interest groups are hopeful that the Biden administration will usher in a positive impact on the environment in the state.

"We look forward to working with the Biden administration on important priorities like the Chesapeake Bay, climate change, and common sense solutions that boost environmental progress and economic prosperity," Maryland Secretary of the Environment Ben Grumbles said in a statement to Capital News Service.

President-elect Joe Biden, D, stated during his campaign that one of his primary concerns is the environment and climate change.

"Currently we are impressed with President-elect Joe Biden's stance on climate change, and his position looks like it will be good for the planet and Chesapeake Bay," Chesapeake Bay Foundation President Will Baker said.

The main factor, though, in Biden's success may be how easily he is able to pass legislation and how aggressive he will be. If Congress remains politically split, this may prove difficult.

How much can be done through the regulatory process versus executive order will be a big factor in how Maryland will be affected, said Sen. Paul Pinsky, D-Prince George's.

The new Environmental Protection Agency under Biden will also have to evaluate what to address first following the Trump administration's environmental rollbacks.

Trump rolled back clean water regulations with the Navigable Waters Protection Rule, which interest groups are nicknaming the "Dirty Water Rule." The regulation weakened some clean water protections that have been in place since 1972 under the Clean Water Act, which is the primary federal law governing water pollution.

So, Biden needs to jump on bolstering the clean water standards and infrastructure once

PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT RACHEL CLAIR/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

The Chesapeake Bay in December 2020. Maryland lawmakers are preparing environmental legislation for the upcoming General Assembly.

again, said Kate Breimann, state director for Environment Maryland.

This includes improving treatment of storm water and sewage. The issue is crucial to Maryland as a coastal state because waterways like the Chesapeake Bay are becoming increasingly polluted, Breimann said.

Baker told CNS in mid-November that the first step is for



See RENEWAL Page A4

Council Chair Calvin S. Hawkins, II Issues Statement on Resignation of Prince George's County Board of Education Chair Dr. Alvin Thornton

By KAREN D. CAMPBELL
Prince George's County Council Media

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Dec. 15, 2020)—The Prince George's County Council is grateful for the service of Board of Education Chair, Dr. Alvin Thornton, who recently announced his retirement, effective in early January. His four-year term was set to expire in 2022.

Dr. Thornton's longstanding service to education in Prince George's County has consistently focused on the shared interest of our students. We appreciate the leadership and partnership of Dr. Thornton, as we worked together to effectively advocate for the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and increased state spending for education, in the Maryland General Assembly.

Additionally, under Dr. Thornton's school board chairmanship, the historic Alternative Financing Construction (ACF) project, a

first of its kind public-private partnership in Maryland and the nation, was advanced by the Board of Education. This innovative project will result in the construction of six new schools in our County and upgrade learning environments over four years.

Dr. Thornton has served as an education leader in Prince George's County many times over, and the Council is grateful for his legendary leadership, institutional knowledge and expertise. Our County and its children and their families, are better for his service. We wish him well and look forward to his continued partnership.

The Council remains committed to working with the Board of Education and all stakeholders to provide a quality education for our children, and secure vital state funding for County schools.

For Area Libraries and Patrons, Pandemic Has Meant a Whole New Story

By LUCIANA PEREZ-URIBE AND MICHELLE SIEGEL
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Dec. 10, 2020)—When the COVID-19 pandemic emerged—but before everything truly shut down—Elyse Kovalsky's first stop was the Mt. Pleasant Library on 16th Street in Northwest Washington.

"When everyone else was freaking out and going to buy toilet paper, I freaked out and went to the library," said Kovalsky, 39, an employee at a non-profit in the city.

"I got as many books as I could physically carry, and I remember walking home and they, at some point on 19th Street, all fell out of my hands," she said. But at that moment, going to the library "felt like the most important thing."

Since the closure of many businesses and operations in March, many libraries in both the District of Columbia and Maryland have reopened and are now running at limited capacity. The revamped operations have introduced significant challenges and opportunities for libraries and their patrons.

Maryland Library Association President Morgan Miller referred to libraries as "a really important touchstone" for many patrons.

According to Pew Research Center survey data from 2016, more than half of respondents indicated that libraries helped them get information that helps with making decisions, grow as a person, learn new things and find information that is trustworthy and reliable.

Libraries also provide crucial resources, such as educational materials, computer access and even shelter to their communities. In this way, Miller described libraries as acting as a form of "social safety net."

The DC Public Library system shut down mid-March and entered Phase Two mid-summer. Of the 26 public libraries, 18 are open and running on a limited basis, while eight remain closed.

For the libraries running on a limited basis, all in-person group programs, such as children's storytelling

sessions, have been put on hiatus. In addition, patrons cannot browse books inside the library, sit at a table or lounge area, copy or scan materials, or use the meeting or study rooms.

Despite these restrictions, DC Public Library spokesman George Williams noted that patrons are still able to come in to pick up books that they have on hold, apply for library cards, send documents electronically for free printing, borrow from a curated selection of book titles available for checkout near the circulation desk, and use a computer—although the number of public computers available has decreased.

In the state of Maryland, there are 24 public library systems—one for each of Maryland's 23 counties, as well as one for Baltimore City—and each is operating in accordance with its own reopening plan.

Libraries in some counties, such as Cecil County, have recently begun to reopen some branches with limited capacity, social distancing and safety protocols.

In the library systems of counties where the state has consistently been reporting the highest COVID-19 caseloads, such as Prince George's County and Montgomery County, all buildings remain closed to the public.

Most branches in Prince George's County Memorial Library System and Montgomery County Public Libraries have been offering appoint-

ment-based outdoor pickup for holds placed online or over the phone.

Libraries are placing a greater emphasis on their virtual opportunities, which they say have flourished in the wake of the initial COVID-19 lockdown.

Before curbside services and limited reopenings, patrons were essentially limited to checking out electronic materials from online resources, such as the Overdrive digital content library, so electronic media have seen significantly more traction with patrons.

From mid-March to mid-November, the DC Public Library saw a 34% increase in checkouts and a 81% increase in holds over the numbers from the same period last year on Overdrive, Williams said in an email.

The digital transition has also led many libraries across the District of Columbia and Maryland to transition previously in-person programs like book clubs and children's storytelling sessions to online platforms such as Zoom and Discord.

In addition, Miller said that many libraries introduced new programming—often video sessions that teach viewers skills for managing daily life amid a pandemic, such as preparing restaurant-quality meals and promoting literacy in homebound children.

"We saw this huge rapid rollout and proliferation of really high-quality virtual programming," Miller said. "In some ways, while our physical spaces got smaller and much more constrained, we became much more expansive, and in these online worlds, we ended up connecting with people in the community who we never had before."

While these transitions to online programming may have seemed smooth for patrons, they required attention to detail for library staff—"program by program, need by need, figuring out how we want to do it," said David Quick, the DC Public Library's coordinator of adult programs and partnerships.

Many libraries have gone "fine free," either temporarily or permanently, to minimize barriers to community use.

Montgomery County Public Libraries advertises on its website that its library fines are "currently suspended."

Prince George's County Memorial Library System, meanwhile, committed to becoming "fine free" on July 1, noting in a press release its intent to ensure that "all Prince Georgians have equitable access to the Library's resources and services, while eliminating the financial barrier of overdue fines."

As for the District, more than 4,000 library cards were unblocked and more than 87,000 cards that had expired since April 2017 were restored, Williams said.

"One of the things that the library has been doing for several years is, we have been systematically removing barriers," he added.

Many patrons have shown an increased interest in learning about anti-racism—particularly after Minneapolis police officers arrested



IMAGE COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY MEMORIAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System hosted "How to Be an Antiracist" author Dr. Ibram X. Kendi in July, attracting more than 226,000 live views.

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Chesapeake Life Center continues to reach out to the community with in-person grief and loss workshops planned for the first quarter of 2021.

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There's Still Time to Give the Greatest Gift

This holiday, we encourage you to visit BeADonor.org and sign up to be an organ donor. It will be the greatest gift you give—the gift of hope.

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Grand Opening Celebration of Two Lidl Stores in Prince George's County

County Council Vice-Chair Taveras: "The new Lidl store signals confidence in the future of Prince George's County and the Northern Gateway... This new store not only means new fresh food options, but also new jobs for the local community..."

Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

John Tierney, NOAA Meteorological Tech, dies at 96

John L. Tierney, 96, of Camp Springs, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration retiree and lover of baseball, died Dec. 7 in Annapolis.

He was born in Springfield, Mass., son of Lawrence and Edith Tierney. A World War II Veteran, he served in the Army Air Corp, attaining rank of Staff Sergeant. Following military service, John began a 40-year career as a Meteorological Technician with the NOAA.

He lived on Henderson Road in Camp Springs for more than 60 years and was noted for his green thumb, producing the largest tomatoes, most tender lettuce, and flower gardens. He had a life-long love of baseball that began the year of his birth when the Washington Senators won the 1924 World Series. He spent countless hours at Memorial Stadium and later Camden Yards, rooting for his Baltimore Orioles.

He was a man of deep faith who devoted 60+ years to his parish, St. Philip the Apostle Church in Camp Springs, where he served as President of the Parish Council, President of the Holy Name Society, Leader of RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and, for many years, a lector. He and Emily regularly attended daily Mass.

John is preceded in death by his parents, sisters Evelyn Cirillo, Vivian Cook, and brothers Bryan, Norman, Richard and Maurice Tierney.

Emily, his wife of 70 years survives him. He was the father of Mary Saxe, Kathleen Antonelli, Ann Scheele, Margaret Beling, John Tierney, and grandfather of nine. Farther Patrick Lewis was celebrant for the Mass of Christian Burial at St. Philip's. Kathleen Antonelli and Patrick Scheele were readers and John Whipple was soloist. Beautiful eulogies were given by son John Tierney and son-in-law Peter Beling. He is buried at Resurrection Cemetery.

John loved books. I knew John best through St. Philip's Book Club where he always read the book.

Neighbors & other good people

Terry (Poe) Wright writes that her mom, Evelyn Poe is in a senior complex and now has Covid. The Poes were among the first families on Skyline

Drive, and lived at the end of my block.

James Butler, of Skyline, asked if I had written about the plane that crashed in Morningside on May 8, 1951. He told me he was stationed at Andrews and was sent over for cleanup. I'll be talking to him for some more information and will report. That tragedy happened 70 years ago but I find that, for those involved, it will never go away.

Viola Christensen, 85, who used to live on Poplar Road in Morningside, died Oct. 31 in Anne Arundel County. Her husband Andreas and daughter Lauren predeceased her. Survivors include son Peter, daughters Sandra and Karen, and five grandchildren.

Karen Rooker let me know that I had wished happy occasion to several who have gone on before us: Evelyn McKewon, who died in November 2019, and Ray and Betty Call.

Chairman Thornton steps down; used to live in Skyline

Alvin Thornton, chairman of the County Board Of Education, has announced he will step down in early January. He submitted his resignation in a letter to County Executive Angela Alsobrooks who had appointed him. He is proud of his tenure, including a project to build six schools using a public-private partnership. He didn't give his reason for departure.

He previously served on the Board in the 1990s, several years as chairman and is retired as a Howard University professor.

Of particular interest to me is that he used to live in Skyline and served a term as President of the Skyline Citizens Association.

Morningside Memories: 60 years ago

In December 1960 the Ladies Auxiliary of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department held their annual Christmas party at the Skyline Restaurant.

Following a delicious dinner, Secret Pal gifts were distributed and new officers were installed: Jean Glaubitz, president; Audrey Holmes, vice-president; Martha Hodoba, treasurer; Lois McMickle, recording secretary; Jean Davis, corresponding secretary; and Josette Prince, membership chairman.

Rose-Marie Coppola: played accordion with Lawrence Welk

Rose-Marie Bruno Coppola, founder of Strolling Strings, died Nov. 28 of Devic's Disease (a central nervous system disorder). She was 81. She formerly lived in the Suitland area and owned an accordion shop in Oxon Hill.

As her obit states, "It would be impossible to list all of her accomplishments here, from her early teenage musical success (performing at Carnegie Hall and with Lawrence Welk) to her thriving musical-services business, Strolling Strings Associates," which performed for presidents, world dignitaries, and countless celebrities.

Her mother said of her that she was an angel and that "she was the best mother her sons could ask for, always there to listen when times were bad, never judging, and always loving."

Viewing was at Stauffer's in Frederick on Dec. 10. To hear her music, go to the Stauffer Funeral Home obituary.

Julie Koch-Michael told me about the death of her good friend Rose-Marie. And I remember Rose-Marie playing her accordion with the Strolling Strings in functions at Andrews AFB.

Milestones

A special Happy Birthday to those born Christmas Day: Jean Nichols, Jason Tomlinson, Samantha Bowie and Christine Mucker. And two born Dec. 25 but are celebrating in Heaven: Florine Miles, born Dec. 25, 1911; and Loretta Hooe, Dec. 25, 1934.

Happy birthday to Jeffrey Norton and Michael Nichols, Dec. 26; Virginia Simms, Carolyn Jeffcoat and Kirra Starr Mears, Dec. 27; Christopher Garris, Anne Lucas, Patsy Anderson and my granddaughter Samantha McHale, who turns 20 on Dec. 28; Brayden Proctor, Dec. 29; Amy Anthony Wade and Robert Tretler, Dec. 30; Pat Spry and Janet Ferguson Hemming, Dec. 31.

Happy anniversary to Gerald and Arvilla Atkinson on their 66th anniversary Dec. 27; Nola and Bruce Thomas, their 43rd on Dec. 27; and my grandson David and Nina McHale who are celebrating their 20th on Dec. 30.

I wish blessed Christmas to all my readers!

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

MAKAYLA EUGENE

Makayla Eugene of Brandywine, Maryland and a student at Frederick Douglass High School, Amazon Days (s) Nights (s) of service is complete. Ten weeks of countless coordination hours, 3 Distribution Days/Nights, \$10,000 worth of supplies distributed to FDHS students with a capstone event on 11/30 for 30 students attending James Madison and Gwynn Park Middle and Melwood Elementary Schools. Amazon Day of Service. A blessing to bless others. #pgcpsproud.

Makayla's 1ST Quarter 4.86 GPA (I.B. Student), MYP Project National Score-5 (1st time for FDHS), SGA Class of 2022 Parliamentarian, member of FDHS Honor Society, PGCPSP/PG Community College Dual Enrollment Student; Amazon I.B. Student Coordinator while working 4 days a week and maintaining her dance studies at the Metropolitan School of the Arts. Congratulations Makayla on your high achievements.

UMES

UMES President Dr. Heidi M. Anderson has been elected to a three-year term on the board of directors of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, "a Washington, D.C. based association of nearly 400 public colleges, universities and systems whose "members advance their regions economic progress and cultural development through teaching, a commitment to underserved students and "a dedication to research and creativity." Information from UMES The Key Newsletter.

A VIRTUAL GRADUATION CELEBRATION

Winter commencement sidelined by COVID-19. UMES grads find solace reaching their goal just the same. UMES' class of 2020 will have stories to tell at future reunions unlike those of Hawk alumni who came before them over the previous 100 years. Two hundred twenty-eight students finished degree work this fall under trying circumstances as the coronavirus prohibited commencement festivities. An alarming nation-wide surge in the spread of COVID-19 forced the historically Black university to cancel traditional graduation ceremonies for a second time this year. Nonetheless, UMES students are appreciative, resilient, and upbeat about what the future holds.

Naasira Brown-El, English, Baltimore: "Coming into school, I wasn't really happy. But I can say today I am a

happy, fun, intelligent person. I have UMES to thank for that. It's a place that helped me become an adult."

"Graduation is one of the biggest steps of my life. It is no more "I'm a child". It is a steppingstone to my adult life. I can do it. I told myself I would graduate. It's a major goal accomplished."

Jose Garcia, Electrical Engineering Technology, District Heights, Maryland: "Being a UMES student motivated me. It made me who I am. It pushed me to be someone better. Being a Hawk means something dearly to me."

"Sophomore year was a tough year for me. I had some distractions. I did not know if I was going to overcome it. Friends and family rallied around me. Three words I learned to live by: "in due time."

"Graduating means the world to me. I almost dropped out. I know my family is proud of me. All eyes are on me. It makes me want to cry. It's real now."

Young Lee, Golf Management, Mt. Airy, Maryland: "It has been a very humbling experience being a UMES student. I had my ups and downs. But you have all the resources here you need to succeed. It is up to you to take advantage. You learn to make choices for yourself". "You just have to keep looking for your happiness, what you are passionate about and then follow the path. That worked for me."

"It's the end of a chapter and a new chapter begins. I feel like I am a freshman in life. I want to keep on learning You can never quite master it. If I can impact a life or two, that is what I would like to do."

Jordan Robinson, Criminal Justice, Rockville, Maryland: "The university is an open and welcoming place. I liked it was a close-knit community where you could get to know others easily. Plus, there was the "HBCU" element and the special camaraderie that goes along with that."

"It just seems easier to talk to professors, or get help with finances, your class schedule. You're not lost in 400-student classes." Becoming a law enforcement officer will be a steppingstone for me. My goal is to be a special agent, maybe a homicide detective." "I know in my heart I will do right by the public and abide by people's constitutional rights and represent the profession as best I can." Information from UMES THE KEY a newsletter for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE.

Around the County

Prince George's County Announces Holiday Closings for New Year's Day

County offices, with the exception of public safety agencies, will close on Friday, January 1, 2021, in observance of the New Year's Day holiday

LARGO, Md. (Dec. 15, 2020)—The Prince George's County Department of the Environment (DoE) announces the following services and facilities will be closed or suspended on Friday, January 1, 2021:

Facility/Service	January 1
Animal Services Facility (3750 Brown Station Road)	Closed
Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill	Closed
Brown Station Road Public Convenience Center	Closed
Electronics Recycling Acceptance Site (Located at the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill)	*Closed
Household Hazardous Waste Acceptance Site (Located at the Brown Station Road Sanitary Landfill)	*Closed
Missouri Avenue Solid Waste Acceptance and Recycling Center	Closed
Prince George's County Organics Composting Facility	Closed
Prince George's County Materials Recycling Facility (1000 Ritchie Road)	Closed
Bulky Trash Collection (By appointment only)	No Scheduled Collections
Trash Collection in County-Contracted Areas	Regular collections occur Tuesday, December 29 through Thursday, December 31
Residential Curbside Recycling Collection	Regular collections for Friday, January 1 move to Saturday, January 2 *(Change in Schedule)*
Residential Yard Trim Collections	Regular collections occur Tuesday, December 29 through Thursday, December 31
	Regular collections for Friday, January 1 move to Saturday, January 2 *(Change in Schedule)*
	Regular collections occur Monday, December 28

*Facility only open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday

TheBus, a public transit service operated by the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation, will not operate on Friday, January 1, 2021. Regular COVID operations of TheBus will resume on Saturday, January 2, 2021. In addition, the County's Call-A-Bus service, will not operate on Friday, January 1, 2021. Regular COVID operations of the Call-A-Bus services resume on Saturday, January 2, 2021.

The Prince George's County Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement will be closed on Friday, January 1, 2021. Regular business hours will resume on Monday, January 4, 2021.

In addition, Prince George's CountyClick 3-1-1 will be closed on Friday, January 1, 2021, and will return to regular operations on Monday, January 4, 2021, 7 a.m.–7 p.m. However, residents can still submit service/issue requests online at www.countyclick311.com/.

—Linda Lowe, Public Information Officer, Department of the Environment

Prince George's County Students Named to Fall 2020 Dean's List

FAIRMONT, WVa. (Dec. 11, 2020)—More than 1,200 students have been honored for their academic achievement at Fairmont State University after completing the fall 2020 semester.

Dr. Mirta Martin, President, and Dr. Rick Stephens, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, have released the President's List and the Dean's List to recognize high-achieving students for their academic distinction. Full-time students who earned a 3.4 or better grade point average are named to the Dean's List. Full-time students achieving a perfect 4.0 grade point average are named to the President's List.

The 120-acre main campus of Fairmont State University sits on a hillside in Fairmont, West Virginia, the county seat of Marion County. The University turns opportunity, passion and hard work into excellence in a vibrant, close-knit campus community where students and teachers become your friends for life. Students enjoy the opportunities offered by a comprehensive state university combined with the personal attention and campus atmosphere expected from a small, private school.

Term: Fall Semester 2020

County: MD-Prince George's Dean's List

Timothy Seay, Geo-Di Tolbert

—Hannah Mersing, Fairmont State University

412 Named to Union University Dean's List

JACKSON, Tenn. (Dec. 16, 2020)—Four hundred twelve students have been named to the Union University Dean's List for the fall 2020 semester, including:

Bowie, MD: **Esther Kuhnert**

The Dean's List includes full-time students who achieve a 3.5 grade point average on a four-point scale.

Founded in 1823 and affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, Union University is characterized by quality Christ-centered teaching and learning. Union offers liberal arts training in more than 100 majors and programs of study along with professional programs in business, education and nursing.

—Tim Ellsworth, Union University

Library Notice

Effective December 23, 2020–January 10, 2021, there will be no live virtual events. On-demand programs & the Virtual Events Archives will be available during this time.

—Prince George's County Memorial Library System

COMMUNITY

Chesapeake Life Center Offers Grief Support Programs

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN
Hospice of the Chesapeake

Workshops offer a walk in the park or a way to write your way through your grief journey

PASADENA, Md. (Dec. 16, 2020)—Chesapeake Life Center continues to reach out to the community with in-person grief and loss workshops planned for the first quarter of 2021.

The first will be a **Winter Walk**. Even in winter, nature has gifts for us, healing to offer. Join other grievers for a mid-winter slow walk through one of the lovely parks in **Prince George's County**. This walk will focus on developing awareness of the natural surroundings and how this can help in coping with loss. There will be time for discussion and reflection. The walk will be for all fitness levels on an easy trail in a park that is yet to be determined and will be held from 10:30 a.m. to noon Feb. 8. Masks are required and participation limited according to Prince George's County and Centers for Disease Control guidelines.

Writing about loss is one way to get thoughts outside of ourselves but with very little risk. There is no one to judge or tell us if we are getting grief right when it is our grief, expressed in our words, on a page. In this workshop, **Journaling: Getting Grief Out**, participants are not

expected to share, unless they want to, and there is no need to even like or be good at journaling. Attendees will be offered prompts for reflection and space to give voice to all the feelings surfacing through your experience of loss. It will be held from 10 a.m. to noon on Feb. 16 on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus in Pasadena. The cost is \$10 and includes a journal.

Per Center for Disease Control and Anne Arundel County guidelines, the number of people who will be allowed to participate is limited to six to allow for physical distancing. Face masks must be worn at all times.

Registration is required for both groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakehospice.org. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops.

In-person and online: Two hybrid grief support programs at Chesapeake Life Center
PASADENA, Md. (Dec. 16, 2020)—Chesapeake Life Center will offer two grief support programs in the new year that will meet both online via a telehealth platform, Zoom for Healthcare, as well as in-person on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland.

One group that will be meet-

ing both in-person and virtually is the **Child Loss Support Group**. This group is for parents who have experienced the death of a child of any age or circumstance. The group will meet from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, and March 3.

Also meeting both in-person and virtually is the center's free **Quarterly Book Group**, where bereaved adults can share in conversations about where grief meets life in literature. This quarter's book choice is "The Fault in Our Stars," by John Green. The group will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Feb. 5.

Per Center for Disease Control guidelines, the number of people who will be allowed to participate in programs in person is limited to six to allow for physical distancing. Face masks must be worn at all times. Visit hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops.

Registration is required for both groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakehospice.org. For details on telehealth bereavement services, visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/clc-covid-19. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org.

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Maryland Examining Wastewater For Coronavirus

By RYAN MCFADDEN
Capital News Service

CHELTENHAM, Md. (Dec. 14, 2020)—As coronavirus cases continue to rise across Maryland, the state is looking into testing wastewater as another way to help combat the pandemic. Widespread testing is expected to begin later this month, according to Maryland's Department of Environment.

Last month, Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, R, announced \$1 million in funding that would go toward testing wastewater for coronavirus in vulnerable communities like correctional facilities, nursing homes, and public housing units. The testing will be led by Maryland's Department of Environment in close coordination with the state's health department.

"This is using cutting-edge science to have a pooled estimate of a ... spread, so we can detect and respond to outbreaks particularly in vulnerable communities," Suzanne Dorsey, assistant secretary for the Department of the Environment, told Capital News Service. "We go in, do the testing then notify the health departments and housing management teams so they can respond."

This second phase of Maryland's COVID-19 Sewer Sentinel Initiative comes after a 90-day pilot program where the department examined the effectiveness of wastewater testing in five different locations statewide from July to October.

"What we know is people begin to shed the virus in their waste before they show any symptoms," said Dorsey. "We are able to detect virus shed from asymptomatic spreaders, and those are the people we think are most responsible for the spread."

Birthe Kjellerup, an associate professor at the University of Maryland's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, said analyzing wastewater is a useful tool because it can detect potential outbreaks days in advance.

"Everyone goes to the bathroom every day whether you are positive or negative," Kjellerup

said. "But not everyone is getting regularly tested."

However, with coronavirus being so widespread throughout the state, Kjellerup said she believes testing wastewater is more effective when examining a particular facility instead of an entire area.

"Let's say over the summer when we had a relatively low number of cases, we could've used this approach and within three to five days, say there will be a surge in this area," Kjellerup said. "We passed those days because there are positive samples everywhere. What we now can do is put this approach into effect in smaller communities that are much more vulnerable."

There have been 236,961 confirmed coronavirus cases in Maryland as of Monday, according to the state's COVID dashboard.

Sen. Clarence Lam, D-Baltimore County, told Capital News Service that he thinks testing wastewater is only a first step toward other actions that will need to happen to handle outbreaks. "It's not the end-all-be-all, nor is it a silver bullet," he said.

According to Dorsey, the department plans to test 50 locations weekly. Dorsey said this initiative is a more focused approach that will help small and vulnerable communities like nursing homes modify their own behavior or have the health department, if necessary, support the community with enhanced testing and contact tracing.

According to Maryland's COVID dashboard, as of last week, there had been 2,478 total COVID deaths in nursing homes, group homes, and assisted living facilities.

There have been 4,978 confirmed deaths statewide as of Monday.

Dr. Robert Gilman, who specializes in disease control at Johns Hopkins, said he thinks wastewater testing can be effective down the road when examining viruses and even vaccines.

"It can be a very useful tool for not only monitoring current diseases but monitoring the effects of vaccinations and the possibility of something coming back," Gilman said.

Maryland State Police Warning Parents, Children About Increase in Online Child Sex Exploitation Cases

By OFFICE OF MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS
Maryland State Police

PIKESVILLE, Md. (Dec. 14, 2020)—With both children and adults spending more time online due to virtual learning and social distancing measures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maryland State Police is reminding those of all ages to be vigilant as it relates to internet safety.

According to the Maryland State Police Computer Crimes Unit, cyber tips concerning the potential sexual exploitation of children have increased considerably over the past year. Through Dec. 7, state police have received 5,433 cyber tips. This compares to 3,248 such tips for all of 2019.

Prince George's County has received the most cyber tips this year, with 1,036 being reported through November, compared to 525 over the same period in 2019. They are followed through the same period by Montgomery County with 862 (408 in 2019), Howard County with 727 (196 in 2019), Baltimore City with 712 (480 in 2019), Baltimore County with 668 (360) and Anne Arundel County with 344 (264 in 2019).

Nationwide, cyber tips have also increased significantly over the past year. NCMEC received 18.43 million cyber tips between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30, 2020. This compares to 11.28 million over the same period last year. This represents a 63.3 percent increase year-over-year.

Between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30, 2020, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) also recorded 30,236 reports of online enticement of children, compared to 15,220 reports over the same period in 2019. This represents a 98.7 percent increase year-over-year.

According to NCMEC, online enticement involves an individual communicating with someone believed to be a child via the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offense or abduction.

This is a broad category of online exploitation and includes sextortion, in which a child is being groomed to take sexually explicit images and/or ultimately meet face-to-face with someone for sexual purposes, or to engage in a sexual conversation

online or, in some instances, to sell/trade the child's sexual images. This type of victimization takes place across every platform; social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, etc.

Children are often the target populations for online criminal activity. Parents are encouraged to monitor their children's use of all digital devices. Digital devices include laptops, tablets, desktop computers and 'smart' phones.

Maryland State Police and NCMEC are aware of instances where child predators are using the darknet to entice children to produce sexually explicit material. According to NCMEC, some child traffickers adjusted to the reluctance of buyers to meet in-person to engage in commercial sex. Some traffickers are now offering options for subscription-based services in which buyers pay to access online images and videos of the child.

Despite these dangers, there are several tips parents can take to help keep their children safe from Internet predators:

- Continuously monitor all of your child's online activity
- Be aware of who your children are communicating with online
- Talk with your children about online content
- Remind children to avoid communication with strangers
- Maintain control of apps downloaded on your child's device
- Be aware of what children see and hear and who they meet
- Know what information your child is sharing

Complaints involving the exploitation of children should be filed with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) at www.missingkids.com or 1-800-THE-LOST. Complaints of child exploitation may include harassment, cyberbullying, and child pornography. Maryland State Police investigators in the Computer Crimes Unit work closely with NCMEC in the investigation of crimes involving child exploitation. If a child is believed to be in imminent danger, citizens are urged to contact their local police or call 9-1-1 immediately.

University of Kansas Announces Spring, Summer 2020 Graduates

LAWRENCE, Kan. (Dec. 17, 2020)—The names of more than 5,600 graduates from the University of Kansas this spring and summer have been announced by the University Registrar. Fall graduates will be announced in early 2021.

Many spring and summer 2020 graduates celebrated their accomplishments as part of the virtual 2020 Commencement. The university also plans to hold an in-person Commencement event in May 2021 for the Class of 2020.

Students from your area are listed below. Not

all students opt to have their name shared by KU News Service.

Everett Terrell Henderson, Bowie, Bachelor of Science in Journalism in News & Information

Heritier Ngwanya Diakabana, Upper Marlboro, Master of Arts in Global & International Studies

Malcolm Wayne Reynolds, Upper Marlboro, Bachelor of Arts in Theatre

—Office of Public Affairs, KU News Service



RECYCLE your CHRISTMAS TREE



The Prince George's County Department of the Environment is making it easy for residents to recycle cut Christmas trees (no artificial trees) by offering convenient drop-off locations and curbside pick up.

Due to the Christmas holiday, yard trim and Christmas Tree collection will run from December 28, 2020 to January 25, 2021. Residents with Yard Trim Collection may place their undecorated, unbagged, live Christmas trees at the curb by 6 a.m. on their regularly scheduled yard trim collection day.

BROWN STATION ROAD PUBLIC CONTAINER PAD & RECYCLING CENTER
3501 Brown Station Road
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
Mon. – Sat.: 7 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Sun.: CLOSED

MISSOURI AVE SOLID WASTE ACCEPTANCE & RECYCLING CENTER
12701 Missouri Avenue
Brandywine, Maryland 20613
Mon., Wed., Fri.: 6:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Tue., Thu.: 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.
Sat.: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Sun.: CLOSED

*Please remove all plastic bags, tinsel and decorations. No artificial trees



SOURCE REDUCTION TIP:

Save bows, paper and boxes for future gift wrapping!

For more information, please call



easy. convenient. accessible.

COMMENTARY

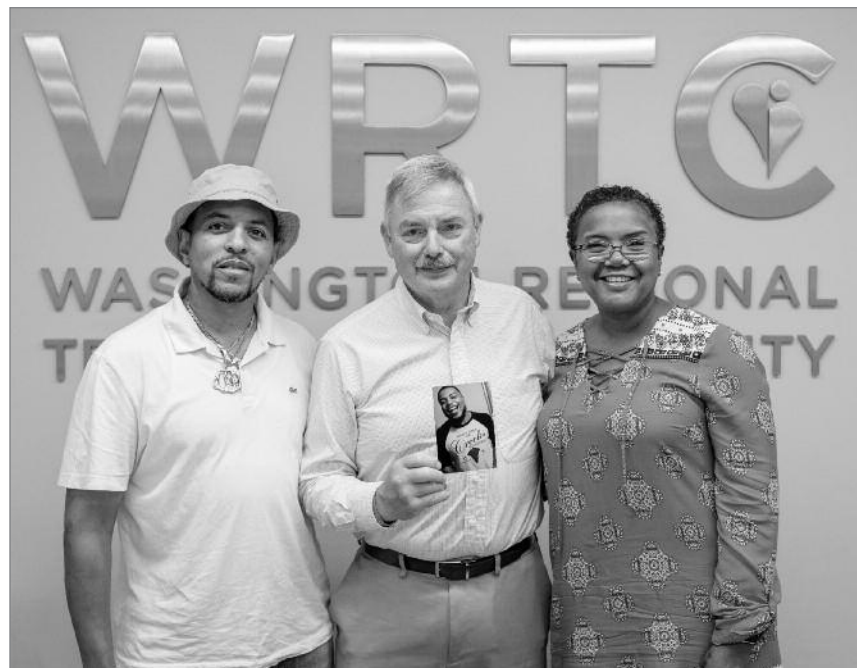
There's Still Time to Give the Greatest Gift

This holiday season will be unlike any other because of what feels like a never-ending COVID-19 pandemic. For us, the holidays haven't been the same since September 2018. That is when our 26-year-old son Anthony went into cardiac arrest likely due to alcohol abuse. His brain was deprived of oxygen for too long, resulting in his death and leaving us with a broken heart.

Anthony, who grew up in suburban Maryland, was the boy next door with a bubbly personality. He was kind and caring. On the outside, Anthony had a passion for creating and sharing music, was vibrant, energetic and full of life. But on the inside, he was struggling with depression and turned to alcohol to cope.

After Anthony passed away, we met with representatives from the Washington Regional Transplant Community (WRTC), the organ procurement organization (OPO) that serves the metro D.C. area. They told us Anthony had the potential to save several lives as an organ, eye and tissue donor. Donation was one way to turn our personal tragedy into hope for other families.

While we were contemplating Anthony becoming a donor, Dean Elgin was on the job hard at work despite the fact he had end-stage heart failure. Dean was alive but dependent on an LVAD, a mechanical device that helped his weak heart pump blood to the rest of his body. He had recently spent four long months cooped up inside a hospital room away from his wife and three daughters. They were praying for a miracle, and that miracle was Anthony.



PHOTOGRAPH CREDIT WASHINGTON REGIONAL TRANSPLANT COMMUNITY (WRTC)
Tim Howard, Dean Elgin & Pam Howard

Our beautiful son ended up donating seven organs to four other people. His heart now beats inside Dean's chest. Because of Anthony, these families will not have empty chairs at their holiday tables this year.

Anthony also donated bone marrow, nerves and blood for meaningful medical research.

In August 2019, we had the opportunity to meet Dean, the recipient of Anthony's heart. It had been 338 days since we last spoke to Anthony and when we heard his heart beating inside Dean we felt his soul was at peace. It was then we truly recognized the gift of organ donation—a gift money can't buy. When we met Dean and his wife Carina, we gave them a photo of Anthony. Dean told us he looks at that picture every morning and Anthony's smile gives him motivation to make the most of every day. Because of Anthony's gift, Dean was able to celebrate when one of his daughters received her doctorate degree and he will be here to witness other remarkable moments in his family's life.

We miss our son every single day. When we think of his organ recipients, we know his dreams and desires to be great came true. He gave the greatest gift and that is his legacy.

Despite the challenges the pandemic has presented for hospitals and the entire health care industry, WRTC still recovered and allocated 384 organs from 122 generous donors, which saved the lives of 328 people.

This holiday, we encourage you to visit BeADonor.org and sign up to be an organ donor. It will be the greatest gift you give—the gift of hope. Hope for the 108,000 people on the national transplant waiting list who, this holiday season, are wishing for their miracle.

—Pam and Timothy Howard, Waldorf, MD

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

National Urban League Helping to Shape Biden-Harris Cabinet and Agenda

"You shape the lives of millions of Americans, as well as American history, and all for the better. I really mean it when I say the country needs you more than any time in the past. The Urban League has stared down some tough, tough periods in American history, and the Urban League has never backed down. You stuck to your core mission: A fight for economic justice and social justice. You've and you've done it in good times and bad times. You have boosted millions of Americans out of poverty into the middle class. You've kept your mission."

—Joe Biden, 2019 National Urban League Conference, Indianapolis

In the days since the Electoral College officially

elevated Joe Biden and Kamala Harris to President-elect and Vice President-elect, announcements of the new administration's chosen Cabinet, senior advisors and policy initiatives has crowded baseless claims of election fraud from the headlines.

I'm proud to say these vitally important decisions are being made with the input and guidance of the National Urban League.

Last week, I was part of a group of civil rights leaders who met with the President-elect and Vice President-elect to discuss the critical issues of racial equity and diversity in their administration.

The meeting was positive and encouraging. The President-elect reaffirmed his commitment to racial justice. We underscored that our job as historical civil rights leaders is first, to help him and

secondly, to hold him accountable for the commitments that were made.

It is essential that the incoming administration assemble a cabinet and advisors that reflect the nation's diversity. The consent of the governed is conferred not only by an election, but by the people seeing themselves among those who govern.

Almost half of nominees for cabinet and cabinet-level positions announced so far are people of color, including African Americans General Lloyd Austin as secretary of Defense and Representative Marcia Fudge as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

Among the selections for cabinet-level positions and senior staff, President-elect Biden has nominated four prominent women of color: Neera Tanden to direct the Office of Management and Budget; Katherine Tai as U.S. trade representative, Linda Thomas-Greenfield as United Nations Ambassador and Cecilia Rouse to chair the Council of Economic Advisors.

This is a welcome and encouraging development following the least diverse administration since Ronald Reagan's first term. But during the meeting with the President-elect and Vice President-elect, we made it clear that appointing a diverse cabinet and advisors is not a substitute for a policy agenda that promotes racial justice and opportunity.

In the first 100 days of the Biden Harris administration, we would like to see action on voting

rights, action on criminal justice reform and an equitable distribution plan for the COVID vaccine. We also would like to see an economic framework that makes a down payment toward reducing and eliminating the racial wealth gap.

Both Attorneys General under the current administration have refused to investigate misconduct among police departments, either individual misconduct or patterns of conduct. That should be reversed on day one: put the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division back in business and allow them to do their job.

Both President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris have been longtime allies of the National Urban League. We honored the Vice President-elect as one of the first recipients of our "Woman of Power" awards in 2004, just after she was elected District Attorney of San Francisco. In 2017, when she assumed office as California's third female U.S. Senator, and the first of Jamaican or Indian ancestry, we honored her with the Hiram Revels Award for Achievement, named for the first African American to serve in the U.S. Congress. Both she and President-elect Biden have been frequent speakers at the National Urban League Conference and our Legislative Policy Conference.

The National Urban League is prepared to work closely with the Biden-Harris Administration to make sure they follow through on their commitments and to help them achieve these goals.

Chris Van Hollen

United States Senator for Maryland



Van Hollen, Senate Democrats Push to Ensure COVID-19 Vaccine Clinical Trials Continue to Enroll Diverse Participants

WASHINGTON (Dec. 17, 2020)—Today, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) along with eight of his Senate colleagues, sent a letter calling on the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS),

the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Operation Warp Speed, and the U.S. Army Material Command (AMC) to make sure COVID-19 vaccine clinical trials continue to enroll a diverse group of participants.

In addition to underscoring this priority, the Senators urged HHS Secretary Alex Azar, FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn, Operation Warp Speed Chief Advisor Moncef Slaoui, and General Gustave Perna to provide information on the demographics of current and future Phase III COVID-19 vaccine trial participants.

"COVID-19 has disproportionately harmed communities of color. Compared to white Americans, Black Americans are one and a half times more likely to contract COVID-19, over three and a half times more likely to be hospitalized, and nearly three times as likely to die from the disease," wrote the Senators. "Americans of color are also more likely to develop severe COVID-19, requiring hospitalization. Hispanic and Latino Americans are hospitalized at a rate over four times higher than non-Hispanic white Americans, and American Indian and Alaska Native people who contract COVID-19 are four times more likely to be

hospitalized than white Americans."

The Senators continued: "Given this disparate impact, FDA and public health officials have stressed the need for clinical trials to enroll diverse populations. Clinical trials should enroll diverse participants to confirm that COVID-19 vaccine candidates are safe and effective for Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds. Diverse clinical trial participation also builds vaccine confidence, which is critical in light of the United States' history of medical research exploitation and discrimination against minority patients."

Senator Van Hollen was joined in sending the letter by Senators Tina Smith (D-Minn.), Bob Menendez (D-N.J.), Sens. Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.) and Gary Peters (D-Mich.).

Renewal from A1

the next president to realize the importance of Chesapeake Bay regulations and funding.

"In its first budget, for fiscal year 2018, the Trump administration proposed cutting all funding for the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program (which) coordinates the cleanup effort among the six states of the watershed and the District of Columbia, the many federal agencies that play a role in the cleanup ... across the watershed," said Lisa Caruso, Chesapeake Bay Foundation's DC communications coordinator.

Congress restored the funding.

Currently, there are a number of air and water pollution lawsuits pending against the Trump EPA. These lawsuits will not disappear, but the hope is to negotiate settlement with the new administration, Baker said.

In the upcoming four years, the Chesapeake Bay should be given greater attention, but this is not up to just Maryland or the federal government, Pinsky said. More interdependence and uniformity on legislation among states across the watershed is necessary to see positive change in the bay, he said.

Actual change in the bay must also target air pollution, as it is inextricably linked to water pollution, Baker told Capital News Service

in mid-November.

"Thirty percent of nitrogen pollution is airborne," Baker said.

Pinsky is co-sponsoring a bill, Climate Solutions Now, which he said will be introduced early in the January legislative session. Similar legislation did not pass in the last General Assembly session, which was shortened by the coronavirus pandemic.

The bill is aiming to reduce emissions 60% by 2030, striving for net zero emissions by 2045. It is expected to require greater energy efficiency, planting more trees and converting public transportation buses to electric energy, Pinsky told CNS in November.

The major issues of what will be passed, and what money goes where, will hinge on what is available after funding continuing COVID-19 relief measures, Pinsky said.

As the coronavirus, following the Thanksgiving holiday, has spiked to record numbers nationwide, the pandemic is a financial "hole," and an impediment for environmental gains, said Pinsky, who chairs the state Senate's Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee.

Sectors heavily impacted by the virus need the money first, such as businesses and health care, leaving less money for areas like the

Chesapeake Bay and environmental protection measures.

The economy is also not in the best place to increase spending right now, as there are major deficits on the national and state levels, Pinsky told Capital News Service.

"By most objective criteria, the economy did fairly well until the pandemic hit. Unemployment was low, growth was robust and wages had started to rise. The improvement even started to show up in traditionally depressed parts of the country (Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia, parts of Ohio)," University of Maryland business professor Kislaya Prasad said.

Economic downturn does not create the best opportunity for green initiatives, which tend to be more costly.

When green initiatives are instituted, some things will cost more and some industries will feel the economic effects more than others.

At the same time, new jobs are created in making those renewable energy resources, University of Maryland business professor Kislaya Prasad said.

According to Prasad, the cost of renewable energy has been falling—so there may be increased money that could be allocated toward the environment.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Should a Working Widow Claim Now or Wait?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor
Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty: My husband died 13 years ago at age 50. I am now 64, never remarried, and work full time making a healthy income. I have never claimed any of his benefits. What are my best options? **Signed: Working Widow**

Dear Working Widow: You have several options available as both a widow and a worker entitled to your own Social Security benefit.

1. You could collect a reduced survivor benefit (only) from your deceased husband and allow your own SS benefit to grow to a larger amount. At age 70, your own benefit will be about 29% more than it will be at your full retirement age, or FRA, which is 66 years and 4 months (your own benefit stops growing at age 70). If you take your survivor benefit now, since you are claiming it before you reach your FRA it will be reduced by about 11% from the amount your husband was eligible to receive at his death. But at your FRA your survivor benefit would reach the maximum of 100% of what your husband was eligible for at his death.
2. If your survivor benefit from your husband at your FRA will be more than your own benefit will be at age 70, you should strive to maximize your survivor benefit by waiting until your FRA to claim it. You can find out what your survivor benefit will be by contacting Social Security. They can also tell you what your age 70 benefit will be, but you can get that too by creating your "My Social Security" account, which is easy to do at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.
3. If your own benefit at age 70 will be your highest benefit, you should strive to maximize your personal benefit by claiming your survivor benefit (only) first, as described in 1. above, and delaying the claim for your own benefits until age 70.

But here's a big red flag: since you still work full time at a "healthy income," be aware that if you claim any SS benefit before you have reached your full retirement age, you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test" which limits how much you can earn before they take away some of your benefits. The earnings limit for 2021 will be \$18,960 (changes annually) and if you are collecting early SS benefits of any type and exceed that limit, they will take back benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by). The earnings test is in effect until you reach your full retirement age, after which there is no longer a limit to how much you can earn while collecting benefits.

So, what is your best option, considering the above? Well, if your earnings from work are substantially more than the annual earnings limit, you may find that you will not receive any benefits, even if you were to claim. That's because they will "take back" benefits by withholding your future Social Security payments until they recover what you owe. For example, if your annual earnings are \$60,000, you would exceed the limit by about \$41,000, which would mean you would need to repay them \$20,500. If your monthly SS benefit was about \$1500 (about average), they would withhold benefits for about 14 months to recover what you owe, meaning you wouldn't be getting any SS benefits while you were earning that much money. Thus, you may find your best option right now is to wait until your FRA to claim any Social Security benefits.

In the interest of full disclosure, there are some nuances related to the earnings limit. The limit is higher, and the penalty less punitive, in the year you reach your FRA (during the months before you reach your FRA). And while you may gradually recover withheld SS retirement benefits starting at your FRA, survivor benefits withheld before your FRA may not be fully recovered, depending upon how long after your FRA you collect them.

The 2.3 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.

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Council Vice Chair Deni Taveras and Council Member Monique Anderson-Walker Celebrate Grand Opening Of Two Lidl Stores in Prince George's County

By ANGELA ROUSON
Prince George's County Council Media

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Dec. 11, 2020)—Prince George's County Council Vice-Chair Deni Taveras (D-District 2) and Council Member Monique Anderson-Walker (D-District 8), welcomed two new Lidl grocery stores to Prince George's County.

Council Vice-Chair Taveras celebrated the opening of the 34,000 square foot grocery store on December 9, 2020. The new District 2 Lidl store is joining the thriving Northern Gateway business community on New Hampshire Avenue, in Takoma Park.

Vice Chair Taveras says the new Lidl brings a quality grocery option to a diverse market.

"The new Lidl store signals confidence in the future of Prince George's County and the Northern Gateway, which has experienced an economic development transformation over the past

few years. This new store not only means new fresh food options, but also new jobs for the local community. We are excited to welcome this new business to District 2."

Council Member Monique Anderson-Walker also celebrated the opening of a 31,000 square-foot Lidl store on December 9 on Livingston Road in Oxon Hill.

"We are excited to welcome this new Lidl store to the District 8 community. It represents a commitment to creating job opportunities that will serve to revitalize the economic health of our community, and I look forward to a vibrant and healthy partnership as well as the quality shopping experience that Lidl stores are known for," said Council Member Anderson-Walker.

Each store, open from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily, will bring approximately 50 new jobs to the local community. For additional information, please visit https://www.lidl.com/grand-openings/US8030?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

New Modern Condominium Homes Coming to National Harbor

Pulte Homes to build The Flats available for purchase summer 2021

By VICKI BENDURE
National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (Dec. 17, 2020)—Peterson Companies announced that Pulte Homes will build The Flats at National Harbor—144 modern condominium homes available in summer, 2021.

"Pulte Homes is pleased to announce that we will be building condominium homes that will be within convenient walking distance to everything that National Harbor has to offer," said Jarod Blaney, mid-Atlantic division president for Pulte Homes. "The Flats will offer 144 condominium homes in a gated enclave, including garage parking and unit sizes and layouts that meet diverse consumer desires. Pulte Homes will offer one- and two-bedroom condos, some with an included office/den, package concierge systems, Smart Home technology options, and consumer inspired layouts."

National Harbor currently has more than 30 restaurants; 160 shops including Tanger Outlets; eight hotels including MGM National Harbor—a luxury casino with world-class entertainment; and two of the Mid-Atlantic's largest spas. The Waterfront District features boutique shopping and unique restaurants along the water. The Flats residents will join 2,500 current residents at National Harbor who enjoy walking to amenities and a great sense of community.

"With 2,500 residents and more than 1,300 townhomes, condominiums and apartments, National Harbor has become a highly sought-after community," said Peterson Companies' EVP of Residential, Stuart

Prince. The most recent residential building at National Harbor, The Haven, experienced record sellout.

"Given National Harbor's location with easy access to I-495, I-295, Capitol Hill, Downtown D.C., Alexandria and Annapolis, you just can't beat the location," explained Prince. "Add that to pristine waterfront, National Harbor amenities, and walkability and you truly have a unique community."

The Flat's residents will be able to participate in a host of activities, including water activities, morning yoga and workouts on the waterfront plaza, various special events and community concerts. Just outside of The Flat's door, residents can walk to restaurants, shops, Fleet Street bars and entertainment. Condominium owners will also have the option to keep a boat within walking distance at the National Harbor Marina. And there are convenient water taxis to take residents to downtown Washington, D.C., Old Town Alexandria or Mount Vernon. The Flats are also within easy proximity to the Navy Yard as well as southwest, Capitol Hill and the Pentagon.

Biking and hiking trails at National Har-



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF BOB NAROD

Interior photo of The Flats at National Harbor.

bor are also a plus for those with an active lifestyle. Residents can walk, run and bike along the National Harbor waterfront and over to Alexandria, and into Washington, D.C. on the many miles of waterfront trails.

Each condominium comes with high-quality finishes and the design detail that is a signature of Pulte Homes. With open layouts and private balconies from the mid \$400's, these homes are expected to be in demand, as demonstrated with past condominium home sales at National Harbor. To get on the The Flats at National Harbor interest list, register at <https://www.pulte.com/homes/maryland/baltimore/national-harbor/the-flats-at-national-harbor-210652#CommunityContact>.

For more information on National Harbor, go to www.NationalHarbor.com.

Court Ruling on DACA a Relief for Marylanders 'In Limbo'

By KAITLYN FRANCIS
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (Dec 14, 2020)—Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, a program that prevents some residents brought to the United States as children from being deported, is being restored to its former, Obama-era policies after a ruling on Dec. 4 that overturned the Trump administration's attempt to limit and eventually end the program.

DACA is a program started in 2012 by the Obama administration to protect those who came to the United States before age 16 from being deported.

When granted DACA status, recipients are given a two-year work permit that they continually renew.

To be eligible for DACA, someone must

be born after June 15, 1981; have come to the United States before turning 16; physically present in the country on June 15, 2012, and when applying for DACA; have had no lawful status on June 15, 2012; lived in the United States from June 15, 2007, until the present; meet certain educational requirements; and have not been convicted of certain crimes.

U.S. District Court Judge Nicholas Garaufis ordered the Department of Homeland Security to post an announcement to accept first-time applicants again and for two-year work permits.

The Maryland Dream Act allows for DACA students who receive a high school diploma or GED in the state to pay in-state tuition to Maryland universities.

In September 2017, the Trump administration stopped new applicants from apply-

ing to DACA, only allowing renewals.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services also announced they will be reinstating applications for an international travel permit called advance parole, which allows DACA recipients to leave the country and still return to the United States.

Amy Rivera, president of University of Maryland's Political Latinxs United for Movement and Action in Society, said PLUMAS has a dream fund for DACA recipients to help pay for legal fees.

PLUMAS works alongside the Undocumented Student Program at the University of Maryland, attends protests and puts on a dream gala every year to raise money.

A portion of members in PLUMAS are

See DACA Page A6

Libraries from A1

and killed George Floyd on May 25—and libraries have been striving to help.

Williams said that DC Public Library data shows the top titles between mid-March and early November were "White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism," by Robin DiAngelo, and "So You Want to Talk about Race," by Ijeoma Oluo.

The DC Public Library now offers unlimited eBook and audiobook copies of limited titles on race.

Seeing a similar interest in Prince George's County, the library system there partnered with local agencies and nonprofits to host a virtual event in July featuring "How to Be an Antiracist" author Dr. Ibram X. Kendi.

The event attracted more than 226,000 live views, according to the library's COO for com-

munication and outreach, Nicholas Brown.

Some patrons also have taken more time to explore genres that are new to them.

Before COVID-19, Kovalsky said she would stop in at least once a month, pick up books, browse the shelves with her two kids, or attend the weekend activities. Now she makes monthly pickups, but her tastes have shifted. Kovalsky said she had not read a book for pleasure in years, but recently began reading "The Refugees," a non-fiction book by Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Ariana Dugan, 33, vice president of product and enterprise at General Assembly, said she has been using the Mt. Pleasant Library more often since the beginning of the pandemic because "it's a nice alternative to screen time for work."

Dugan said she also enjoys newfound efficiency: "It's a little bit more transactional, because I go online to sign the book, order it, and then just pick it up at the library rather than having that kind of

browsing experience, and I don't super mind that honestly."

She has also discovered a love of non-fiction.

"Things that take me out of the here-and-now but are still in one way or another grounded in reality, I would say is a common theme in terms of what I've been getting from the library," she said.

For some people, despite the libraries' enhanced cleaning protocols and changes, COVID-19 remains a concern.

Julie Locascio, an attorney and long-time Washington resident, told Capital News Service that since the beginning of the pandemic she has only picked up one book from the library and has been very careful to minimize human exposure.

Despite this, she wrote in a social media message to CNS, "I have been super grateful at how many books I have been able to borrow electronically from the library."

Not everybody knows the libraries are open.

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'A Bible Based, Christ Centered & Spirit Led Congregation'

6801 Sheriff Road Landover, MD
20785 (301) 773-6655

Sunday Biblical Institute:
9:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship:
7:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.
Saturday Worship:
6:30 p.m.

'WONDERFUL WEDNESDAYS WITH JESUS':
12 noon (The Power Hour) and 6:45 pm

"A Time of Prayer, Praise, Worship, & The Word"
Dr. Henry P. Davis III, Pastor
www.fbhp.org

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church of College Park

Welcomes You Where Jesus Christ Is Lord and King
Stephen L. Wright, Sr., Pastor

5018 Lakeland Road
College Park, MD 20740
301-474-3995
www.fbc-cp.org

Sunday School 9:30a.m.
Sunday Worship 11a.m.
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7-8p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Service 8p.m.

UNITED METHODIST

Union United Methodist Church

14418 Old Marlboro Pike,
Upper Marlboro, MD

Church (301) 627-7389

Sunday School: (Children/Adults) - 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Rev. Dr. Kendrick D. Weaver,
Pastor
www.uumchurch.com

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419 Hill Road, Landover, MD
20785 • 301-490-2625

Rev. Ranessa Mayo, Pastor

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Matthew 28:19-20

Sunday School 9:00 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.

Soulful Thursdays
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

BAPTIST

Forest Heights Baptist Church

We exist to strengthen your relationship with God.
6371 Oxon Hill Road
Oxon Hill, Maryland 20745

Sunday School (Adults & Children) - 9:30 A.M.
Worship Service - 11:00 A.M.
Wed. Prayer Service & Bible Study - 7:00 P.M.
Office (301) 839-1166
Fax (301) 839-1721
E-mail: FHBC@verizon.net
Pastor: Rev. Waymond B. Duke

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Intercessory Prayer: Sundays - 8:30 a.m.
Church School: - 9:15 a.m.
Morning Worship Celebration - 10:30 a.m.
Wed. Night Bible Study - 7:45 p.m.
Elder Willie W. Duvall, Pastor

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DACA from A5

DACA recipients and Rivera said the rulings come as a big relief for a lot of students.

Rivera said it is important to keep a critical eye on the incoming administration's actions to help DACA students as there is much more to be done, such as taking away renewal fees and creating a gateway to citizenship for recipients.

"I know a lot of members were definitely worried about (the Trump Administration's agenda) because when you are undocumented in the U.S., you are always in a type of limbo," said Rivera. "You never know when the authorities in this country are going to decide whether you can stay in this place that you call your home or if you have to be forced back to a land you don't know much."

As of March, Maryland had 7,870 active DACA recipients. However, 38% of immigrants eligible for DACA had applied as of 2019 in Maryland, according to the American Immigration Council.

"It is a wonderful ruling because there are a lot of kids in Maryland and in other states that have been in limbo and have been without protection because of what Trump did with the deferred action program," said Maryland Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk, D-Prince George's and Anne Arundel. "So this at least gives them some hope. And it's wonderful because a lot of them need to work. These are very tough times that we're living, really unprecedented times with COVID."

Immigration attorney Paola Vibriesca, a partner at Ninan + Vibriesca Law in Greenbelt, Maryland, has been in the process of calling back clients, who previously came to her office meeting every requirement except for the fact that they would be first-time applicants, with the good news that they can start the application process immediately.

"Hopefully it's the beginning," Vibriesca said. "What we're hoping, when Biden comes into office, is something more permanent or people who know they will be able to stay here with permanent status, not just something that they have to renew every year."

Pena-Melnyk said DACA recipients working in Maryland are given an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number linked to the IRS to pay taxes, and contributed over \$139 million in taxes last year to the state.

Those without valid U.S. Citizenship and Immigration documentation in Maryland are eligible for a "federally non-compliant" driver's license or identification card.

Pena-Melnyk said that Maryland is especially humane and inclusive compared to other states and has a lot of hope for Biden's presidency to do the same.

The incoming administration said they will end Trump's "detrimental" asylum policies, reverse policies that separate parents and their children at the border and increase humanitarian resources at the border in the new president's first 100 days.

Grief from A3

org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops.

Chesapeake Life Center announces virtual grief support schedule for new year

SADADENA, Md. (Dec. 17, 2020)—Chesapeake Life Center will continue many of its support programs and workshops via a telehealth platform, Zoom for Healthcare, through March.

New to the online program is the **Caregivers Monthly Support Group**, a group designed for those actively caring for a loved one with a chronic illness. This group will provide attendees with an opportunity to connect with other caregivers, learn about resources, coping strategies and more, in a safe, therapeutic space. It will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon on the first Wednesday of the month, Jan. 6, Feb. 3 and March 3.

The following groups also will be meeting virtually:

- **SoulCollage Grief Support Group** has participants create a series of collages to commemorate lost loved ones and to visually journal the grief process. The group will meet on the first Monday of the month, from 6 to 8 p.m. Jan. 4, Feb. 1 and March 1.
- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Monthly Morning Group** is for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon on the third Wednesday of the month, Jan. 20, Feb. 17 and March 17.
- **Nurturing the Grieving Heart** through Yoga is a six-week virtual workshop that will be held from 6 to 7:15 p.m. Thursdays, Jan. 21 to Feb. 25. These adult yoga classes are facilitated by Cathy Rees, a registered nurse and certified yoga instructor with the Yoga Center of Columbia. This gentle workshop can be done standing or from a chair and is perfect for both grievers and caregivers. The total cost for the six weeks is \$40.
- **Parent/Parental-Figure Loss Monthly Support Group** is a monthly drop-in group that is open to adults grieving the death of a parent or parental figure. It will meet from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on the fourth Wednesday of the month, Jan. 27, Feb. 24 and March 24.

Acknowledging that not everyone has access to this technology or may not be comfortable with it, the center suggests people call or email the office and grief professionals will work with individuals to help them find other appropriate resources if needed.

Registration is required for all groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org. For details on telehealth bereavement services, visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/cle-covid-19. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops.



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