

# The Prince George's Post



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## Happy New Year!

from your friends at the Prince George's Post

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### Top Ten Adult Fiction



IMAGE CREDIT PGCMLS

## Library Announces 2022 Top Reads in Prince George's County

By NICHOLAS BROWN  
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Dec. 22, 2022)—Every holiday season the Prince George's County Memorial Library System shares local booklovers' top reads for the year. The 2022 reading lists include a wide range of recent releases and beloved classics. The titles reflect the community's love of reading, eagerness to learn and grow, an interest in history and the range of challenges facing contemporary society, plus dedicated following of Mo Willems, the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" series, and books about Minecraft.

Usage of physical materials is on the rise, growing from 1,170,654 in calendar year 2021 to 1,704,966 in 2022 (through November), a 45.6% increase. Digital resource

usage has grown 58% since 2016 and 2022 digital resource usage is on track to exceed 2021 usage. EBook/eAudiobook usage has grown by 455% between 2016 and 2022.

Over the holidays, Prince Georgians are encouraged to stock up on reading at their local neighborhood branch library and enjoy the wealth of eBooks, eAudiobooks, streaming media, and online resources available at no cost. The Library's full catalog of books is available at [pgcmls.info](http://pgcmls.info) and the PGCMLS App. Staff picks for adult readers (English and Spanish) are shared each month at [pgcmls.info](http://pgcmls.info). Customers of all ages can log reading and library activities to earn badges and entries for Wizards tickets and prize packs through the Wizards Winter Reading Challenge. The free challenge can be joined online at [pgcmls.info/Wizards](http://pgcmls.info/Wizards). Customers of neighboring library systems

can register through their local library at this LINK or by visiting a participating library's website: DCPL, Alexandria Library, Fairfax County Library, and MCPL.

#### Top 10 Adult Fiction

- "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens
- "The Vanishing Half" by Brit Bennett
- "The Midnight Library" by Matt Haig
- "The Judge's List" by John Grisham
- "People We Meet on Vacation" by Emily Henry
- "It's Not all Downhill From Here" by Terry McMillan
- "Anxious People" by Fredrik Backman
- "Life After Death" by Sister Souljah

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## County Council Member At-Large Calvin S. Hawkins, II, Hosts Special Screening of "Lorton: Prison of Terror" Documentary

Free, Ticketed Event, Saturday, January 7, 2023, at Prince George's Community College, Largo

By GILLIE HAYNES  
Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Member At-Large Calvin S. Hawkins, II will host a screening of producer Karim Mowatt's film, "Lorton: Prison of Terror", a documentary exploring life in the region's former prison complex through the firsthand, personal accounts of former inmates, corrections officers, and families of people who were imprisoned at one of the eight Lorton Reformatory prisons.

The screening will be held on **Saturday, January 7, 2023, 5 p.m.–8 p.m.**, at the Prince George's Community College, Center for the Performing Arts, Proscenium Theater, 301 Largo Rd., in Largo, Maryland. This event is free; however, seating is limited. You must have a ticket to attend.

Lorton Reformatory is a former prison complex in Lorton, Virginia, established in 1910 for the District of Columbia. Described by many as outdated, overcrowded and violent, Lorton developed a reputation as one of the most notorious prisons in the American prison system. The last prisoners were removed from Lorton Reformatory in 2001, and a year later, the property was sold to Fairfax County. It is now a mix of single-family homes and apart-

ments, and recreational facilities in walkable communities.

Council Member Hawkins shared, "I am pleased to present this documentary which shares an untold story about what occurred behind the prison walls at Lorton – the conditions endured by inmates and the impact of their experience on families and communities. I encourage our residents to see this important film."

A passionate advocate for returning citizens, Council Member Hawkins added that his commitment is born of personal experience. "I am devoted to creating and seeking opportunities to support those who travel the way that I traveled—returning home to a community that presents a host of viable opportunities and options to succeed and not to return to prison."

The free screening event will also feature a Question & Answer session following the film presentation.

While previous screenings have sold out, tickets are available for the January 7 event hosted by Council Member Hawkins.

For tickets please visit: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lorton-prison-of-terror-tickets-461903123677>

## In Maryland, Dems Capitalized on Mail In Voting—But the GOP Didn't

By NATHAN SCHWARTZ and BRANDON SCHWARTZBERG  
Capital News Service

As the 2020 presidential election neared, then-President Donald Trump warned all Americans—especially Republicans—about the supposed dangers he saw in early, absentee and mail-in voting.

"As far as the ballots are concerned, it's a disaster," he said during a September 2020 presidential debate, repeating a fully debunked, utterly untrue argument that such ballots lead to election fraud.

But Trump, who lost the 2020 election to Democrat Joe Biden, was right in one way. Mail-in voting was a disaster—for Maryland Republicans in 2022.

In at least five major races in the state, Republican candidates led on Election Night only to see their leads slip away over the next few days as mail-in ballots were

counted. Five conservatives lost their leads, too, in nonpartisan races for school board seats in the state.

Given what happened, a growing number of Republicans now say they must embrace mail-in voting to give themselves better odds in future elections.

"I'm not aware of any efforts to help Republicans vote by mail, but on the Democrat side, there were a lot of efforts—and I think we're seeing that in the results," said Del. Neil Parrott, a Republican who led in his race for the District 6 U.S. House seat on Election Night only to lose to the incumbent Democrat, Rep. David Trone, when the mail-in votes were counted.

**Flipping the results**  
Amid the COVID-19 pan-

demic, early voting and mail-in ballots have become common ways to cast ballots in recent elections, including in Maryland.

In November's general election, a little over two million ballots were cast in Maryland, and over 900,000 of those ballots were either cast during early voting, or mailed in, state elections records show.

But in Maryland, the mail-in ballots could not be counted until after Election Day. That's because in May, Gov. Larry Hogan vetoed a bill that state lawmakers passed that would have allowed for the counting of mail-in ballots before Election Day. Hogan said the election reform bill that would have allowed the earlier counting of mail-in votes didn't go far enough to prevent voter fraud.

The requirement that mail-in votes be counted after Election Day, combined with the Democrats' embrace of mail-in voting,

made for some misleading preliminary results on Election Night. For example:

- In the race for Anne Arundel County executive, Republican County Councilwoman Jessica Haire led the incumbent Democrat, Stuart Pittman, by 10,863 votes on Election Night. But once all the mail-in ballots were counted, Pittman was declared the winner—as 42,156 of the 58,504 mail-in votes went the Democrat's way.
- In the race to represent District 6 as a member in the U.S. House, Parrott led by over 11,000 votes just after Election Day. But Trone ended up winning by 24,524 votes—because the Democratic incumbent received about 33,000 more mail-in votes.
- In the election to represent District 33 in the Maryland State Senate, Republican Del. Sid Saab led Democrat Dawn Gile by 1,636 votes before the counting of mail-in ballots. But Gile received 7,328 more mail-in votes than Saab, meaning the Democrat won by a little more than 6,000 votes.

In the race for Frederick County executive, Republican State Sen. Michael Hough led Democrat Jessica Fitzwater by just over 11,000 votes just after Election Day. But Fitzwater received 10,868 more mail-in votes than her opponent. Paired with a 1,201-vote advantage in provisional ballots, Fitzwater defeated Hough by just 989 votes.

In the election to represent District 9A in the Maryland House of Delegates, four candidates competed for two seats. Incumbent Republican Del. Trent Kittleman finished Election Night in the lead. However, a subpar performance for her in mail-in ballots dropped her to third in the race, narrowly missing out on re-election by 113 votes. Her closest opponent, Democrat Chao Wu, received 2,482 more mail-in votes.

Ben Smith, Pittman's campaign manager, said the election results show how Democrats used mail-in voting to their advantage.

"Ensuring broad turnout was important to us, and vote by mail is an incredible asset in that re-

spect, because it removes a lot of the barriers to participation that a voter might otherwise experience because of issues with transportation, childcare, work or any other responsibility," Smith said.

#### How the Democrats utilized mail-in voting

Yvette Lewis, chair of the Maryland Democratic Party, said the party "spent a lot of time educating voters on how easy it was to do mail-in voting."

She said the state Democratic Party sent digital ads to voters encouraging them to vote by mail. Meanwhile, Democratic volunteers called or texted voters and knocked on doors to deliver the message that voting by mail was easy and convenient.

As a result, Democrats "realize the importance, the ease of voting by mail and voting early, because all kinds of unforeseen things can happen on Election Day," Lewis said.

Individual Democratic campaigns reinforced the message that

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# TOWNS and NEIGHBORS

## In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

### Wayne Neale remembers "It's a Wonderful Life," growing up in Morningside

"I didn't know it at the time, but there is something about Morningside that made it the perfect town in which to be raised. We knew nearly all the members of the families in community, as most families contained 4 or 5 children. Everything from the Christmas tree lighting ceremony to the school Christmas program was attended. Athletic summer programs, the cub and boy scouts, safety patrols on the corners when school was out, and after school- basketball in the playground. Teachers that you knew and respected. White's Grocery for penny candy and a crewcut at Johnson's Barber Shop. And, as we got older, the sub-teen and teen clubs. The firemen were residents and role models, and the ladies participated through the firehouse Ladies Auxiliary. The police were the fathers of our classmates.

"As I think about it now, it has a lot of resemblance to Jimmy Stewart's movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." This tribute to Morningside was by Wayne Neale, for the Neale family.

### Town of Morningside: Christmas report

"Breakfast with Santa had a great turnout—the Magic Show, Pancake Breakfast and Santa Secret Shop. The kids had a great time! A Special Thanks to Morningside resident, Mr. Pitts of Larkspur Rd., for all his Santa Experience."

On Sunday, December 18, the Recreation Committee went through the town Singing Carols and House Judging. The winning houses are:

- 1st Place - Taylor and Hernandez of Morgan Rd.
- 2nd Place - The Gordan Family of Woodland Rd.
- 3rd Place - Freeland Family of Larches Ct.
- Honorable Mention - Vice Mayor Wade of Town of Morningside

### Neighbors & other good people

Donald Young, 100, of Temple Hills, Census Bureau Statistician. Dept. of Commerce Medal recipient, member of local service organizations, died Dec. 19. I'll remember this amazing man in next week's column.

Congratulations to Kristen and Julian Ehiem on the birth of their twins, Ambrose and Teresa. Their mother, Kristen, was secretary at St. Philip's in Camp Springs

but now has a new job as mom of two.

Heather McHale, of Clinton, drove to Climax, Michigan, for the funeral of her beloved grandfather, Wesley "Wes" Mitchell Swarouth, who died December 1 at the age of 88. From his obit, "He graduated from Climax-Scotts High School in 1950 and then went on to spend 4 years in the United States Air Force. On February 13, 1955, Wesley married Sandra Joan Fenwick. Wes and Sandra were lucky enough to have 67 loving years together. They were a beautiful team and built a wonderful life on their farm. Wes was a lifelong farmer and loved everything about farming. Feeding beef cattle and everything that went along with it. It was one of his greatest joys."

I've had an artsy time seeing my granddaughters' shows: Samantha McHale, on her viola with the Towson University Symphony Orchestra, Dec. 3; Sarah McHale performing with the Fall Dance Showcase at UMBC; and Mary McHale on trumpet with Bishop McNamara High School's Christmas concert. Earlier in the year, Mary was Amy in McNamara's production of "Little Women."

### Pearl Harbor (continued)

Jill Kimmel, formerly of Skyline, emailed the item about Pearl Harbor in last week's column and I asked for more information about her parents. She wrote,

"My dad was Capt. Edwin McDonald, mom was Marie McDonald. My dad was well known after the war for his exploits in Antarctica. He was given a medal by the Queen of England as well a Legion of Merit from the President. He also received many medals for his service during the war. Among others, he received 2 silver medals and 1 bronze.

"Mom did tell me more about the attack—so much turmoil and chaos. Her house was strafed by the Japanese, killing next-door neighbor's baby. The woman was so distraught she carried the baby with her for days. My mom said after the attack on Pearl all the civilians waited to be taken back to the states. She said she played poker the whole way home aboard the ship. She was later an air raid warden in San Francisco during the war."

### MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital honored

Congratulations to MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital for being awarded the Pathway to Excellence designation by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

The hospital treats 45,000 in its Emergency Department and 11,000 inpatients annually. This is the first national nursing designation for the hospital and makes MedStar Southern Maryland the only hospital in the Southern Maryland peninsula to be Pathway designated. Additionally, it is the only hospital in Prince George's to receive this designation.

### Buy stamps now!

On January 22, postage will go up. Again. First class letters, from 60¢ to 63¢. Postcards, from 44¢ to 48¢. International letters and postcards, from \$1.40 to \$1.45. I don't know what happens to "additional ounce."

### Thank you for your Thank You

The delightful tribute to Morningside by Wayne Neale, triggered several Thank-Yous to me for keeping Morningside in the news. Among them: Morningside Mayor Benn Cann, Jim Reilly, former Morningside Councilman Russell Butler, former Councilwoman Carol (Kline) De-Graba, Dave Williams, Jody Nyers, Cathy Miller (who years ago worked with me in St. Philip's Library), Jan Stocklinski (whose mother was the first Morningside Mayor), Julie Koch-Michael, and even my daughter Therese Gallegos (who reads the column down there in Brownsville, Texas).

### Milestones

Amy Anthony Wade and Robert Tretler, Dec. 30; Pat Spry and Janet Ferguson Hemming, Dec. 31, Sister Haimanot, Dorothy Cullinan and Bridget Vilky, Jan. 1; Evelyn Lozano, Jan. 2; Courtnei Bland, Jan. 3; Jennifer Jung, J. B. Thomas, and Krista Neale, Jan. 4.

Happy Anniversaries to my grandson David & Nina McHale, their 23rd on Dec. 30; my grandson Isaac & Eva Gallegos, their 2nd on Dec. 31; my grandson Conor & Heather McHale, their 19th on Jan. 3; and my son John & Michelle McHale, their 26th on Jan. 4.

You may note that, of the grooms listed in these anniversaries, three are my grandsons and one is my son. I don't know why the McHales keep getting married at this midwinter time of the year.

It could have something to do with their parentage: John Edward McHale Jr. & Mary Margaret Mudd were married 72 years ago, on Jan. 3, 1951, at St. Mary's Cathedral in Saginaw, Michigan.

*Happy New Year to all my Readers*

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### A SPECIAL THANKS

"Good morning, Church family, a note of thanks to Pam Stahl and Avis Balkcom-Williams for the wonderfully orchestrated and well-presented Christmas Cantata, "How Great Our Joy" on Sunday, December 11. All the members who came together to form the combined choir. Your attire was festive, and your melodious sound was very inspiring: the Media Ministry—Kevin Augustus on the sound board, and Ronald & Rendell Crawford's doing the streaming. June Fauber the narrator; the members of the combined choir for decorating the sanctuary; and the members who provided a light continental breakfast to satisfy our appetites after the morning service". Pastor Dorothea Stroman.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations "Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education." Martin Luther King, Jr. Congratulations to Jason Mitchell, who is the grandson of the late Garnell and Ruth Turner of Brandywine, Maryland and the son of Larry and Patricia Turner Mitchell of Rio Vista, California.

Jason just graduated from Southern New Hampshire University, on Saturday, December 10, 2022, with a Master of Science in Sports Management and Graduate Certificate in Athletic Administration. Jason lives in Southern California and presently works at a private high school.

### NOTTINGHAM MYERS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

You are invited to join us for our Parish New Years Eve Service at Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church, Saturday, December 31, 2022, at 4 p.m. Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church, 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772, Pastor Shemaiah Strickland. <https://www.thenhf.org>.

### TRIBUTE TO BARRY WHITE

A Tribute to Barry White, January 14, 2023, Harmony Hall Arts center 8 p.m. The address is 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Jourdan Carroll is just one of those singers that you never want to forget. Walking away from his soulful voice at the end of a show gives you hope and admiration for his talent. Carroll has worked his entire life on his voice. His voice is so deep and mesmerizing it is often associated with the voice of the legendary Barry White. With notes so low that some could claim the ground was shaking, he made his star-like debut in his early teens. After being noted so many times for his resemblance to Barry White, he decided to bring it into his shows. This only increased his popularity and fame as old fans

of Barry White now had a new and refreshing voice to bring the 70s soul star back to life. Carroll has captured the charismatic persona of Barry White, as well as his penchant for impromptu comments while performing. This show is a "must-see" event for anyone who is a Barry White fan or a lover of classic R&B.

### CHRISTMAS AT THE HARBOR

Nightly Tree Light Show at the Plaza, 150 National Plaza, National Harbor, Maryland runs every half hour from sunset to 9 p.m. Watch the brand new 60-foot RGB tree come to light nightly. The breathtaking light show dances alongside a holiday medley recorded by the United States Air Force Band.

### ICE! AT THE GAYLORD NATIONAL RESORT

Gaylord National Resort will celebrate the Christmas season with the return of the hotel's beloved holiday tradition ICE! until December 31, 2022. Using more than 2 million pounds of ice, the amusing holiday classic, 'A Christmas Story' will be brought to life in ice sculpture form by a team of 40 world class ice artisans from Harbin, China. This year, guests will experience over ten scenes from the hilarious family tale including the old man's major award, Aunt Clara's pink nightmare, the ultimate triple dog dare at the school's flagpole and more. The display is kept at a frosty 9 degrees Fahrenheit, but don't worry, guests will be provided Gaylord National's signature blue parkas to keep them warm and toasty. Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center address is 201 Waterfront Street, National Harbor Maryland.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Bowie State University is excited to celebrate their winter graduates and honorary degree recipient Mr. Eddie C. Brown. Mr. Brown has distinguished himself over the span of a 50-year career, as an investment manager, entrepreneur, and philanthropist.

### HARMONY HALL ARTS CENTER

Arts Center featuring an Art gallery, a concert hall, fitness room, meeting rooms, a multipurpose room, playground, and a preschool room. Part of Maryland's 2020 Year of the Woman. Seniors Programs and Teen Programs are offered. The center is located at 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Website: <https://www.mncppc.org/1979/Harmony-Hall-Arts-Center>. Telephone: 301-203-6070.

*Happy New Year to Everyone!!!*

## Around the County

### Council Vice-Chair and District 6 Council Member Wala Blegay Responds to Deadly Carjacking at Largo Gas Station

On Tuesday another act of violence was committed in our community. I am deeply saddened and extend my heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and loved ones of Lee Alexander Thomas, a District 6 resident whose life was taken in a deadly carjacking at a gas station in Largo.

When violence invades the lives of a family in our community, it affects us all. At a time when Mr. Alexander's family should be gathering to celebrate the holidays, they are now gathering to mourn a life lost.

I am determined to keep our communities safe. I will work with Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy and Chief of Police Malik Aziz to ensure justice in the senseless murder of Lee Alexander Thomas.

The Thomas family has my full support and prayers during this difficult time. In District 6, we are family, and we will get through these difficult times together.

A reward of up to \$25,000 is being offered for information leading to an arrest and indictment in this case. If you have any information, please call 301-516-2512.

### Martinez Lopez Earns Dean's List at Davis & Elkins College

ELKINS, W.Va. (Dec. 22, 2022)—Davis & Elkins College student **Joshua Martinez Lopez** of Hyattsville, Maryland, has achieved the Dean's List for the fall 2022 semester. To earn the honor, full-time students must achieve a semester GPA of 3.6 to less than 4.0.

Related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Davis & Elkins College is located in Elkins, West Virginia, and offers 45 academic programs. For more information, visit the College website at [www.dewv.edu](http://www.dewv.edu).

## Banneker-Douglass Museum Saddened by Theft and Defacement of Monumental Statue of Harriet Tubman



PHOTO COURTESY BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM

**Photos (left to right): Detail of vévé, the beaded staff that Harriet Tubman held in her left hand and full image of the monumental statue, Araminta with Rifle and Vévé (2017) courtesy of Goya Contemporary Gallery.**

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Banneker-Douglass Museum**

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Dec. 21, 2022)—On Saturday, December 17, the Banneker-Douglass Museum suffered a theft and the defacement of the monumental statue of Harriet Tubman, Araminta with Rifle and Vévé (2017) by Dr. Joyce J. Scott.

Installed in September 2022, the monumental statue, Araminta with Rifle and Vévé sits in front of the museum on view along Franklin Street. Museum staff noticed the vévé, a beaded staff that Harriet Tubman held in her left hand, was missing.

A police report was filed immediately. Museum staff are currently working with the City of Annapolis Police Department to review video footage with hopes of recovering the piece.

"We're saddened that this has occurred," said Chanel Johnson, Executive Director of Banneker-Douglass Museum and Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. "If anyone has any information connected to the theft, please let us know. We are asking for the community's assistance in this effort. We are praying for the return of the vévé to restore the statue to its original state."

Dr. Joyce J. Scott, a MacArthur "Genius" Fellow, is known as the

"Queen of Beadwork" for the intricate, handcrafted beading featured in many of her pieces. Araminta with Rifle and Vévé (2017) is on loan from Goya Contemporary Gallery in Baltimore. Scott originally created the piece for a 2018 exhibition entitled Harriet Tubman and Other Truths at Grounds for Sculpture in Hamilton, N.J.

The museum will be closed until further notice while the investigation is underway.

If anyone has any information, please contact the museum via email at [bannekerdouglassmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:bannekerdouglassmuseum@gmail.com) or via phone at (410) 216-6180.

The Banneker-Douglass Museum is the State of Maryland's official museum of African American heritage and culture. It is operated by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. It serves to document, interpret, and promote African American history and culture through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America's rich cultural diversity for all. The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m.—4 p.m. Admission is free. To learn more, visit <http://bdmuseum.maryland.gov>. Follow us on social media: Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

# COMMUNITY

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

### Can I Get Survivor Benefits While Still Working?

By RUSSELL GLOOR, National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation, the non-profit arm of the **Association of Mature American Citizens**

**Dear Rusty:** I lost my wife several years ago and I qualified for Social Security Spousal benefits. Unfortunately, because of my income, I have not been able to take advantage of this benefit. I am currently 64 and still working. I believe I have until the age of 70 to receive this. Is there any way to claim any of this before I start taking my Social Security in a couple of years? **Signed: Working Widower**

**Dear Working Widower:** Your entitlement to surviving spouse benefits from your wife actually never expires so, you can wait until you stop working full time, or until you reach your full retirement age (FRA), to claim your benefit as a widower.

Social Security's "earnings test" lasts until you reach your full retirement age which, for you, is 66 years and 8 months. That is the age at which your earnings from working will no longer affect your Social Security benefit. So, you can simply defer claiming your survivor benefit until you reach your FRA, or until you stop working full time and won't exceed the annual earnings limit (the earnings limit changes yearly; for 2023 it is \$21,240). But there is no way to avoid the earnings test if you're collecting SS benefits of any kind before you reach your full retirement age. If you collect your surviving spouse benefit early and exceed the earnings limit, SS will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by), and if your work earnings are high enough it can temporarily disqualify you from receiving SS benefits. The penalty for exceeding the earnings limit is also less severe in the year you reach your FRA.

You might take some comfort in knowing, anyway, that taking your survivor benefit before your FRA would mean it would be reduced (by 4.75% for each full year early) but waiting until you reach your FRA to claim it would mean you'll get 100% of the survivor benefit you're entitled to (the same amount your wife was entitled to when she died). And you can claim your survivor benefit (only) first and collect that, while allowing your personal SS retirement amount to continue to grow, up to age 70 if you wish. You should strive to maximize whichever benefit will be highest—your own, or your survivor benefit—and collect that benefit for the rest of your life. If you choose to claim your survivor benefit at your FRA and switch to your own higher amount at 70, your personal SS retirement benefit at 70 will be almost 27% more than it will be at your full retirement age. That would be a good way to avoid the earnings test, maximize both benefits, and secure the highest possible Social Security benefit for as long as you live.

Whether waiting until 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit makes sense depends on whether it will be higher at age 70 than your survivor benefit at your FRA, and on your life expectancy. Average life expectancy for a man your current age is about 84 and you would break even moneywise at about age 81 if you wait until age 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit. So, you'd get the most in cumulative lifetime benefits by waiting until your FRA to claim your survivor benefit and—if it will be higher—waiting until you're 70 to claim your own SS retirement benefit. The choice is yours to make but longevity is the key, so you should carefully assess your potential life expectancy, including your family history, your current health, and your lifestyle to help you decide.

*The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://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](http://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](http://www.amac.us/join-amac).*

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## Marietta House Museum Presents: “From Slave Ship to Harvard: Yarrow Mamout and the History of an African American Family”, by Author James H. Johnston

By STACEY HAWKINS  
Marietta House Museum

Marietta House Museum is thrilled to present nationally acclaimed author and historian, James H. Johnston, on **Thursday, January 12, 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.** to discuss his book, “From Slave Ship to Harvard: Yarrow Mamout and the History of an African American Family”. This is a hybrid presentation.

James H. Johnston will discuss the life

of Yarrow Mamout, a self-emancipated Muslim man whose story from Africa to Maryland lends insight into understanding the lives of 18th & 19th century free and enslaved people in Prince George's County, MD. Yarrow Mamout was the first of his family to arrive in America. Hear the true story of an African American family in Maryland over six generations, from their ancestor Yarrow Mamout to the present generations.

To join this fascinating conversation

please register online at <https://tinyurl.com/msfbswrz> or call (301) 464-5291 for more information. This is online and in-person. To receive the Microsoft Teams link you must register in advance. Address for in-person presentation is 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD. 20769. Marietta House Museum is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

## Maryland’s Van Hollen Wants Congress to Address Medical Debt Practices

By GRACE YARROW  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, hopes to reform medical debt practices with the introduction of legislation that would curb unfair policies and protect consumers.

Van Hollen and co-sponsor Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Connecticut, announced the bill Nov. 30.

The Maryland lawmaker and Murphy first sponsored the legislation in 2020. The bill, called the Strengthening Consumer Protections and Medical Debt Transparency Act, failed to pass before the end of 2020.

“When folks are sick or in the hospital the last thing they should be worried about is whether they’ll lose their house or their wages for seeking care,” Van Hollen said in a statement. “This legislation puts safeguards in place to ensure transparency, cap interest rates, and keep the focus on patients’ health and wellbeing so they can get the care they need.”

If passed, the measure would require health care institutions to communicate about debt with consumers and cap the annual interest rate growth for medical debt at 5%.

The legislation also calls on the Department of Health and Human Services to create a database for public information

about medical debt collection practices from hospitals and other providers.

Additionally, the bill includes consumer protections like checking for insurance coverage assistance before a provider sends debt to collection agencies and that health care entities must provide patients with itemized bills and payment receipts.

“Forcing people to go bankrupt just because they get sick is immoral—plain and simple,” Murphy said in a statement. “We need to shed light on the hospitals out there who are abusing patients with overly aggressive debt collection practices.”

In 2021, 12% of Maryland residents had medical debts in collection, according to a study by the Urban Institute.

See **MEDICAL DEBT Page A6**

## Top Reads from A1

“The Other Black Girl” by Zakiya Dalila Harris  
“While Justice Sleeps” by Stacey Abrams

## Top 10 Adult Non-Fiction

“Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents” by Isabel Wilkerson  
“Algebra the Easy Way” by Douglas Downing  
“Python All-in-One” by John C. Shovic  
“Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don’t Know” by Malcolm Gladwell  
“Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women That a Movement Forgot” by Mikki Kendall  
“Call Us What We Carry: Poems” by Amanda Gorman  
“How to Be Antiracist” by Ibram X. Kendi  
“Salt, Fat, Acid, Heat: Mastering the Elements of Good Cooking” by Samin Nosrat  
“Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don’t Know” by Adam M. Grant  
“The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story” edited by Nikole Hannah-Jones

## Top 10 Adult Audiobooks

“Becoming” by Michelle Obama  
“The Bible Experience: Old Testament” by Zondervan  
“Rich Dad Poor Dad: What Rich Kids Teach Their Kids About Money That the Poor and Middle Class Do Not” by Robert T. Kiyosaki  
“Born A Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood” by Trevor Noah  
“Spanish 1 B: The Complete Course”

by Simon and Schuster Audio  
“It’s Not All Downhill from Here” by Terry McMillan  
“Spanish III B: The Complete Course” by Simon and Schuster Audio  
“Spanish III A: The Complete Course” by Simon and Schuster Audio  
“The Guardians” by John Grisham  
“Spanish: The Short Course” by Simon and Schuster Audio

## Top 10 eBooks (Spanish)

“Violeta” - Isabel Allende  
“Hopeless: Tocando el cielo” - Colleen Hoover  
“Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada” - Pablo Neruda  
“Amor en verso” - Colleen Hoover  
“Conversaciones entre amigos” - Sally Rooney  
“Y a ti, ¿cómo te gusta el café? Contigo” - Elsa Delgado  
“Velorio” - Xavier Navarro Aquino  
“Verity: La sombra de un engaño” - Colleen Hoover  
“Cantoras” - Carolina de Robertis  
“Nunca, nunca (1)” - Colleen Hoover

## Top 10 Audiobooks (Libby)

“Finding Me” by Viola Davis  
“The Paris Apartment” by Lucy Foley  
“The Maid” by Nita Prose  
“Black Cake” by Carmaine Wilkerson  
“Book Lovers” by Emily Henry  
“Run Rose Run” by Dolly Parton and James Patterson  
“Cold Mourning” by Brenda Chapman  
“The Recovery Agent” by Janet Evanovich  
“Atlas of the Heart” by Brené Brown  
“Lessons in Chemistry” by Bonnie Garmus

## Top 10 Teen Fiction

“Shadow and Bone” by Leigh Bardugo  
“Children of Blood and Bone” by Tomi Adeyemi  
“The Summer I Turned Pretty” by Jenny Hour  
“They Both Die at the End” by Adam Silvera  
“One of us is Next” by Karen M. McManus  
“The Hate U Give” by Angie Thomas  
“Ace of Spades” by Faridah Àbíké-Íyímíde  
“A Court of Thorns and Roses” by Sarah J. Maas  
“The Outsiders” by S. E. Hinton  
“The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes” by Suzanne Collins

## Top 10 Teen Graphic Novel

“Heartstopper Volume 1” by Alice Os-eman  
“Dragon Ball Super 14, Son Goju, Galactic Patrol Officer” by Akira Toriyama  
“Dragon Ball Super 8, Sign of Son Goku’s Awakening” by Akira Toriyama  
“Heartstopper Volume 4” by Alice Os-eman  
“Heartstopper Volume 2” by Alice Os-eman  
“Fruits Basket Volume 1” by Natsuki Takaya  
“Pretty Guardian Sailor Moon 1” by Naoko Takeuchi  
“Heartstopper Volume 3” by Alice Os-eman  
“Dragon Ball Super Volume 15, Moro, Consumer of Worlds” by Akira Toriyama  
“Miles Morales Volume 5, The Clone Saga” by Saladin Ahmed

See **TOP READS Page A4**

## Earth TALK™

### Surging Population Worries Environmentalists

Dear EarthTalk:

*I hear that world population just topped eight billion. Is this growth wreaking havoc on the environment/climate and what is the prognosis for population growth globally over next few decades?*

—Peter. W., Albuquerque, NM

Global population has indeed reached eight billion, but it won't remain there for long. Lower mortality rates and longer life expectancies have contributed to elevated population numbers. Although richer countries have lowered their birth rates in recent decades, poorer countries—specifically those in sub-Saharan Africa—continue to have high birth rates. Whether or not we will be able to support a continually growing population is still a hotly debated topic.

Many analysts still subscribe to philosopher Thomas Malthus' hypothesis, first postulated in

a 1798 essay, that humans' ability to provide more and more resources will always be overwhelmed by ever-increasing population growth numbers. But others believe that growing population numbers can be supported with proper and effective resource allocation. Regardless, a growing population coupled with climate change will have an impact on resource availability and distribution.

Population projections are inherently tricky. It's impossible to account for every scenario that could be a determinant over the course of a century. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (UNPD) projects that human population will pass 10 billion by 2100. However, a convergence of population forecasts created by the Wittgenstein Centre projected a global population of 8.79 billion by 2100 after an initial peak of 9.73 billion in 2064. This projection is vastly lower than

UNPD's projections due to their different modeling approaches.

The Wittgenstein Centre's models arrived at different population totals based on variables such as fertility, mortality and migration pattern changes. The models predicted a lower total fertility rate (TFR) as access to education and contraception for childbearing people increased. A low TFR will have long term impacts on the overall global population. A reduced global population would reduce carbon dioxide output and lower resource needs and stresses, but climate change will continue to have consequences that will affect resource availability for decades to come even if we are successful at reining in emissions.

Social programs and systems will need to adapt as populations age and access to contraception and education increases. Age gaps will expand in countries with low TFRs. Labor forces will decrease, social security and universal health-care systems will become strained and economic growth will be lowered as a result. These factors create a daunting task to support a growing global population, but it is possible.

Global population numbers do put a large

strain on the environment, so it is important to elect policymakers who support a sustainable future with commitments to reduce fossil fuel emissions and who uphold and encourage reproductive education and healthcare for everyone, especially childbearing people. Whether our future will be some sort of Malthusian hell or a global garden where most of us receive the nourishment and resources needed to survive is still anybody's guess.

**CONTACTS:** The Global Population Will Soon Reach 8 Billion—Then What?, [un.org/en/un-chronicle/global-population-will-soon-reach-8-billion-then-what](http://un.org/en/un-chronicle/global-population-will-soon-reach-8-billion-then-what); Fertility, mortality, migration, and population scenarios for 195 countries and territories from 2017 to 2100, [thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)30677-2/fulltext#seccetitle10](http://thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)30677-2/fulltext#seccetitle10).

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# COMMENTARY

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## Bennie Thompson's Historic Leadership of Jan. 6th Committee Is an Extension of a Lifelong Mission to Safeguard Voting Rights and Racial Justice

*"This committee is nearing the end of its work. But as a country, we remain in strange and uncharted waters. We've never had a president of the United States stir up a violent attempt to block the transfer of power. I believe, nearly two years later, this is still a time of reflection and reckoning. If we are to survive as a nation of laws and democracy, this can never happen again."*

—U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, Chair, House January 6 Committee

It is difficult to overstate the profound gravity of the decision by the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6 Attack on the United States Capitol to recommend criminal charges against former President Donald Trump, or the grievous nature of his alleged crimes.

Almost as astounding has been the meticulous,

conscientious work of the January 6 Committee under the resolute leadership of Chair Bennie Thompson.

In an environment where the instruments of government increasingly are exploited for political advantage, Rep. Thompson oversaw a clear-eyed, non-partisan, and fearless examination of the facts surrounding one of the darkest days in U.S. history.

The committee's referral marks the first time in the nation's history that federal law-enforcement officials have faced the prospect of criminally prosecuting a former president and a declared candidate to claim the office for a second time.

A federal grand jury in February 1974 was prepared to indict sitting President Richard Nixon on four criminal counts for his role in the Watergate scandal. But a 1973 opinion by the Justice De-

partment's Office of Legal Counsel in 1973 concluded against indicting a sitting President. This conclusion, reaffirmed in 2000, guided special counsel Robert Mueller's decision not to charge Trump with obstruction of justice related to the investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

It also arguably bolstered Trump's exaggerated sense of impunity which led directly to the events of January 6. The mob that attempted to carry out Trump's coup displayed the same sense of impunity, making no effort to hide their crimes, even posting the evidence on social media. The Big Lie of voter fraud, they believed, justified their violence.

Rep. Thompson, born and raised in Jim Crow Mississippi, has seen the power of a lie employed to justify violence, and it has fueled his determination to seek full accountability for those responsible.

"I'm from a part of the country where people justify the actions of slavery, Ku Klux Klan, and lynching. I'm reminded of that dark history as I hear voices today try and justify the actions of the insurrectionists of January 6, 2021," he said as he opened the committee's first public hearing on June 9.

Chairing the committee was an extension of his lifelong mission to protect voting rights and racial justice.

"We are supposed to be a democracy," he told the New York Times. "And when we see people carrying Confederate battle flags in the group, that's the symbol of slavery and absolute resistance to the rule of law. So for me, it was bringing back a part of our history that none of us should be proud of."

Rep. Thompson has a very personal connection

to that history. Textbooks used in the segregated schools where he was educated—books that only reached Black students after they were discarded by white schools, "showed Black people as slaves, butlers or choppers in the field," he said. "You didn't see a Black senator or a Black representative or a Black lieutenant governor. You only saw Black people in menial kinds of responsibilities."

In his early teen years, he attended mass meetings in Jackson where he met Medgar Evers. He and a few friends were arrested for protesting but released because they were underage.

As a student at Tougaloo College, he worked as a member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee to register Black voters and volunteered on the congressional campaign of Fannie Lou Hamer.

He launched his career in public service immediately after graduating, elected as an alderman in his hometown of Bolton, Mississippi, in 1969 and as mayor in 1973. Following his two terms as mayor, he served on the Hinds County Board of Supervisors until his election to Congress in 1993.

In his 30 years in Congress, he has compiled an impressive list of achievements including creation of the National Center for Minority Health and Health Care Disparities, disaster relief reforms in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, and the most comprehensive homeland security package since September 11, 2001.

But he considers the work of the January 6 Committee his most important.

"I want it to benefit this country and the world," he told the New York Times. "Because we still, in my humble opinion, are still the greatest country in the world. We just had a hiccup on Jan. 6. And we have to fix it."

—December 22, 2022

## Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita, Children's Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## A Christmas Eve Lesson

Fifty-five years ago, on December 24, 1967, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered the message at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta on what would be his last Christmas Eve, titled "A Christmas Sermon on Peace." Once again, I share some of that powerful lesson. In a season when many people sing carols praying for peace on earth, Dr. King shared a sharp warning for our nation and world: "Now let me suggest first that if we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective. No individual can live alone; no nation can live alone, and as long as we try, the more we are going to have war in this world . . . We must either learn to live together as brothers or we are all going to perish together as fools."

His words remain prescient. Are we any closer to heeding them? At the end of the sermon, Dr. King spoke about the day four years earlier when

he had told the nation at the March on Washington that he had a dream for America's future. He said in the turbulent years that had followed it already felt like he was watching that dream turning into a nightmare. But Dr. King said he was not willing to give up:

"Yes, I am personally the victim of deferred dreams, of blasted hopes, but in spite of that, I close today by saying that I still have a dream . . . I have a dream that one day men will rise up and come to see that they are made to live together as brothers. I still have a dream this morning that one day every Negro in this country, every colored person in the world, will be judged on the basis of the content of his character rather than the color of his skin, and every man will respect the dignity and worth of human personality. I still have a dream that one day the idle industries of Appalachia will be revitalized, and the empty stomachs of Mississippi will be filled, and brotherhood will be more than a few words at the end of a prayer, but rather the first order of

business on every legislative agenda."

He went on: "I still have a dream today that one day justice will roll down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream. I still have a dream today that in all of our state houses and city halls men will be elected to go there who will do justly and love mercy and walk humbly with their God . . . With this faith we will be able to speed up the day when there will be peace on earth and good will toward men. It will be a glorious day, the morning stars will sing together, and the sons of God will shout for joy."

Decades later, Dr. King's dream remains deferred, but every generation has a new chance to bend the arc of the moral universe closer towards justice, equality, good will towards all, and peace. Fifty-five years after Dr. King gave that Christmas Eve sermon, it is still up to us to make that dream and that day when the sons and daughters of God shout for joy real for all children and their families in America.

—December 23, 2022

### Mail-In from A1

voting early or voting by mail would be good options.

"We utilized methods of contact like calls, texts, door knocks, digital outreach and mail to ensure voters knew how to vote by mail or in person during Early Vote and Election Day," said Smith. "For vote by mail, when voters requested ballots, we put a lot of effort into ensuring that they returned their ballots."

Given how much effort Democrats put into pumping up the mail-in vote, Trone didn't panic and didn't concede on Election Night.

"We always knew this race was going to be close," Trone, who was running in a redrawn district that included more Republicans, told supporters in Frederick as the early Election Night count showed falling behind Parrott by about six percentage points. "The district is different, and it's going to take a few days for the election officials to finish counting the tens of thousands—and it is tens of thousands—of votes that are still outstanding throughout the district."

That being the case, Trone, who was bidding for his third term, added: "I'm confident that we are headed back to Congress."

His confidence was well-founded. Trone pulled into the lead as the mail-in vote was counted, and three days after Election Day, the Associated Press declared him the winner. Trone finished about 10 percentage points ahead of Parrott.

### What Republicans are saying now

While Democratic officials made early voting a priority among its voters, the same cannot be said for Republicans. Republicans

did not use mail-in voting to their advantage, said Parrott, the losing GOP congressional candidate.

"I think going forward, the Republican Party in Maryland just needs to realize and voters need to realize this is the law," Parrott said. "This is how elections are gonna be conducted."

Parrott's thoughts on mail-in voting for his party reflects those of the head of the Republican National Committee.

"Our voters need to vote early," Republican National Committee Chairwoman Ronna McDaniel told Fox News in early December. "There were many [people] in 2020 saying, 'Don't vote by mail, don't vote early,' and we have to stop that, and understand that if Democrats are getting ballots in for a month, we can't expect to get it all done in one day."

Upset with the close result in her race, Kittleman tied her failed re-election bid to the GOP's demonization of mail-in voting.

"There may have been a number of people who would have liked to vote but couldn't get out on Election Day, having been dissuaded from using mail-in voting opportunities," she said. "I think it was a very bad move on our part."

That bad move stemmed from what Trump said about mail-in balloting over and over again for more than two years, Kittleman said.

"President Trump, along with other Republicans [that] are urging Republicans not to vote using mail-in ballots, which frankly is really, really stupid," Kittleman said.

Noting that mail-in voting now appears to be a permanent and major part of every election, she added: "If you don't take advantage of it, you're cutting off your nose to spite your face."

### Top Reads from A3

#### Top 10 Juvenile Fiction

- "Rowley Jefferson's Awesome Friendly Adventure" by Jeff Kinney
- "Big Shot" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Wrecking Ball" by Jeff Kinney
- "Dork Diaries: Tales from a Not-so-Best Friend Forever" by Rachel Renée Russell
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Deep End" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of an Awesome Friendly Kid: Rowley Jefferson's Journal" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Meltdown" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Last Straw" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Third Wheel" by Jeff Kinney
- "Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck" by Jeff Kinney

#### Top 10 Juvenile Nonfiction

- "Minecraft for Beginners: A Step-by-Step Guide" by Stephanie Milton
- "Minecraft. Guide to: Creative" by Thomas McBrien

"Minecraft. Guide to: Ocean Survival" by Stephanie Milton

"Minecraft. Guide to: Farming" by Alex Wilshire

"Minecraft. Guide to: Combat" by Craig Jelley

"Guinness Book of World Records 2022"

"Minecraft Blockopedia" by Craig Jelley

"Minecraft Let's Build! Theme Park Adventure" by Stephanie Milton

"Minecraft Maps: An Explorer's Guide to Minecraft" by Mojang AB

"Minecraft. Guide to: PVP Minigames" by Stephanie Milton

#### Top 10 Easy Fiction

- "Should I Share My Ice Cream?" by Mo Willems
- "I Love My New Toy!" by Mo Willems
- "Pete the Cat's Family Road Trip" by Dean Kim
- "There is a Bird on Your Head!" by Mo Willems
- "My New Friend is So Fun!" by Mo Willems
- "Cece Loves Science: Push and Pull" by Kimberly Derting
- "Mirabel's Discovery" by Vicky Weber

"Let's Go for a Drive!" by Mo Willems

"Pete the Kitty Goes to the Doctor" by Kim Dean

"I Will Surprise My Friend!" by Mo Willems

#### Top 10 Magazines on Libby

- The Economist
- The New Yorker
- New Scientist
- Woman's World
- Prevention
- Us Weekly
- Cook's Illustrated
- HGTV Magazine
- National Geographic Magazine
- Kiplinger's Personal Finance

#### Holiday Closures

The Library will be closed for the holidays on the following dates:

Saturday, December 31–Monday, January 2

Customers are encouraged to verify daily operating status at [pgcmls.info](http://pgcmls.info) prior to traveling to the Library over the holidays, in case of inclement weather closures.

## The Prince George's Post

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Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260  
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Brenda Boice	-
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# Sleep is Good Medicine

## 11 tips for healthier sleep

FAMILY FEATURES

**S**leep can sometimes feel like self-care that can wait or a reward you need to earn. However, the opposite is true. When it comes to your health, sleep is just as important as physical activity and nutrition.

While you sleep, your body is busy healing and repairing itself, learning and actively preventing chronic diseases. For most adults, getting healthy sleep means sleeping for at least 7 hours each night without waking up frequently, going to bed and waking up at roughly the same times each day and waking up feeling refreshed. Healthy sleep helps the body boost immunity, manage weight, reduce stress and lower the risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer's disease.

"We know chronic insufficient sleep can have a detrimental impact on personal health and increase the risk of many diseases," said Jennifer L. Martin, a licensed clinical psychologist and professor of medicine at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA. "Healthy sleep is also important for mood regulation and mental health, helping to reduce the risk of problems such as anxiety and depression."

However, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 3 adults in the United States report getting less than 7 hours of sleep per night. Your daily routine — what you eat and drink, the medications you take, how you schedule your days and how you spend your evenings — can significantly impact the quality and duration of your sleep.

These tips from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine's "Sleep Is Good Medicine" campaign — which aims to emphasize sleep as a key pillar of health, equivalent with nutrition and exercise — can help you create a healthy sleep routine to improve your health today and in the long run.

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Get up at the same time every day, even on weekends and during vacations.
- Set a bedtime early enough to get at least 7 hours of sleep each night.
- Use your bed only for sleep and sex, or when you are sick. Watch TV and work outside the bedroom.
- Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.



Photos courtesy of Getty Images

- Reduce fluid intake before bedtime.
- Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Don't eat a large meal before bedtime. If you are hungry at night, eat a light, healthy snack.
- Avoid drinking caffeine in the afternoon or evening.
- If you don't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed. Do a quiet activity without a lot of light.
- Avoid alcohol before bedtime.
- Keep a sleep diary. Over a two-week period, track when you go to bed each day, wake during the night and wake in the morning. Also track when you exercise, nap, take medication or have caffeine or alcohol.

Even if you don't think you have a sleep problem, talk to your doctor about your sleep and share your sleep diary. Together, you can figure out what healthy sleep looks like for you and how to get it. This can help prevent sleep difficulties before they become harder to treat.

Learn more about the role sleep plays in your health and find more tips to help improve your sleep habits at [sleepisgoodmedicine.com](https://sleepisgoodmedicine.com).



## 4 Steps to Live in the Present Every Day

FAMILY FEATURES

**L**iving in the present means celebrating each moment as it happens without worries about the past or anxiety for what the future holds and enjoying life to the fullest. Many people find themselves thinking about what happened yesterday or what might happen tomorrow, making living in the now a challenge.

You can overcome those hurdles and live each day more fully by adopting habits that promote physical and mental well-being, including these suggestions from the experts at Natrol, the No. 1 drug-free sleep aid brand, according to data from Nielsen<sup>^</sup>.

### Regular Exercise

You'll find exercise on virtually every list of self-care advice, and for good reason. Exercise stimulates your body in numerous beneficial ways, not the least of which is getting your heart pumping and oxygen flowing throughout your body, including your brain. Exercise also pairs well with meditation or mindfulness activities, which allow you to align your body's movement with your thoughts and focus on the act of nurturing your body while freeing your mind.

### Quality Sleep

Getting quality sleep is linked to improved concentration and productivity, consciously managing your sleep habits can help you be more present each day. Creating a bedtime routine and establishing a comfortable, quiet sleeping environment are important steps. In addition, drug-free sleep aids like Natrol Melatonin products are designed to work with the body's natural cycles and help users fall asleep faster, stay asleep longer and wake up revitalized with a clearer, calmer mind<sup>†</sup>. Made with clean ingredients and no artificial flavors, sweeteners or preservatives, the line of melatonin products may help you rethink your relationship between sleep and living life to the fullest.

### Deep Breathing

Focusing on the here and now can be easier said than done. However, it's possible to train your body and mind to concentrate on specific thoughts and tasks. Deep breathing exercises are an example of physically focusing yourself. Initiating a slow, steady breathing pattern and paying close attention to that rhythm can be an effective way to ward off negativity, whether it's fear, anxiety or another undesirable emotion. Managing your breathing gives you a degree of control that can help you navigate a tricky situation or establish a deeper connection between your body and mind.

### Time Management

For many people, the modern world's frenetic lifestyle often demands constant multitasking. However, that continual juggling act makes it virtually impossible to give your full attention to any one aspect of your life. While a full stop to your multitasking tendencies may be impractical, you can carve out time to dedicate your mind more intentionally and completely. You may be surprised by how much joy you derive from simply being present.

Explore more advice and products to help you stay present at [Natrol.com](https://Natrol.com).

<sup>^</sup>Nielsen, xAOC, 52 weeks ending 09/10/22

<sup>†</sup>These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.



## DEVELOP HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS

Healthy sleep begins with 7-9 hours of sleep a night, but there's more you need to know to achieve the sleep you deserve. By getting the recommended amount of sleep and hitting all your sleep stages, you can wake up feeling more refreshed and ready to own the day.

**Create healthy sleep habits.** Establishing a consistent sleep-wake schedule helps regulate your circadian rhythms and increases your quality of sleep.

**Avoid bright screens 60 minutes before bedtime.** Exposure to bright LED lights such as smartphones, laptops and TV screens before bed can interfere with your body's natural release of melatonin.

**Consider taking a melatonin supplement.** When you need a little extra nudge toward dreamland, melatonin may help you fall asleep and stay asleep so you wake up refreshed.<sup>†</sup>

**Create a calm and dark bedroom oasis.** A dark, noise-free bedroom can help you sleep better throughout the night. Mask noise pollution with calming sounds and block out disruptive light with darkening curtains or a sleep mask.

**Walk or exercise daily.** Walking as little as 10 minutes a day can help improve sleep quality.

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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.

**Reverend Twanda E. Prioleau,**  
**Pastor**  
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*Rev. Ranesa Mayo, Pastor*

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Matthew 28:19-20

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Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.

Soulful Thursdays  
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**BAPTIST**

**Forest Heights Baptist Church**

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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](mailto:FHBC@verizon.net)  
Pastor: Rev. Waymond B. Duke

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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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## Medical Debt from A3

A 2020 Gonzales poll by Economic Action Maryland showed that 34% of Marylanders would not be able to pay an unexpected \$500 medical bill.

Medical debt also disproportionately affects Black people. In Maryland, 24% of Black residents said they delayed seeking medical care because of costs compared to 12% of white people.

"Unlike a lot of other debts, no one chooses to get sick," said Marceline White, director of Economic Action Maryland, an organization that has helped pass legislation targeting unfair medical debt practices.

"You can't cost-comparison shop when you're in an ambulance on the way to a hospital," she said. "So many families simply don't have the resources to absorb that kind of unexpected financial blow, which can be catastrophic."

White said the new bill by Van Hollen and Murphy is a positive step for the country and targets the "most egregious" medical debt practices.

She stressed the importance of reform with the backdrop of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and said there has been broad support in Maryland for this type of legislation.

"I think we are going to see continued strains on our health care system, and on many families who are having chronic illnesses sort of post-pandemic post-COVID," White said. "I think this should be something that most Americans and most members of Congress can agree upon. At least I would certainly hope so."

RIP Medical Debt is a charity established to reduce the burden of medical debt on low-income families using donations, paying off over \$7 billion of debt since 2014 for over 4 million people. CEO and president of RIP Medical Debt, Allison Sesso, is enthusiastic about federal attention to the topic.

"We must do more to protect patients from medical debt and ensure people get the health care they need without fear of incurring debt," Sesso said in a statement to Capital News Service. "(The bill) takes positive steps toward addressing the data challenges we face in understanding the prevalence of medical debt so we can better target policy solutions and more closely monitor the use of extraordinary collection actions."

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## LEGALS

**THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
P.O. Box 1729  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20773

**In The Estate Of:**  
**TAKIYAH JAMILA SPRIGGS**  
Estate No.: 125929

**THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
P.O. Box 1729  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20773

**In The Estate Of:**  
**ADA P. HARRIS**  
Estate No.: 125944

**NOTICE OF JUDICIAL PROBATE**

To all Persons Interested in the above estate:  
You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed by Thomas J. Kokolis for judicial probate for the appointment of a personal representative.

A hearing will be held at 14735 Main Street, Room D4010, Upper Marlboro, MD on **March 7, 2023 at 10:30 A.M.**  
This hearing may be transferred or postponed to a subsequent time. Further information may be obtained by reviewing the estate file in the Office of the Register of Wills.

REGISTER OF WILLS FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY  
CERETA A. LEE  
P.O. Box 1729  
UPPER MARLBORO, MD 20773-1729  
PHONE: (301) 952-3250

143623 (12-29-1-5)

**THE ORPHANS' COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**  
P.O. Box 1729  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20773

**In The Estate Of:**  
**RUSSELL HERBERT POWELL, JR.**  
Estate No.: 125987

**NOTICE OF JUDICIAL PROBATE**

To all Persons Interested in the above estate:  
You are hereby notified that a petition has been filed by Thomas J. Kokolis for judicial probate for the appointment of a personal representative.

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