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Prince George's County Circuit Court Judge Is First American Elected as Full-time Judge to the United Nations Dispute Tribunal

By JOCELYN STEELE

Circuit Court for Prince George's County

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (April 10, 2023)—The Honorable Sean D. Wallace was elected to the United Nations Dispute Tribunal as a full-time judge on November 15, 2022. He will serve in Nairobi, Kenya for a term of office beginning on July 1, 2023 and ending on June 30, 2030. Judge Wallace is the first American to serve as a full-time judge on the United Nations Dispute Tribunal. The Tribunal addresses employment-related disputes within the United Nations.

"I am honored to be selected for this exciting opportunity to work with the United Nations," said Judge Wallace. "I look forward to working in Kenya, but I will certainly miss my colleagues of the Maryland bench and bar, as well as the place I have called home for nearly six decades."

Judge Wallace's election by the United Nations General Assembly comes after a very competitive and extensive screening process. To learn more about the selection process, please review the United Nations Internal Justice Report. According to the United Nations Statute, a candidate must have a majority of all votes cast. During this election, there was a runoff with Judge Wallace receiving the majority of votes. To view the announcement of Judge Wal-



PHOTO COURTESY CIRCUIT COURT FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY

The Honorable Sean D. Wallace

lace's election and results of the runoff (time code: 26:06), visit: <https://media.un.org/en/asset/k1m/k1m72xbveh>.

Judge Wallace will officially retire as a Judge with the Maryland Judiciary on May 1, 2023,

See UNITED NATIONS Page A3

Greenbelt Branch Library Hosts Bilingual National Touring Exhibit "For All the People"

By NICHOLAS BROWN
PGCMLS

GREENBELT, Md. (April 13, 2023)—The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) and National Library of Medicine have partnered to present a bilingual (English/Spanish) national touring exhibition on the history of healthcare reform in the United States at the Greenbelt Branch Library through May 18, 2023. "For All the People: A Century of Citizen Action in Health Care Reform/Para todo el pueblo: Un siglo de acción ciudadana en la reforma de la atención de la salud" was curated by historian and educator Beatrix Hoffman, PhD, of Northern Illinois University.

The 12-panel traveling exhibit explores the history of citizen-led healthcare reform in the United States and is accompanied by a companion digital gallery (English only). It is on display on the second floor of the Greenbelt Branch Library during regular branch hours: Monday 10 a.m.–6



PHOTO COURTESY PGCMLS, CREDIT DANIEL BERNSTEIN AND JACK GEIGER-OB11567

Nurses meeting at Death Health Center.

p.m., Tuesday–Wednesday 12–8 p.m., Thursday–Friday 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m., and Sunday 1–5 p.m. PGCMLS exhibits are free and open to the public. Registration is not required. Visit pgcmls.info/events for more information.

"The Greenbelt Branch Library is honored to host this important exhibit for PGCMLS," said Megan Sutherland, Interim Chief Operat-

ing Officer for Public Services. "Greenbelt's local tradition of community-centered civic engagement aligns with the history documented in the exhibit. The Library continues to be at the forefront of promoting health care access in partnership with Prince George's County Health Connect."

See EXHIBIT Page A3

Maryland Teens Compete in First Round of Envirothon Competitions

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Association of Conservation Districts

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 12, 2023)—High school science students from across the state are heading outdoors to compete in the first round of qualifying heats leading up to the 2023 National Conservation Foundation (NCF) Envirothon, North America's largest envi-

ronmental education competition for high school teens.

The Envirothon is a demanding outdoor natural resources competition for teens that are passionate about the outdoors and the environment. Students participating in the Maryland Envirothon have been studying the state's natural resources since the beginning of the school year. As part of their extracurricular training, they identify and cate-

gorize living resources, perform soil surveys, estimate wood yield from trees, and solve other complex natural resource issues. Students are taught by soil scientists, wildlife specialists, foresters, and environmental engineers from local, state, and federal agencies and private environmental organizations. The competition includes a special environmental issue that changes from year to year. This year's environmental

issue is Adapting to a Changing Climate.

Teams compete by applying their knowledge and problem-solving skills in these natural resource areas. The county team with the highest score wins the local or regional competition and advances to the Maryland Envirothon, scheduled for June 15–16 at the Western 4H Park in Garrett County. The winner of the Maryland Envirothon will go on to represent the state later this summer at the North American competition in New Brunswick, Canada, where more than 500 teenagers will compete for scholarships and prizes.

The Envirothon is sponsored by Maryland's Soil Conservation Districts and the State Soil Conservation Committee and supported by other state and federal programs. Date and contact information for Prince George's County Envirothon competition is listed below:

Prince George's County Envirothon Competition

Date: April 26, 2023
Place: William S. Schmidt Outdoor Environmental Education Center
Contact: Kim Rush Lynch, Pr. George's Soil Conservation District, karlynch@co.pg.md.us or 301-574-5162

Attorney General Anthony Brown Notches Wins During First Legislative Session

By JENNIFER GABLE
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 13, 2023)—Attorney General Anthony Brown was among the winners in the race to get legislation passed by the Maryland General Assembly in the session that ended Monday. Despite serving only three months, he was able to shepherd his top two legislative priorities, civil rights enforcement and the authority to prosecute police-involved fatalities through the legislature, and both are expected to become law.

Brown took office in January, replacing former Attorney General Brian Frosh and becoming Maryland's first Black attorney general.

Brown's extensive legislative experience likely played a role in the passage of his agenda within his first 100 days as attorney general. Brown, a Democrat, represented the 4th Congressional District from 2017 to 2023, forgoing reelection to that office to run for AG. Brown also served as Maryland's lieutenant governor from 2007 to 2015 and as a Maryland House of Delegates member from 1999 to 2007.

"We articulated a number of priorities coming into office, and a focus primarily on what we needed to accomplish in the first 90 days in the legislative session," said Brown in an interview with Capital News Service. His "top priority" was the

establishment of "civil rights enforcement authority" in his office, said Brown in an interview with Capital News Service.

He managed that goal with SB 540, "Civil Rights Enforcement - Powers of the Attorney General," which, if signed by the governor, would authorize the Office of the Attorney General to investigate, bring civil prosecutions and remediate any civil rights violations. It would also establish a civil rights enforcement fund to be used for enforcement, community outreach and education.

This bill, which would be effective Oct. 1, would allow the attorney general to enforce federal and state civil rights laws, a power held currently by 21 attorney generals around the country. In Maryland, The Maryland Commission on Civil Rights has been the only state entity with enforcement power for 53 years. It looks into cases of housing, employment and public accommodation discrimination, among other civil rights problems. Brown said that the commission has limited resources to do this job, and the AG's office would have more power and resources to assist in enforcing civil rights violations.

"Maryland's law is pretty strong—we don't tolerate discriminatory practices against members of the LGBTQIA+ community, based on race, ethnicity, or source of income," said Brown to Capital News Service. "We are not talking about

expanding either the classes of protected peoples or the practices that are deemed discriminatory, but just giving us the authority to enforce it."

Opponents criticized the civil rights enforcement bill saying it could put financial strain on small businesses facing unwarranted allegations of discrimination.

"What the attorney general is proposing in SB 0540 raises several concerns," wrote the Howard County Chamber of Commerce in February, "if businesses were to be overwhelmed by punitive, litigation and fines that would exacerbate the negative perception of Maryland's business climate."

Brown acknowledged these concerns stating, "This is not about the size of the business; it's not about targeting people; it is about targeting discriminatory practices."

Lisae Jordan, executive director and counsel for The Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault, said the bill also was a priority for her organization.

"Ending discrimination, including sexual harassment, is important for all of us and it makes sense for our state's top attorney to be able to respond when civil rights laws are violated," she said.

Another of Brown's successful priorities was SB 0290, which would expand the power of the AG's Independent Investigations Division to investigate and



PHOTO CREDIT MICHELLE LARKIN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Attorney General Anthony Brown (standing seventh from left) looks on as Gov. Wes Moore signs HB1, extending the statute of limitations for lawsuits involving child sexual abuse, at the Governor's Reception Room on April 11, 2023.

prosecute police-involved fatalities and serious injuries.

Under current law, the attorney general can investigate police-involved incidents, but they must send the evidence to the local state's attorney, who then decides whether to prosecute.

"That is just fraught with problems," said Brown, adding that these local state's attorneys often have a close relationship with the police departments, which can influence the objectivity of these investigations and prosecutions.

"If you believe you need independent

investigations, then why wouldn't that be the case for prosecutions?" said Brown.

Independent investigations for policing largely came into public discussion in the aftermath of the murder of George Floyd in May 2020 by former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin and other officers. The Independent Investigations Division was not created until the spring of 2021.

This bill would create greater public

See WINS Page A3

INSIDE

- Prince George's County Finds Forever Homes for 179 Cats and Dogs
- The Prince George's Film Festival Announces Call for Film Submissions for 2023
- Whilhelmina Kemcha Presents at Pitt-Bradford's Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Fair

Around the County, Page A2

Marietta House Museum's Luncheon Lecture Series presents
One Duckett Family: Many Different Journeys

Library News

Community, Page A3

ChildWatch:
Doing Something

To Be Equal:
"Tennessee Three" Fiasco Highlights the Inextricable Link Between Racism and Gun Violence

Commentary, Page A4

Lieutenant Governor Miller Joins CASA to Highlight Impact of Recently Enacted Legislation on Maryland Communities

Maryland Rental Costs Trend Above National Average, Begin to Level Out in 2023

Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

Morningside seeks Scouts, bands, old cars, kids on bikes, teens pushing lawnmowers for July 4 Parade

The annual Morningside Independence Day Parade is coming up July 4. Parade planners are seeking antique cars, bands, majorettes, clowns, musicians of all stripes, fire engines, politicians, you name it. You, for instance, might want to decorate your bike and ride it up Suitland Road hill. I'll cheer you from my usual spot, under the Baptist tree. For information or to register, call 301-736-2300.

And here's what else is going on in Morningside:

In his new position as Honorary Commander at Joint Base Andrews, Morningside Mayor Benn Cann attended the State of the Base meeting this week. (I hope he will suggest Andrews provide an entry for the Parade.)

The Morningside election is coming up May 1 at the Town Hall. The election will fill two Council Seats. So far, the only candidates are incumbents Bradley Wade and Todd Mullins, both hoping to retain their current jobs on the Council. Todd has his sign out, reminding Morningsiders to "Re-Elect Todd Mullins!" Thanks, perhaps, to "Morningside-Skyline," three applied to be Election Judges. (One, however, is not a Morningsider and therefore not eligible.)

Morningside recently purchased new Executive Chairs for the Council office. They came from La-Z-Boy and are really comfortable. I tried one out on a recent visit to the Municipal Building.

If the April 15th Yard Sale was rained out, Rain Day April 22 might be sunny. You could drop by the Morningside Firehouse between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. and see what good things are for sale.

On a sad note: GI Liquors is still boarded up following the March 17 invasion—a stolen car that soared off Suitland Road and plowed into the store. The injured employee has apparently recovered. The store hasn't.

Neighbors & other good people

Sharon O'Rourke plays drums with the Washington Commanders Marching Band. Before that, she played for the Washington Redskins Marching Band, beginning in 1996. Years before that, she grew up in the house across the street from me, the daughter of Pat and John Thompson. She completed her master's in music and now directs three school bands in Montgomery County. She recently came by, and we had a good visit, with lots of memories.

Morningside officials Karen Rooker and Sharon Fowler are headed to Milford, Michigan, to see Audrina Loveless-Fowler in her school play.

James "Jim" Cowan, of Greenbelt, died March 28. He graduated from Salisbury State Teachers College and worked as a history teacher at Oxon Hill High School for more than 35 years before opening the Suitland University High School program. Before retiring, he was principal at Owens Road Elementary and later, the elementary education coordinator for Towson University at the College of Southern Maryland. Survivors include his wife Eva Garin, sister Joan Geist, three children and a godson.

Changing landscape

Vice President Harris was at D.C.'s 14th Street Bridge last week, announcing a \$72 million grant to overhaul that aging bridge which spans the Potomac River.

Delegate Lewis, the Capitol Market team and Neighborhood Design Center recently took a community walk in the Blue Line Corridor, along routes starting at Branch Avenue Metro, Suitland Road Metro, and Addison Road Metro. They mapped the area, seeking restaurants providing healthy food.

Two eaglets popped their heads up from Mr. President and Lotus's new nest in a 100-ft.-high white oak at the Arboretum on April 3. Because the new nest is in a more wooded spot, experts don't plan to install an eagle camera. Wildlife

manager and arborist Sue Greeley reports they seem to be doing well, "They've got big beaks and big feet right now, so they look like an awkward teenager growing into themselves."

Daughter Therese and other family members took a picnic lunch to the Arboretum three Sundays ago, in beautiful weather. They looked for the eagle nest, but no luck.

Postage

Hurry to buy your 1st class 63-cent stamps! They're going to 66 cents on July 9, unless overruled by the postal regulator. Now, I know that's too high but, according to the rate-hike story in The Washington Post, "Sending mail in the United States is still cheaper than in nearly any country in the developed world." Also, remember those Forever stamps you bought ten years ago will still do the same job.

Fred White, watchmaker

Freddie Thomas "Fred" White, 84, died April 7. He was born in Bradshaw, W. Va. and graduated from Baileysville HS; he was later inducted into their Hall of Fame. He served an apprenticeship for watchmaking under his cousin at Virginia Ann Jewelers in Bluefield, Va.

Fred became a watchmaker and jeweler and owned a store on Old Branch Ave., near Coventry for 41 years. I visited Fred White's Watch Shop about a year ago, after making an appointment, as required.

He was a Mason with Perseverance Lodge #208 in Indian Head, past President of American Watch and Clockmakers Institute, and active in the Horological Association of Va.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Shirley, daughter Michelle, son Danny, goddaughter Michelle, three grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and sister

See MORNINGSIDE Page A6

Around the County

Prince George's County Finds Forever Homes for 179 Cats and Dogs

A \$50K grant from Best Friends Animal Society provides County residents with free pet adoptions until April 30.

LARGO, Md. (April 14, 2023)—The Prince George's County Animal Services Facility and Adoption Center (ASFAC) celebrates the adoption of 179 cats and dogs to forever homes with loving families. The adoption surge is due to a \$50k grant from Utah-based Best Friends Animal Society and community efforts to provide County residents with free pet adoptions until April 30. The number represents a 380% percent in pet adoptions over the same period last year.

"We're excited to partner with Best Friends Animal Society to help us reduce the County's shelter population and find loving homes for our many homeless animals," said DoE Director Andrea Crooms. "We encourage anyone searching for that special pet to take advantage of this free adoption event."

Standard adoption processes and a \$10 license fee for residents apply. Interested adopters and fosters can view available pets at bit.ly/pgcadoptapet or visit the 3750 Brown Station Road facility in Upper Marlboro, Tuesday-Friday, from 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Saturday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

"This campaign has given 179 pets their second chance in March, and we know that we can surpass those numbers in April," said Marlan Roberts, Senior Manager of Operations at Best Friends Animal Society. "Pets are an important part of our lives, and many Prince George's County residents are looking for that special dog or cat to add to their family."

Best Friends Animal Society is a nonprofit organization focusing on animal welfare and providing resources to shelters nationwide.

For more information about pet adoptions or pet services, call 301-780-7235.

—Linda Lowe, Department of the Environment

The Prince George's Film Festival Announces Call for Film Submissions for 2023

Submissions Open for Filmmakers to Showcase Their Work and Win Awards in Various Film Categories

LARGO, Md. (April 14, 2023)—The Prince George's Film Office is pleased to announce its call for film submissions for the 2023 Prince George's Film Festival. The festival invites filmmakers from all over the world to submit their work and be a part of this exciting event.

Now in its second year, the Prince George's Film Festival aims to showcase a diverse range of films and filmmakers, providing a platform to celebrate the art of cinema. The festival is accepting film submission in various categories including, narrative feature, documentary, short films, animation, and new this year, international and student categories. The new international category will provide a platform for filmmakers from different countries to showcase their work and promote cultural exchange, allowing filmmakers and audiences to gain insights into other cultures and perspectives through the medium of film. By adding a dedicated category for student films, the Prince George's Film festival recognizes and encourages the talent of young filmmakers and gives them a platform to share their unique perspective.

The Prince George's Film Festival is seeking groundbreaking and unique films to display for the 2023 festival. Filmmakers are encouraged to send works that show off their unique vision, creativity, and skillset. This is a great opportunity to present a fresh and innovative work that captures the minds of filmgoers everywhere.

The early bird deadline for film submissions is May 10, 2023. Selected filmmakers will be notified on September 1, 2023. Filmmakers can submit film works via Film Freeway at <https://filmfreeway.com/PrinceGeorgesFilmFestival>.

The Prince George's Film Festival will take place from September 28–October 1, 2023. The festival will also include Q&A sessions with the filmmakers, panel discussions, workshops, high-powered networking opportunities, and special events.

"We are thrilled to invite filmmakers from around the world to submit their work to the second annual Prince George's Film Festival," said Donna Foster-Dotson, Prince George's Film Festival's director. "Our goal is to showcase the best of independent cinema and provide a platform for emerging and established filmmakers to connect with audiences."

The festival's jury will award filmmakers in different categories, including Best Narrative Film, Best Documentary Film, Best Short Film, Best Animation Film, Best International Film, and Best Student Film.

For more information on the Prince George's Film Festival and the submission guidelines, please visit www.pgfilmfestival.com.

Founding Festival Partners

The Prince George's Film Festival is founded and generously supported by the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council, Experience Prince George's, and Bowie State University.

In 2013, the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council established the Prince George's Film Office to assist filmmakers with telling stories through film. Their mission is to streamline the path to completing film projects in Prince George's County by helping filmmakers navigate state and county permits, production protocols, and resources hassle free and expeditiously.

As the legislated local arts agency for Prince George's County, PGAHC fosters and expands art opportunities for all County citizens and visitors to create a world-class cultural environment where high-quality arts and humanities programs are diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

—Prince George's Arts & Humanities Council

Whilhelmina Kemcha Presents at Pitt-Bradford's Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Fair

BRADFORD, Pa. (April 14, 2023)—Whilhelmina Kemcha, from Laurel, Md., presented "Effects of Gender on Attitudes Towards Interpersonal Conflict" during the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford's annual Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Fair on April 15.

The Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Fair is an annual opportunity for Pitt-Bradford students to present the results of their research in a public setting. Research topics include political analyses, economics case studies, microRNA research, examinations of public policy and more.

—Kimberly Marcott Weinberg, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

CREATIVE CELEBRATIONS

Creative Celebrations with Tracy Pinkney. Tracy is the founder, CEO and Creative Director of the catering business. She has been in the catering business for twenty plus years. Join us at Romano Winery to enjoy delicious shrimp, crab seafood salad, fish, shrimp baskets and grilled shrimp garden salads. Sunday, September 4, 2023, from 12–4 p.m. The address is 15715 Bald Eagle School Road, Brandywine, MD 20613. Creative Celebrations specializes in wedding parties, brunches, showers, reunions, whatever you want to call your event.

BIKE BLESSING

Save the date: Sunday, May 21, 2023, and join us at 11 a.m. Bring a fellow riding friend. Come grow with us. There will be a special bike blessing at Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor. Contact Minister Cary Montgomery at 240-381-5914.

CONCERT

Celebrating Caribbean Heritage Month, we present to you Dion Parson & 21st Century Band Saturday, June 3, 2023, 8 p.m. Led by Grammy award-winning drummer and composer Dion Parson & 21st Century Band is a powerhouse ensemble of musicians that bring you their special brand of Caribbean jazz. Can you hear the sounds of reggae, calypso, steel pan, zouk, and chutney in the air? Imagine no more, because either you already know, or you are about to find out. Get your tickets, grab your partner, and tell them we are jamming at Harmony Halls Arts Center. The address is 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. All ages. Tickets: \$35/adult; \$30 seniors and students. Purchase tickets through PARKS DIRECT.

STARPOWER NATIONAL TALENT COMPETITION

Starpower National Talent Competition April 21–April 23, 2023, from 4:30–9 p.m. The competition will be held at The Show Place Arena Prince George's Equestrian Center. Starpower is the stage where performers of all ages and levels, across the globe, showcase their talent. Schedule: Friday, April 21, 4:30–10 p.m., Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m.–10 p.m., Sunday, April 23, 9 a.m.–9 p.m.

Starpower is the stage where performers of all ages and levels, across the globe, showcase their talent. Cost: Free for spectators. Link: More information (<https://www.starpowertalent.com>). The address is 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue.

BREAKING BARRIERS TO PROCUREMENT SUMMIT

Prince George's County Office of Central Services (OCS) Supplier Development and Diversity Division (SDDD) in partnership with the people for Change Coalition and the PFC Black Chamber of Commerce will host Breaking Barriers Procurement Summit Thursday, April 27, 2023, from 9 a.m.–4 p.m. at College Park Marriott Hotel Conference Center, 3501

University Blvd., Hyattsville, Maryland 20783. Networking event with special invited guest 4–6 p.m. This is an opportunity for small and minority businesses to have face-to-face meetings with procurement officers. Participate in panel discussions on the procurement process. Learn about local, state, and federal procurement opportunities.

Networking with Jonathan Director Prince George's County Office of Central Services (OCS), Donald Cravins Under Secretary of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency, Kevin Anderson Secretary Maryland, Department of Commerce. Register online [@pfccoalition.org/events](https://pfccoalition.org/events).

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University 3rd Annual Scholarship Donor Appreciation will be held virtually on April 24, 2023, 4–6 p.m. At 5 p.m. we will recognize and celebrate Bowie State University students and the community of alumni, friends and partners who make it possible for our #Bowie BOLD students to excel in their academic journey and persist to graduation. Contact Karmalita Contee. Phone: 301-860-4333 email: acontee@bowiestate.edu. Website: <https://bowiestate.edu/about/administration-and-governance/division-of-institutional-advancement/don>. Categories: Alumni

HEATWAVE CONCERT

The Heatwave Concert will be held Saturday, May 20, 2023, 8: p.m. at Harmony Hall Art Center, 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Heatwave is a Dayton, Ohio-based funk/disco band formed in 1975 by the late Johnnie Wilder Jr. and Keith Wilder (vocals). The Wilder brothers were American service men based in western Germany who started the group in Europe following their discharge from the U.S. Army. They were internationally known for their singles "Boogie Nights," "The Groove Line," "Mind Blowing Decisions," "Aren't No Haft Stepping," "Always and Forever." Do not miss this exciting performance. All ages. Tickets: \$45/adult; \$40 senior and student. Purchase tickets through PARKS DIRECT.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

The Bowie State University National Alumni Association, Inc. (BSUNAA) was established in 1939 to keep alumni connected to the history and traditions of their beloved alma mater. The primary mission of the BSUNAA is to advance the cause, establish a mutually beneficial relationship between Bowie State University and the National Alumni Association, Inc., financially aid students who wish to attend Bowie State University, and to financially aid Bowie State University.

Being an active member in the BSUNAA, keeping us apprised of your accomplishments and networking with other alumni and current students, you will continue to find enrichment from your relationship with Bowie State University and members of the BSU National Alumni Association.

COMMUNITY

Marietta House Museum's Lunchtime Lecture Series presents One Duckett Family: Many Different Journeys

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

On Wednesday, May 3, 12 noon–1 p.m. Marietta House Museum will present a Lunchtime Lecture featuring histories of Amelia and Jacob Duckett's family. Their family was enslaved at Marietta, a tobacco plantation, in what is today, Glenn Dale, Prince George's County, Maryland. Amelia and Jacob's nine children all knew the travails and hardships of enslavement. Please join House Museum director Julie Rose as she shares multiple histories of the Duckett family members—stories of self-liberation, Underground Railroad, marriage, war, and life in Washington, D.C. post-Emancipation.

Guests are welcome to bring their lunch and enjoy conversation and new friends. Tours of the house are optional following the lecture.

Self-guided walking tour packets are also available in kiosks by the parking lot.

This is a free lecture at Marietta House Museum. For more information and to register please call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com. We look forward to seeing you.

Marietta House Museum is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD. 20769, and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

United Nations from A1

and he will be recalled as a Senior Judge until June 5, 2023 prior to departing for his new post in Nairobi with the United Nations Dispute Tribunal.

Judge Wallace has served as an Associate Judge at the Circuit Court for Prince George's County since April 4, 2002. Prior to joining the bench, he served as a County Attorney in Prince George's County from 1999 to 2002, and he was Deputy County Attorney/Associate County Attorney from 1988 to 1999. From 1985 to 1988, Judge Wallace was an As-

sociate Attorney at Knight, Manzi, Brennan, Ostrom and Ham, P.A.

In 2001, he received a Senior Executives in State and Local Government Certificate from Harvard University's School of Government. Judge Wallace graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Hampden-Sydney College in 1982, and a Juris Doctor from the University of Maryland School of Law in 1985.

To learn more about the Circuit Court for Prince George's County, please visit: <https://www.princegeorgescourts.org/148/Circuit-Court>.

Exhibit from A1

PGCMLS' Greenbelt Branch Library and the Orlando Veterans Administration Healthcare System are the first organizations in the United States to host "For all the People/Para todo el pueblo" for its 2023/2024 tour. The exhibit will also visit Salt Lake County Library, A.T. Still University in Missouri and Arizona, Youngstown State University in Ohio, University of Central Florida College of Medicine in Orlando, the Mexican American Civil Rights Institute in San Antonio, LaGrange College in Georgia, San José State University in California, and the University of Northern Colorado.

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) helps customers discover and define opportunities that shape their lives. The Library serves the 967,000+ residents of Prince George's County, Maryland through 19 branch libraries, a 24/7 online library, the County Correctional Center Library, and pop-up services throughout the community. PGCMLS is a responsive and trusted community-driven organization. Programs, services, and outreach activities serve book lovers, immigrants and refugees, job seekers, children, young professionals, seniors, and families alike. PGCMLS is the recipient of the 2021 Urban Libraries Council Top Innovator Award for Workforce and Economic Development. Learn more at pgcmls.info/about-us.

Wins from A1

confidence in the legal process when police officers are involved in a death or injury, Brown said.

"It's not just the prosecution, but even the decision not to prosecute, when the Office of The Attorney General looks at it and says, we don't believe there's significant evidence here or cause to bring a prosecution, we believe that the public will have greater confidence in it."

The Maryland Alliance for Justice Reform supported the bill through written testimony in February. "85% of Marylanders surveyed support the concept of an independent prosecutor when police conduct is alleged," wrote Phil Caroom of the MAJR Executive Committee. "The local prosecutors themselves are conflicted because they work with the very same police officers on a daily basis," wrote Caroom.

Police agencies were less enthusiastic. The State Law Enforcement Officers Labor Alliance, which represents 1,757 active state law enforcement officers, testified in bill hearings that it's concerned that the legislation removes local, elected state's attorneys from the process.

"SB 290 eliminates the checks and balances in the Judicial System and would allow for the Independent Investigations Division unit to operate unchecked. With unchecked power, the IID unit could essentially ruin the lives and families of police officers doing their jobs to protect citizens," wrote Brian Gill, alliance president. "No one group in government

should ever have ultimate authority over any of its citizens."

Both bills passed the General Assembly in the final days of session. The Civil Rights Enforcement bill passed third reader in the House with a vote of 100-34 on April 5, and the Authority to Prosecute bill passed third reader in the House with a vote of 99-37 on April 6. Both bills were approved in the Senate, and await Gov. Wes Moore's signature.

"In the coming days, the governor will conduct a thorough and deliberate review of the bills passed through the General Assembly and will act with Marylanders' best interests at the top of mind," said a spokesman for the governor's office.

Despite these big wins for Brown, he didn't get everything he wanted. He was eager to see the passage of legislation for juvenile justice reform, specifically through a bill proposed by Sen. Jill Carter, D-Baltimore City, and cross-filed by Del. Charlotte Crutchfield, D-Montgomery, which would have limited the types of offenses committed by children that automatically go to adult court.

The bill, The Youth Equity and Safety Act, stalled in committee, despite having support from the ACLU, the Office of the Public Defender and the Office of the Attorney General.

"I have no doubt it will be back next year, and I hope to work with the sponsor, and the other stakeholders in the interim to get a bill into shape," said Brown. "I'm confident that next year we'll get something done."

LIBRARY NEWS

Library Celebrates National Poetry Month With Tribute to J. Joy "Sistah Joy" Matthews Alford

By NICHOLAS BROWN
PGCMLS

amy.jenkins@pgcmls.info with any questions.

A Celebration of Poetry in Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (April 12, 2023)—Spring is a time for renewal and reflection, and the Prince George's County Memorial Library System believes that poetry is a valuable medium of expression that all community members can access, create, and enjoy. The Library commemorates National Poetry Month this April with the fourth annual PGCMLS Poetry Contest, a series of poetry workshops and discussion programs for youth and adults, and a special event on April 24 at 6:30 p.m. (Hyattsville Branch Library) to celebrate the work of Inaugural Prince George's County Poet Laureate J. Joy "Sistah Joy" Matthews Alford.

The Academy of American Poets established National Poetry Month in April 1996 as "...a special occasion that celebrates poets' integral role in our culture and that poetry matters." Since inaugurating the role of Prince George's County Poet Laureate in 2018, Sistah Joy has galvanized the community of established and emerging poets of all ages in Prince George's County, through the Office of the Poet Laureate, a program of Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council.

2023 Annual PGCMLS Poetry Contest

PGCMLS is currently accepting submissions for the 2023 "Joy to the Word" PGCMLS Poetry Contest. This year's theme is heroism. Prince George's County residents of all ages are invited to submit their poetry through April 30, 2023. Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of distinguished local poets, including Ladi Di, Sainey Ceesay, and Diane Wilbon-Parks. The submission form and guidelines are available at pgcmls.info/poetry.

Contact

Featured Poetry Events

The Library's National Poetry Month series continues with workshops and an open mic event.

- Monday, April 24, 6:30–8:30 p.m.—A Celebration of Poetry in Prince George's County (Hyattsville, teens/adults)
- Wednesday, April 26, 6–7:15 p.m.—Writers' Group: Poetry Book Workshop (Virtual, ages 5 and up)
- Wednesday, April 26, 6:30–7:30 p.m.—Open Mic Featuring MeMe Speaks (South Bowie, adults)

PGCMLS programs are free and open to the public. Registration is recommended or required for select events. Visit pgcmls.info/events for more information.

Library and FEC@PGCC Offer New Financial Literacy Programs for Families

LARGO, Md. (April 11, 2023)—Financial literacy is an essential life skill that Prince Georgians can learn through the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS). This National Financial Literacy Month, the Library expands its longtime partnership with the Financial Empowerment Center at Prince George's Community College (FEC@PGCC) to launch the Money as You Grow Book Club, a family financial literacy series for parents/caregivers and children ages 3–8. The programs teach children new skills, such as earning, saving, planning, and shopping. Concepts are presented through interactive reading and family activities, and simultaneously reinforce financial education for participating adults.

Based on a nationwide curriculum provided by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, the Money as You Grow Book Club will initially be offered at four PGCMLS branch libraries, Oxon Hill (April 11 at 5:30 p.m.), Largo-Kettering (April 20, 10:30 a.m.), Glenarden (Tuesday, May 9, 5:30 p.m.), and New Carrollton (June 1 at 4 p.m.). Additional sessions

and on-demand videos will be available in summer 2023.

"Prince Georgians have access to a wide range of financial programs and services through the Library and FEC@PGCC, including tax preparation, financial coaching, financial workshops, and more," said Nicholas A. Brown, Acting Co-CEO, PGCMLS. "The Money as You Grow Book Club series provides access to intergenerational learning opportunities about financial skills that will help individuals and families obtain knowledge and practical household application. These programs align with the Library's strategic focus area of personal achievement, which aims to connect customers with opportunities to advance their individual growth."

Financial Literacy Resources at the Library

PGCMLS offers a wide range of financial literacy programs, services, and resources throughout the year. All programs, services, and resources are free, but some may require registration or a library card.

- Tax resources:** state and federal tax forms (subject to availability), free tax prepa-

ration services with Prince George's CASH Campaign and FEC@PGCC

- Online resources:** Foundation Directory Online Professional and Grants to Individuals (Candid) - available on-site at the Hyattsville Branch Library, academic research databases, virtual FAFSA counseling through Brainfuse HelpNow
- Books:** Finance and business books in English and Spanish (print and electronic)
- Magazines:** 135+ finance magazines like Fortune, Kiplinger's Personal Finance, and Entrepreneur via Libby/Overdrive, including publications in English, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, and more.
- Programs:** Listos, clic, avance online banking literacy classes for Spanish speakers, financial workshops presented by FEC@PGCC, Money as You Grow

The Financial Empowerment Center at Prince George's Community College is a partnership with the United Way of the National Capital Area, powered by Truist.

Earth Day Is Ongoing for Maryland Life Plan Community

Collington, a Kendal Affiliate, installs EV charging stations as part of three-year sustainability plan

By PRESS OFFICER
Collington Life Plan Community

MITCHELLVILLE, Md. (April 17, 2023)—Earth Day is not a one-day event at Collington, a Life Plan Community near Washington. For the Kendal affiliate, sustainability and climate action is a long-range, ongoing project.

As part of its efforts to live out Kendal's value "to engage in practices that sustain and improve our environment," Collington developed a three-year Sustainability Plan for 2021-2023, including more than 30 initiatives to address climate

change and other environmental concerns. These initiatives have guided the work of the Collington management team and resident committees, leading most recently to the installation of three new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations on campus.

Open for use by Collington residents, employees, and visitors, the charging stations manufactured by ChargePoint include the universal J1772 connector that can be used with any electric vehicle being manufactured (Teslas require an adaptor that is supplied with the car). Access is provided through the ChargePoint app at a nominal rate per kilowatt hour.

This project was led by resident members of the Collington Climate Action Committee, and jointly funded by the Collington Foundation, Collington Resident Association, Collington Administration, a Pepco rebate program and generous donors.

"The installation of these EV chargers will support the residents who have invested in electric cars while providing convenience for those looking to live environmentally conscious lives on campus," said Mike Burke, Chair of Collington's Climate Action Committee. "These charging stations will provide our community a safe way to help build a sustainable future."

This is not the community's only effort to protect the environment, address climate change

See EARTH DAY Page A6

mulchmadness
DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

SATURDAY APRIL 22

Prince George's County Organics Composting Facility
6550 Maude Savoy Brown Rd., Upper Marlboro, MD
(From Crain Highway, proceed on Maude Savoy Brown Road to Facility)

*Public restrooms are not available.

8 am to 1 pm
or while supplies last

Source Reduction Tip:
Reduce water usage, prevent soil erosion, and reduce the use of herbicides in your home gardens by applying mulch.

- The event is for County residents only, proof of residency may be required.
- All attendees are encouraged to wear a face covering and follow social distancing guidelines.
- Self-loaders must bring their own shovels, pitch forks, bags, containers and/or tarps to secure/transport the material.
- Only non-commercial vehicles, 3/4-ton maximum weight are permitted. No business vehicle signage will be permitted, all commercial signs should be covered or removed prior to entering the site.

This mulch is primarily derived from the Christmas tree collections.

For more information, visit mypgc.us/mulchmadness

COMMENTARY

Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Doing Something

After yet another mass shooting made headlines [last] week—this time, at a bank in Louisville, Kentucky—the chief medical officer for University of Louisville Health gained national attention as he shared his emotional thoughts on the regular toll gun violence takes. As Dr. Jason Smith spoke at a press conference to give an update on the victims' conditions, he said: "For 15 years, I've cared for victims of violence and gunshot wounds. And people say 'I'm tired,' but it's more than tired. I'm weary. There's only so many times you can walk into a room and tell someone, 'They're not coming home tomorrow.' And it just breaks your heart when you hear someone screaming 'Mommy,' or 'Daddy.' It just becomes too hard day in and day out to be able to do that. My team is fantastic. They're absolute professionals. They're wonderful. But sooner or later, it catches

up to everybody. You just can't keep doing what we're doing . . . You can't keep seeing all the people with these horrific injuries coming through the door without doing something to try and help. And I don't know what the answer is. I'm a doctor. I don't know what the answer is. But to everyone who helps make policy, both state and federal, I would simply ask you to do something. Because doing nothing, which is what we've been doing, is not working."

Dr. Smith's voice is one more in the overwhelming chorus urging elected leaders to do something to stem our national gun violence epidemic. In Tennessee, where three nine-year-olds and three adults were killed at the Covenant School on March 27, that cry became a roar as thousands of people, many of them high school and college students, descended on the state capitol in

Nashville to demand lawmakers protect children instead of guns. The whole nation watched what happened next to three members of the state's House of Representatives who were willing to listen. Reps. Gloria Johnson, Justin Jones, and Justin Pearson stood with their constituents—and were quickly attacked by Republican peers in the state legislature, who then voted to expel Reps. Jones and Pearson from their elected positions.

When Rep. Johnson was asked why she thought she survived the expulsion vote but Reps. Jones and Pearson did not, she was candid: "Well, I think it's pretty clear. I'm a 60-year-old white woman and they are two young Black men." The same forces that stripped two young Black male legislators from elected office for standing up to entrenched power structures, standing with their voters, and standing against gun violence have been at work in Tennessee and across our nation for a very long time. But those forces have not had the last word.

The councils in Rep. Jones's and Rep. Pearson's districts who were asked to appoint temporary replacements for their positions both unanimously nominated Reps. Jones and Pearson to fill their own vacant seats. Both men were sworn in again this week, and both also plan to run again in the required special elections to fill them permanently. Reverend Janet Wolf, a longtime Children's Defense Fund colleague, ally, and friend in Tennessee, was on the streets during the protests, inside the gallery during

the votes to strip Reps. Jones and Pearson from office, and there to witness their return. As she sat through the attacks on the three representatives, she recognized the votes as part of continued attempts to undermine the power of voters in Knoxville, Memphis, and Nashville. But in the protests and their aftermath she also felt hope.

Rev. Wolf saw firsthand how the young people surging on the state's capitol represented an incredibly diverse range of backgrounds and local public and private schools, and could sense how the coalition in the streets marked a turning point. As one young woman told her, "I feel like I'm living history." Rev. Wolf says for her and others in Tennessee who were young during the Civil Rights Movement, seeing this generation ready to change things was a profound moment: "It was beautiful to see all of these young people and remember what it was like to feel that change was just around the corner—and to feel hopeful that systemic change is not only possible, it is happening."

When Tennessee Governor Bill Lee signed an executive order on Tuesday strengthening background checks for gun buyers and asked state lawmakers to do even more, it was just one sign that calls for change were being heard. The young people and politicians and their supporters who are calling for more have no intention of giving up. They are committed to doing something, and their struggle should give all of us hope.

—April 14, 2023

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

"Tennessee Three" Fiasco Highlights the Inextricable Link Between Racism and Gun Violence

"We won't be bent, we won't be bowed, and we won't be ordered to ignore the hearts and minds of the people who elected us, demanding commonsense gun safety in a state that has nearly none. The GOP of the Tennessee House of Representatives attempted to obstruct me and my colleagues from these goals and to shred our democracy. Instead, Republicans have only fanned the flames of hope that illuminate our movement, helping it to grow more powerful and glow more brightly."

—Tennessee State Rep. Justin J. Pearson

The crowd of more than 1,000 that gathered at Tennessee's Capitol to demand safer gun policies was mostly white.

The three 9-year-old children and two of the three

staff members who died in the mass shooting that inspired the protest were white.

The group of legislators who stood at the House podium with a bullhorn to lead protestors in the galleries was multiracial.

Only the Black legislators were expelled.

The Tennessee lawmakers who voted to expel House members Justin Jones and Justin Pearson while sparing Gloria Johnson shifted focus away from the outcry against gun violence—which cuts across every demographic—toward their own appalling racism.

In the eyes of the nation, when the House convened on the morning April 6, the Tennessee Three were facing expulsion because they protested gun violence. When it adjourned that evening, the Justins

had been expelled because they are Black.

The reality is that racial resentment and gun extremism are inextricably linked.

Racial resentment is a "statistically significant" predictor of white resistance to gun safety policies, research shows. Yet those same "racially resentful" Americans are less likely to support "gun rights" if they believe Black people are exercising those rights more than they are.

Despite the reality that a gun in the household offers almost no protection against assailants, doubles the risk of death by violent homicide and triples the risk of death by violent suicide, the vast majority of gun owners cite "protection" as their reason for owning one.

Clearly, for many white gun owners "protection" means "protection from Black people."

The high rate of gun ownership in the South, even today, can be traced to the backlash against Reconstruction. The higher the rates of historical enslavement in a county, the higher the rates of contemporary gun ownership.

Nearly half of Southerners live in a household with at least one gun, compared to 28 percent of Northeasterners. Six of the ten states with the highest rates of gun violence—including Tennessee—are in the South.

Tennessee has the 10th-highest rate of gun violence in the nation and ranks 29th on the strength of its gun safety policies. Just eight days after the massacre at Covenant School, the state's Senate Judiciary Committee voted to defer action on any gun-related legislation until next year.

While the anti-gun safety supermajority in Ten-

nessee's legislature's may continue to block common-sense policies for some time to come, their effort to silence the outcry against gun violence clearly has failed. Not only have both Justins been reappointed to the House, they return as national heroes.

The Nashville Metropolitan Council unanimously voted to reappoint Jones to his seat on Monday, and the Shelby County Board of Commissioners returned Pearson to the House on Wednesday.

"Today we are sending a resounding message that democracy will not be killed in the comfort of silence," Jones said after the vote. "Today we send a clear message to Speaker Cameron Sexton that the people will not allow his crimes against democracy to happen without challenge."

In contrast to the legislature's stubborn refusal to address gun violence, Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee has issued an executive order strengthening background checks for gun purchases and called for a red flag law that would temporarily remove guns from dangerous people.

Lee and his wife, Maria, were longtime friends of two of those who lost their lives at Covenant School: substitute teacher Cynthia Peak and headmistress Katherine Koontz. Peak was expected at the governor's mansion for dinner with Maria Lee on the day of the shooting.

It should not take a personal connection to the victims of a massacre to move a public servant to take a stand against gun violence. But now that Lee has taken the first step, he must continue the journey and the legislature should follow.

—April 13, 2023

General Assembly Has Grown More Representative of Maryland's Demographics Over Past Decade

By NICKY WOLCOTT and CHRISTINE ZHU
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 11, 2023)—Each year, up to 188 state lawmakers spend three months in Annapolis for the Maryland General Assembly's session.

The 2023 session saw a group of legislators that was more representative of the state in terms of race, gender, party affiliation and age than a decade ago, according to a Capital News Service analysis.

But underrepresented groups still face challenges in the state capital when it comes to getting their legislative priorities through.

Race and Ethnicity

The Maryland General Assembly has gradually become more diverse in recent years.

Roughly 57.8% of Maryland residents are white, according to 2022 U.S. Census estimates. The legislative body isn't quite proportionate with 61.2% of 2023 politicians identifying as white, but it's much closer than the 74.5% in 2014.

The percentage of Black lawmakers is close to the general population: 33% of the state legislature identifies as Black, as does 31.4% of the public.

In the past decade, the number of Asian legislators has not reached double digits. The nine Asian lawmakers in 2023 make up 4.8% of the General Assembly, but 6.9% of Maryland's population identifies as Asian.

The Department of Legislative Services breaks down race into Caucasian, African-American, Asian and other. It does not take ethnicity or Hispanic origin into account.

The Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus, however, keeps track. Its membership has fluctuated throughout its nine years of existence but remained under 10, with seven in the current year—3.7% of the General Assembly.

About 11.1% of the Maryland population identifies as Hispanic or Latino, according to 2022 U.S. Census estimates.

Executive director Madelin Martinez said the underrepresentation doesn't stop at the legislative level; it's present in local government and schools as well.

Education and healthcare access are the caucus' top priorities. To pass legislation, members look for similarities across cultures.

"Poverty is across all races,"

Martinez told Capital News Service. "It's a common denominator for a lot of our communities, so just try to find that common ground."

Gender

The number of women in the Maryland General Assembly has increased by almost 13% over the last decade, with 80 women serving across both chambers this year compared to 56 in 2014.

42.7% of the 2023 state legislature consists of women despite them making up 51.3% of Maryland's population, according to 2022 U.S. Census estimates.

Valerie Graham, executive director of the Women Legislators in Maryland, said women lawmakers tend to introduce more bills about issues relating to women, and that underrepresentation in the state capital makes it harder to advocate for those concerns.

"The women that are here have to work really hard just to get their priorities through," Graham told Capital News Service.

Graham said the caucus had three main policy areas for this year's session: economic issues, health care, and criminal justice reform.

To accomplish these goals,

women in the Maryland General Assembly must advocate for a slight majority of the state's population as a minority in the state legislature.

"The Women's Caucus in Maryland is now over 50 years old," Graham told Capital News Service. "There's been incredible, extraordinary growth in what women do on the state level and how they make their impact and advocate for themselves and for their constituents."

Party

The Republican party saw gains in both chambers of the Maryland General Assembly during the 2014 general election, when Maryland elected Larry Hogan as its second Republican governor since 1970.

The party's been slightly overrepresented compared to its voter registration over the past decade, but that changed after the 2022 election.

Republicans represent only 23.9% of registered voters in the state, but 30.7% of voters registered as one of the two main parties are affiliated with the GOP, according to the state elections board's February 2023 voter registration statistics.

The Republican party saw its percentage of lawmakers in the General Assembly drop below 30.7% for the first time since 2014 in the current session.

The number of GOP legislators fell to a total of 52 in 2023—the lowest number of Republicans across both chambers since 2010.

The decrease in Republican state politicians coincided with Moore's election in 2022, restoring the Democrats' trifecta of control in the House, Senate and governorship.

Republicans haven't held a majority in either chamber in more than a century, and the party is now underrepresented in the Maryland General Assembly compared to the makeup of Democratic and Republican registered voters in the state.

House Minority Leader Jason

Buckel, R-Allegany, said it's become even harder for the Republican party to pass legislation relating to its priorities, such as crime and the economy, with the decline in GOP lawmakers and the absence of a Republican governor.

"There are issues and moments where we work well and work towards compromise with the Democratic supermajority and their

See DEMOGRAPHICS Page A6

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Lieutenant Governor Miller Joins CASA to Highlight Impact of Recently Enacted Legislation on Maryland Communities

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland LG News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (April 13, 2023)—Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met [April 12] with community members and CASA Maryland members to celebrate the impact of legislation recently signed into law by Governor Moore, including the Family Prosperity Act and the Fair Wage Act.

“The Moore-Miller legislative agenda will put forth concrete solutions to the biggest issues facing our communities—like child poverty,” said Lt. Governor Miller. “As a result of strong and collaborative partnership with the General Assembly, our administration is enacting the most aggressive anti-poverty measures in state history and creating pathways to work, wages, and wealth. This is what leaving no Marylander behind looks like.”

The Family Prosperity Act proposed by the Moore-Miller administration and signed into law by Governor Moore earlier this week will put Maryland on a path to ending child poverty by ensuring hundreds of thousands of Marylanders, including thousands of immigrant families, will continue to receive critical relief through the Earned-Income and Child Tax Credits.

Lt. Governor Miller previously testified in support of the Family Prosperity Act in the legislature alongside CASA members. Her testi-

mony marked the first legislative testimony from a Maryland lieutenant governor in nearly a decade.

Maryland families will also benefit from the Fair Wage Act, also signed into law by Governor Moore this week. The Fair Wage Act will raise the minimum wage to \$15 two years ahead of schedule.

The Fair Wage Act of 2023, which raises the minimum wage in Maryland effective January 1, 2024. The acceleration brings the minimum wage up to \$15 an hour two years ahead of schedule and will increase wages for approximately 163,000 workers, benefitting 120,000 children in Maryland.

The Family Prosperity Act of 2023, which will lift at least 34,000 Maryland children to the next rung on the economic ladder and combat the root causes of child poverty through two primary means:

- Permanently extending the Earned Income Tax Credit created by the legislature during the 2020 legislative session and removing the \$530 cap for adults without qualifying children;
- Expanding the Child Tax Credit to cover all taxpayers who have children aged six and under who have a federally adjusted gross income of \$15,000 or less (up from \$6,000); the expansion makes all children under age six eligible while retaining credit for children over age six who are living with disabilities.

The expansion of the Child Tax Credit will benefit an estimated 40,000 taxpayers, while the expansion and permanent extension of



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller met with CASA Maryland members on April 12.

the Earned Income Tax Credit will provide much-needed relief for as many as 400,000 Marylanders. The action is part of nearly \$200 million reserved for tax relief as proposed by Governor Moore, including funding for the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, and new tax cuts for veterans.

Maryland Rental Costs Trend Above National Average, Begin to Level Out in 2023

By NATALIE ADAMS
Capital News Service

Housing rental costs in Maryland have been above the national average since at least 2018. Even as average rents started to level out in January and February of this year, rents in Maryland are still above the national average.

Rents were relatively stagnant before the COVID-19 pandemic, but spiked with pandemic inflation. In 2023, rents appear to be balancing with the help of disinflation and some local legislation. 2023 data is current through February of this year.

Rents in Maryland are consistently higher than the national average. Rents for the state as a whole were an average of nearly \$350 greater than the national average, while Baltimore was an average of \$250 greater and Annapolis an average of \$800 between 2018 and 2023.

Maryland and Baltimore have seen relatively stagnant numbers through these years, while Annapolis has seen

an exponential increase, from rents \$700 greater than the national average in 2018 to \$900 greater in 2023.

The major metropolitan areas in and around Maryland make it a desirable—and therefore more expensive—place to live. With Washington, D.C., Baltimore and Annapolis all serving as job centers, rents in the area tend to be high.

“One thing that easily drives [rental prices] is the fact that the major part of housing in Maryland ... is the Washington, D.C., suburbs,” said Brian Gilmore, a legal expert in landlord-tenant relations and housing and a lecturer at the University of Maryland. “It’s not the entire state, but I would say the suburbs drive it.”

Rent in the Maryland metropolitan area remained relatively level between 2018 and 2020. Rent in Maryland, Baltimore and Annapolis increased by about 3% during this time, in line with the national average increase of 2.7%.

But in 2021, rents jumped in many areas. Rent increased nearly 8% in

Maryland and Baltimore, nearly 10% in Annapolis and about 9% nationally.

Another rent spike came in 2022. In Maryland and Baltimore, rent increased by about 8%, while Annapolis rent jumped nearly 10%. Nationally, average rent increased more than 11% during this time.

Gilmore said there are market solutions to help renters stay in their homes amid rent increases. Giving tenants ample time to plan and prepare for a rent increase and multi-year leases at a set rate are two solutions that can help tenants afford their rental long term.

“[Market solutions] will work better to help the consumer because my experience has been that unexpected rent increases would just drive a person right on out,” Gilmore said. “People like to stay because—especially if they have children—school districts, getting to know some people in their community, knowing how to travel back and forth to work. ... If they have some time, maybe they will stay.”

These rent spikes came in the wake

of limits on rent increases during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some Marylanders had to choose between paying sudden, large rent hikes and leaving their long-time residences.

To combat this issue, Maryland state Del. Melissa Wells, D-Baltimore, introduced a bill in February in the Maryland General Assembly that will create a minimum period of notice for large rent increases. The bill has passed the Maryland General Assembly and is waiting for sign off from the governor. It would take effect October 1, 2023.

The bill will require landlords to notify tenants of rent increases of more than 4% at least four months in advance.

“Tenants were not given the proper notice to make the decision on if they could afford the rent increase or if they needed to find a new living situation ... this often was resulting in evictions,” Wells said at the Judicial Proceedings Committee meeting on March 28. “What [this bill] aims to accomplish is to give tenants that time they need to make the decision that works best for them and their families around extension of their lease or non extension.”

Rent appears to be leveling out in

2023. Early in the year, Baltimore rent has increased by about 1%, Annapolis rent has increased less than 1% and Maryland and national rent has decreased by about 1%.

With constant talk of inflation and Americans across the country struggling to afford rent, this recent stagnation seems unusual. Inflation has been decreasing since mid-2022 and the Federal Reserve is optimistic it will continue to improve.

Headline inflation, a monthly raw inflation figure reported by the Consumer Price Index, peaked in June 2022 at 9% and consistently decreased through the end of the year. The sudden change was spurred by the Federal Reserve increasing interest rates, China reopening its markets and increasing global supply chain production.

“You see inflation now coming down because supply chains have been fixed, demand is shifting back to services and shortages have been abated,” Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell said at a press conference in February. “It is gratifying to see the disinflationary process now getting underway and we continue to get strong labor market data.”

Women Legislators of Maryland Elects 2024 Executive Cabinet

By PRESS OFFICER
Women's Caucus

Annapolis, Md. (April 10, 2023)—The Women’s Legislative Caucus of Maryland unanimously voted Delegate Edith J. Patterson to serve as President for the next legislative term. Delegate Patterson has been a public servant for her entire career as a teacher, college administrator, Charles County Commissioner, Member of the Charles County Board of Education, and finally, member of the House of Delegates since 2015. She holds a Bachelor’s degree in Biology and Chemistry from Virginia Union University, a Master’s degree from Bowie State University, and a Doctorate from George Washington University. She brings extensive experience in higher education and a lifelong dedication to the advancement of women. Delegate Patterson has chaired the Women’s Veterans Event for the past 8 years and most recently, served as President-Elect. Patterson is a member of the Ways and Means Committee and chairs the Racing and Gaming Subcommittee.

Delegate Patterson shared, “I am honored for the opportunity to serve as President of this very prestigious caucus and look forward to building on the accomplishments and work of prior

presidents. We will work to invest in the next generation of women leaders and find new ways to further advance women’s economic empowerment and self-sufficiency.”

Delegate Patterson is joined by a slate of talented, dedicated women who will serve as her Executive Cabinet. The newly elected Executive Board, which will also begin their term on April 11th, represents diverse communities from across the State of Maryland. The Executive Board members are:

- P r e s i d e n t - E l e c t Delegate Nicole Williams
- 1st Vice President Delegate Dana Jones
- 2nd Vice President Delegate Michele Guyton
- S e c r e t a r y Delegate Brooke Grossman
- T r e a s u r e r Delegate Pam Queen
- 1st Member At-Large Delegate Jennifer White
- 2nd Member At-Large Delegate Linda Foley
- Appointed Parliamentarian Delegate Karen Toles

The Women’s Caucus is incredibly thankful to the outgoing officers, most specifically, President Lesley Lopez. Delegate Lopez shared, “I am proud of the work the Caucus has done this year, and I am excited to see that work continue with this new Executive Board.”

TOWN OF CHEVERLY NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The Mayor and Council of the Town of Cheverly proposes to increase real property taxes for real property excluding apartments.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2023, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 3.5%, from \$759,365,269 to \$785,996,708 for real property excluding apartments.
2. If the Town of Cheverly maintains the current tax rate of \$0.4899 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 3.5% resulting in \$130,467 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.4733, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The Town is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments.

The Town proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.5399 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 14.1% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$523,474 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 6pm on Thursday, May 4, 2023, at the Town Hall, 6401 Forest Road, Cheverly Maryland and remotely via video teleconference.

To join the Zoom video conference: <https://tinyurl.com/FY24-CYTR>

To join with audio only: (301-715-8592) US, Meeting ID: (837 1292 1129)

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged.

Participants who join the video/audio conference will be enabled to speak by the meeting chair. Speakers will be allowed to address the Council for three (3) minutes. Public Comment may also be made via emailing (townclerk@cheverly-md.gov). All electronic comments must be submitted by 6 PM on May 4, 2023.

Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call 301-773-8360 for further information.

The Town of Cheverly has a different tax rate for apartment real property. The following chart provides the corresponding constant yield information for those properties:

Real Property Type	Percentage Change in Base	Previous Assessable Base	New Assessable Base	Current Tax Rate	Percentage Change in Revenue
Real Property Excluding Apartments	3.5%	\$759,365,269	\$785,996,708	\$0.4899	3.5%
Apartments Only	3.5%	\$57,237,981	\$59,266,015	\$0.6600	3.5%
Real Property Type	Change in Revenue	Constant Yield Tax Rate	Proposed Tax Rate	Percentage Higher than Constant Yield	Change in Revenue Proposed Rate
Real Property Excluding Apartments	\$130,467	\$0.4733	\$0.5399	14.1%	\$523,474
Apartments Only	\$13,385	\$0.6374	\$0.7100	11.4%	\$43,027

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United Methodist Church

"A CHURCH ON THE REACH FOR GOD"
9363 D'Arcy Road
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**(301)735-9373
Fax: (301) 735-1844**

**Rev. Dr. Timothy West,
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20785 (301) 773-6655

Sunday Biblical Institute:
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Sunday Worship:
7:30 a.m., 10:45 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.fhbp.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.

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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

COMMUNITY CHURCH

**WORD OF GOD
COMMUNITY
CHURCH**
"The Church Where Everybody is Somebody and
Jesus is Lord"

4109 Edmonston Road Bladensburg, MD
(301) 864-3437

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

Morningside from A2

Martha Beam. He was preceded in death by his sister Lillie Emily and his Granddog Shadow. His funeral was at Lee 's April 13 with burial at Trinity Cemetery in Waldorf.

Maggie Eads, educator, gardener
Margaret Hall "Maggie" Eads, 79, Surrattsville High, Class of 1961, died January 19 after a fall in her kitchen. Survivors include her husband George, son Geoffrey, daughter Betsy, their spouses, and four grandchildren.
She was born in Florida, moved to Anacostia, then to Clinton. After earning a BA in education at Maryland, she taught at Palmer Park, Seabrook and Gaylord elementaries in Prince George's and in Arlington. The Eads moved to Santa Monica, Calif., back to DC, to Detroit, and eventually to Harrison Street in NW Washington where they bought a plot of unbuild-on land across the back alley from their home. They transformed this patch into a wonderful garden of flowering shrubs, azaleas, peonies, camellias, daffodils, tulips, lilies, and trees such as dogwood, redbud and cherry. Neighbors began to refer to the lot as "Maggie's Secret Garden." Maggie could often be found working there and giving gardening advice.

Milestones
Happy Birthday to Jim Reilly, Cindy Pitts, Barbara Sparks and Margaret White, April 23; Edna Lucas, April 24; Sue Stine McConkey-Mason and Daisy Young, April 25; Kenia Spivey and my grandson David McHale, April 25; Christy Miller (Cooper) and G.A. DeFelice, April 26; Michael Call, April 27; Cathy Miller, April 28; Hazel Ball and Beverly Gotshall Marquis, April 28; DJ Fowler and Jessica Phipps, April 28.
Happy Anniversary to Janet and Brian Spivey on April 23, and to Jan and Cindy Smith who wed April 28, 1972.

Earth Day from A3

and promote sustainability. Previous initiatives included reducing the use of petrochemical fertilizers and pesticides and installing long-lasting LED lights in the community walkways. The Grounds committee is currently working with Collington's landscaper to shift from gas-powered to electric tools, and Facilities Director Shawn Bostic is exploring suitable sites for solar panels on campus. A plan to help Collington transition its own vehicle fleet to electric engines is also under discussion.
"I am proud of the Collington Climate Action Committee for launching the EV charging project," shared Ann Gillespie, Chief Executive Officer of Collington. "This directly serves Collington's mission to engage in practices that sustain and improve our environment and planet. I am excited to see how our community will grow as we invest in Collington as a model for sustainable living."
For more information about Collington Life Plan Community, visit collington.kendal.org or call 301-925-7707.

Demographics from A4

leadership, and there are moments and issues where we feel like there's not enough attention given to compromise," Buckel told Capital News Service.

Age
There are more Maryland General Assembly members under age 50 in 2023 than any other year in the past decade.
The age of legislators often shifts following election years. While the number of lawmakers between the ages of 20 and 34 rose by just four after the 2018 election, those above age 65 dropped from 63 to 39 for the 2019 legislative session.
Dels. Joe Vogel, D-Montgomery, and Jeffrie Long Jr., D-Calvert and Prince George's, made history last November when they became the first Gen Z politicians elected to the Maryland General Assembly.
Both men turned 26 between Election Day and the start of the 2023 legislative session.
Vogel is the youngest current member of the General Assembly. He said he sees his age as an asset and ran on a campaign with multi-generational support.
"I'm not just fighting for young people, I'm fighting for people of all ages," he told Maryland Matters in November.
During the previous election cycle, Sen. Sarah Elfreth, D-Anne Arundel, earned the title as the youngest woman to serve in the upper chamber at age 30.
She called age diversity a "definite strength" to the state legislature because it brings about different perspectives and experiences.
"The whole point of the General Assembly is to have a representative body," Elfreth told Maryland Matters in November.

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