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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JAMES LEVIN

The Green Street Academy will be moving to a new location at 125 N. Hilton St. in Baltimore for the fall. The school held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new building, which formerly housed the Gwynns Falls Junior High School before its closing in 1985, on Wednesday, January 28, 2015.

Maryland Charter Schools Push for Independence; State Laws Keep Control With Local School Boards

By DEIDRE MCPHILLIPS
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Maryland's public charter schools feel stifled under current state laws that keep them under the authorization and governance of local school boards, but the creation of separate charter school boards could cost taxpayers and students much more.

Charter schools were poised to be a hot topic during this legislative session from the beginning. A week before his inauguration, Gov. Larry Hogan appointed former Delegate Keiffer Mitchell, a noted Baltimore Democrat, as a special adviser to oversee some of his legislative initiatives, including the expansion of charter schools.

"It's like McDonald's seeking to get approval from Burger King to open a new restaurant," said Kara Kerwin, president of The Center for Education Reform, a national organization that supports freedom of choice in education, specifically with charter schools.

But Brad Young, president of the Board of Education of Frederick County, home to three

public charter schools, said he thinks all public schools, charter or otherwise, should be governed by one body.

"It's counterproductive to set up a second system that would be run totally separate from the current school system," Young said. "What char-

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Lawmakers Persuade Obama to Drop Plan to Tax 529 College Savings Accounts

By ANIKA REED
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Kensington, joined forces with lawmakers from both parties in persuading the Obama administration to abandon its plan to tax 529 college savings accounts.

Van Hollen, ranking member of the Budget Committee, called House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. to raise objections to the taxation proposal while she flew with President Barack Obama from India to Saudi Arabia aboard Air Force One earlier this week, according

to a Democratic aide familiar with the discussion who is not authorized to speak publicly.

The formal announcement of the plan's demise was made Tuesday by White House officials.

The 529 proposal lasted a week after meeting fierce opposition from critics on both sides of the aisle, who said it defeats the purpose of helping low- and middle-income families.

House Speaker John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, and Pelosi heavily lobbied for the president and his administration to drop the tax hike.

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Rushern L. Baker, III "2014 Washingtonian of the Year"

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

Upper Marlboro, MD – On January 15, 2015, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, was recognized as one of nine "2014 Washingtonians of the Year" by Washingtonian Magazine at a luncheon honoring the awardees at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel in Washington, DC. County Executive Baker joined Mark Bergel, Founder, A Wider Circle, Ann H. Bissell, Volunteer and FONZ Board Member, National Zoo, Arch Campbell, Film Critic, for-

merly with WJLA, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, Duane Gautier, Founder, Honfleur Gallery, Tawanda Hanible, Founder, Operation Heroes Connect, Carol Pensky, Wendt Center for Loss and Healing and Gerald R. Sigal, Founder, Sigal Construction Corporation. To read the backgrounds of the nine 2014 "Washingtonians of the Year" go to <http://www.washingtonian.com/articles/people/2014-washingtonians-of-the-year/>

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Warrants Backlog Under 40,000 Levels Not Seen Since 2007

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Lt. Governor

Upper Marlboro, MD...The Sheriff's Office Warrant/Fugitive Division reported that the warrant backlog that was over 53,000 four years ago is below 40,000 - a level not seen since 2007.

The news from the Sheriff's Warrant/Fugitive Division comes on the heels of the Crime Reduction Press Conference held yesterday at the Community of Hope AME Church in Temple Hills, MD, where Sheriff Melvin C. High joined Governor O'Malley and various county leaders including Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, County Police Department Chief Mark A. Magaw, County State's Attorney Angela Alsobrooks, Council Chairman Mel Franklin, Council Member Karen Toles and members of the community to report 2014 Crime Reduction in Prince George's County.

Referring to remarks he made at the press conference, Sheriff High said, "Four years ago, we set priorities to be successful in our work and to reach goals like this one. That priority was to apprehend violent crime offenders. In addition, we com-

mitted to staying ahead of new warrants coming in and to stopping the growth trend of the backlog," said Sheriff High.

"Under the Warrant/Fugitive Division, we've developed a multi-pronged strategy to manage our warrant process for all types of warrants, even as we stay focused on violent offenders. We've serve warrants through arrests, extradition, the enormous success of the team we put on cold cases and warrant operations we undertake throughout the year with assistance from other law enforcement partners. We have a productive interface with the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), the warrant invalidation process we improved with assistance from the legislature has proven successful and we send a letter to individuals with outstanding misdemeanors because sometimes people forget. And, our warrant processing staff manages a huge volume of administrative warrant closures," said Sheriff High.

"It's energizing heading into a new year because our success is based on the commitment of our people to the work we do."

For more information contact the Communications and Public Affairs Division at 301-780-7354.

Baltimore's Liquor Board, Stung by 2013 Audit, Regroups, Promises Changes

By MELANIE BALAKIT
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE -- Nearly 20 months after a state audit found its operations to be dysfunctional, officials at Baltimore's liquor board say they're trying to turn the office from an example of the city's old-style patronage system into a modern, publicly accountable department.

The board now has computer spreadsheets to track fines and fees. It is requiring all applications to be notarized. And employees are required to formally disclose any conflicts of interest, according to a report the board delivered to the General Assembly on Dec. 9.

But a bigger challenge lies in uprooting a culture that's existed at the board for decades, a culture that allowed employees to work without oversight and Baltimoreans to skirt the law.

"The politics of old Baltimore City still run wild at the liquor board," Baltimore State Sen. Bill Ferguson said this fall, more than a year after the state's findings were released.

The state audit, which covered liquor board proceedings from

Sept. 1, 2010, to Aug. 31, 2011, found that the board's inspection of liquor establishments were wildly uneven. For example, 96 licensees, the audit found, were inspected eight or more times, but 202 licensees received no inspections at all.

The board had no written policies on how employees should do their work, did not review employee performance, failed to have paperwork showing it responded to many citizen complaints and inconsistently handed out punishment to violators of liquor laws.

"In each area of... operations we reviewed, comprehensive written policies were lacking," Thomas J. Barnickel III, who led the audit, told the Maryland General Assembly's Joint Audit Committee when he released his findings in March 2013.

By state law, the governor appoints liquor commissioners with the consent of the Senate. The Senate has traditionally deferred to local senators for nominations.

Samuel T. Daniels Jr., who worked for more than 25 years at the liquor board, said those senators often have ties to bar and restaurant owners in their district.



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Exterior of Doc's Liquors on N. Fulton Avenue in Baltimore.

The culture, he said, lacked oversight. "There's something about the agency that breeds casual," Daniels said. "Most employees came under patronage. Most had ties to city or state senators, and most felt entitled not to do anything."

Daniels says he received his job because his father, Samuel T. Daniels Sr., a well known civil rights activist, was friendly with Maryland Gov. William Donald Schaefer.

From the day he began doing liquor license inspections in the

late 1980s, he says, he was doing part-time work for full-time pay.

"Say I had to do five inspections," he said. "If I lined them up proficiently, they could be done in an hour and a half. We didn't have to go back to the office. Nobody was checking. So you'd say, maybe I want to go sailing. Maybe I had errands to run. I used to do that."

The audit found that, nearly 20 years later, the board was

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INSIDE

Maryland Youth Riding Teams Receive Touch of Class Awards

The Touch of Class Award was initiated by MHIB in 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition. To date, 67 people and 29 horses, ponies, mules and donkeys from 14 different Maryland counties.

Community, Page A3

How to End Child Poverty for 60 Percent of Poor Children

It is a national disgrace that so many poor children live in the United States of America—the world's richest economy. It doesn't have to be this way. It's costly. And it's the greatest threat to our future national, economic, and military security.

Commentary, Page A4

Permits Allow Hunting on Maryland Farmers' Fields to Control Crop-Eating Deer

Based on the acreage, crops, damage, and the status of surrounding farms, the department issues a certain number of permits to the farmer. Each permit allows for a certain number of deer to be killed based on the department's assessment.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "American Sniper"

U.S. Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle is sent to Iraq with only one mission: to protect his brothers-in-arms. Despite the danger, as well as the toll on his family at home, Chris serves through four harrowing tours of duty in Iraq, becoming emblematic of the SEAL creed to "leave no man behind."

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are some basic guidelines about seafood consumption, especially for women and in light of all the pollution threats to our oceans and waterways?

—Betsy Draper, Boston, MA

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Come have Community Coffee with Councilman Patterson

Bring your issues to McDonald's, 6126 Oxon Hill Road, on Friday, Feb. 20, 9 to 11 a.m., for Community Coffee with Obie Patterson, Prince George's County Council Member for District 8. He'll be there, with some of his staff, to discuss local development and other issues, and to field your questions. The coffee is free.

This McDonald's is on Oxon Hill Road, across from Home Depot. For more information, call Mr. Patterson's office at 301-952-3860, or email councildistrict8@co.pg.md.us.

Highland Tea

Celebrate Darnall's Chance's Scottish heritage and partake in a cozy winter afternoon tea on Saturday, Feb. 28 at 2 p.m. Enjoy the tastes and sounds of Scotland. Admission is \$23 (\$28 for non-resident). Capacity is limited. Call 301-952-8010 or email darnallschance@pg-parks.com.

Neighbors

Morningside Volunteer Fire Department recently welcomed a new volunteer, Marcellous Grigsby, who came to them from another volunteer company in Prince George's. He has graduated from college where he played Division I football and recently married his beautiful wife. As it says on the Morningside VFD's Facebook, "We are lucky to have him and his motivation is contagious!"

Dolores Steinhilber, of Waldorf, formerly of Skyline and Tantallon, is proud of granddaughter Anne Marie Beran who this week made her 1,000th point playing basketball for J.R. Tucker High School in Richmond. Anne Marie is the daughter of Paula Steinhilber-Beran.

In the Oxon Hill Pantry newsletter, Secretary Betty Cottrell reports that the Pantry served 6511 needy people in 2014 and gave out 10,299 bags of food.

The monthly Morningside Town Meeting will be Tuesday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m. at the Town Hall.

The quarterly meeting of the Skyline Citizens Association will be Wednesday, Feb. 18, 7 p.m. at Skyline School.

Morningside memories

Thirty years ago, February 1985: The Town of Morningside recognized several residents as Good Neighbors for "outstanding improvements" or "continuous upkeep and beautification" of their homes and yards. The Good Neighbors were: Alfred Kuntz of Pine Grove Drive, Harvey and Helen Shaw of Maple Road, Barbara Erickson of Woodland Road, Kenneth and Elva Hawley of Larkspur Road, and Ernesto and Elaine Canlas of Morgan Road.

Changing landscape

A new Shell station has opened in Clinton, next to McDonald's. On the other side of the station is the shuttered Office Depot.

Staples in Penn-Mar has closed.

The Clinton Center has opened at 9004 Old Branch Avenue, near BK Miller's. It is a well-equipped facility featuring a large dance floor, separate bar area and food-staging facilities. For rates or questions, call owner/manager Kristy Richardson at 301-298-5389.

She met her husband in history class

Antonia Carmela "Annette" Stine, who loved Christmas and hoped to live 'til then, died of cancer on Dec. 21 at her home in Clinton. She was 55.

Annette was born in Antillo, Sicily, the only child of Dominic and Maria Toscano. She immigrated with her parents in 1966 and became a U.S. citizen. Her family eventually settled in Temple Hills and Annette graduated in 1977 from La Reine High School. One year she was May Queen at Holy Family Church in Hillcrest Heights.

She received her bachelor's degree in French at the University of Maryland; however, by then she had met her future husband, Michael Stine, in a history class. They were married June 6, 1981, and honeymooned in Ocean City. For the past 30 years they lived in the Boniwood Farms development in Clinton.

She worked for various contractors and the Navy from 1981 to 2013. At retirement she received the Meritorious Service Award, one of the highest civilian awards, from

the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Research Development and Acquisition.

Annette is survived by her husband of 33 years, Michael Stine, and her parents, Dominic and Maria Toscano. Father Scott Hahn and Father Edward Hegnauer concelebrated her Mass of Christian Burial at St. Philip's Church. Readers were Savannah Dean and Maddalena Leo and music was by John Whipple.

We'll all miss her wonderful smile.

May they rest in peace

Annetta Rose Cavanaugh Pridgen, 85, of San Antonio and formerly of Skyline, died Jan. 14. She was born in Ohio, earned a BA at East Carolina University, and married Aubrey Pridgen in 1948. As military wife she traveled most of Europe and the U.S. She is survived by her husband of 66 years, Aubrey; daughters Audrey, Anna, Amy and Ailsa; three grandchildren, a sister, a brother; and her dog, Snigal. Her daughter Audrey Pridgen-MacLean lives in Skyline.

Dorene A. Gardner, 88, a longtime resident of Skyline, died Jan. 30. Her husband James predeceased her. Her sons Steven, James and John, and three grandchildren survive her.

Annette D. Davis, 79, of Forestville, died Jan. 25. She was retired from the DC Public Schools after 35 years. Survivors include sons Vince and Gregory Hunter and three grandchildren. Mass of Christian Burial was at St. Bernardine's in Suitland.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Angie Miller, Katelyn Dudding and Pat Miller, Feb. 13; Joan Rose, Scott Jenkins and Mary Reilly, Feb. 14; Father Ted Hegnauer, David Chambers, Mary Young and Ruby Holloway, Feb. 15; Sarah Anderson and Dean Woods, Feb. 16;

Charlene Holmes and Danny Fowler, Feb. 18; and Clifford Lantz, Feb. 19.

Happy anniversary to Frank and Soo Wilson on Feb. 15; and to Wilda and Joe Cheseldine, who were married at Mount Calvary Church on Feb. 16, 1958.

Happy Valentine's Day to all my Readers

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Statement On President's Announcement To Replace Sequestration

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) released the following statement regarding President Obama's anticipated proposal at the House Democratic Issues Conference to end sequestration in his upcoming budget submission for Fiscal Year 2016 (FY16). Congress passed, and Congresswoman Edwards opposed, the Budget Control Act of 2011, which required across-the-board reductions (sequestration) in most federal defense and nondefense discretionary programs, projects, and activities for FY13 and additional spending reductions each year through FY21. In December 2013, the House and Senate agreed to the Bipartisan Budget Act which eased spending reductions for FY14 and FY15, but which would return again on October 1, 2016, unless further action is taken.

"I welcome the news that President Obama will replace the disastrous sequestration in his upcoming budget. An ill-advised approach that I and the majority of my Democratic colleagues never voted for, it has hurt working families and stunted economic growth in my congressional district and across the country. Reinstating these arbitrary and senseless cuts would directly hurt Maryland working families, federal employees and contractors, and military facilities such as Joint Base Andrews and Fort Meade.

"House Republicans acted irresponsibly with sequestration and continue to do so by threatening to cut funding for the Department of Homeland Security. This is no way to govern. I look forward to working with the President and my congressional colleagues to end sequestration with a balanced solution that targets sensible savings and invests in the future of working families by creating jobs, rebuilding our infrastructure, and ensuring affordable education."

Upper Marlboro Author Releases New Children's Book

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. — January 6th marked the nationwide release of author Kenya Rhodes' new children's book, "Luna's Birthday."

On the eve of her 7th birthday, Luna is whisked away to a magical birthday celebration hosted by the sun, the moon and the stars. She becomes a sparkling heavenly body, looking down on the bright lights of the city below. Luna can't wait to return home and tell her mother and father all about the party in the night sky. Join her in her fun-filled birthday adventure in "Luna's Birthday."

Published by Tate Publishing and Enterprises, the book is available through bookstores nationwide, from the publisher at www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore, or by visiting barnesandnoble.com or amazon.com.

Rhodes created "Luna's Birthday" to give life to her own childhood fantasies of seeing the stars up close. She currently lives in Maryland with her cat, Jedi.

Maryland Youth Riding Team Earns Touch of Class Award

ANNAPOLIS, MD — The Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB), a program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture, presented



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

its December Touch of Class Award to a regional youth riding team that won a national championship at the 2014 U.S. Pony Club Championships in Lexington, Kentucky.

Agriculture Secretary Buddy Hance, Deputy Agriculture Secretary Mary Ellen Setting; and MHIB Chairman Jim Steele Chair made the presentation at a reception hosted by The Equiry horse magazine following the Lisbon Horse Parade in Howard County this past weekend. The annual parade drew more than 3,000 spectators and about 500 horses.

The team which rode their mounts in the Parade included Ryan Keefe, 14, from Sandy Spring (Montgomery County); Hallie Kling, 14, from Brookeville (Montgomery County); Gracie Lukaczer, 16, from Washington D.C.; Rachael Miller, 17, from Pasadena (Anne Arundel County); and Erin Reilly, 16, from Woodbine (Howard County).

The team members represented the Iron Bridge Hounds Pony Club from the Washington metro area and the St. Margaret's Pony Club from Annapolis. They joined forces to win the Novice Event in the three-day event competition, defeating 21 other teams from across the United States.

"Young riders like these form the foundation for the future of Maryland's horse industry," said Secretary Hance. "We are so proud of their accomplishment. Their equestrian expertise once again shows that Maryland is a training ground for future champions."

Coach Rumsey Keefe said, "These young riders are incredibly dedicated and really put forward a great effort."

Two other Maryland teams, in show jumping and mounted games, also earned national championships at the event and will be honored at Horse World Expo in January at Timonium.

The Touch of Class award was initiated by MHIB in 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition. So far 59 people and 29 horses, ponies, mules and donkeys from 14 different Maryland counties and 24 different equestrian disciplines have been honored. The award is named in honor of Touch of Class, the Maryland-bred mare that won two show jumping gold medals at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. For more information, contact MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord at 410-841-5798 or ross.peddicord@maryland.gov.

Laurel author releases new book on salvation

LAUREL, Md. — Author Cortland Jones announced the release of his new book, "Out of the Darkness: A Journey Into the Marvelous Light."

"Out of the Darkness" is an

insightful resource providing biblical references from both the Old and New Testament books of the Bible that are intended to enlighten and encourage spiritual growth. Jones writes a personal testimony of his life experiences that has acquired him enough knowledge on salvation. The book encourages readers to consider God's invitation of salvation by relying one's faith in Jesus Christ. A more personal, intimate relationship with God allows us to be touched, changed and transformed into blessings in ourselves.

Published by Tate Publishing and Enterprises, the book is available through bookstores nationwide, from the publisher at www.tatepublishing.com/bookstore, or by visiting barnesandnoble.com or amazon.com.

Jones has been attending in Reid Temple AME Church in Glenn Dale, Maryland, since 1993. An educator in Prince George's County Public Schools, he conducted after-school bible studies from 1995 to 2010. Moreover, Jones facilitates seminars for The National Family Resiliency Center in Columbia, Maryland, and provides strategies for family transitions.

MaDHMH Submits to General Assembly a Report on Safety Standards for Outpatient Oncology, Rheumatology Offices

Baltimore, MD (December 17, 2014) — The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) has submitted a report by the Safety Standards workgroup to the General Assembly. The workgroup was tasked with studying appropriate national safety standards for mixing, reconstituting and performing similar, routine acts by or under the supervision of an oncologist, rheumatologist or hematologist in an outpatient setting.

The workgroup was established by Senate Bill 1108, Chapter 580 of the Acts of 2014, and was chaired by DHMH. The workgroup comprised such stakeholders as representatives from the Board of Pharmacy, the Board of Physicians, Med-Chi, the Maryland and District of Columbia Society of Clinical Oncology (MDCSCO), as well as community practitioners.

The workgroup developed recommendations on the appropriate minimum safety standards for outpatient oncology and rheumatology practices in three key areas: infection control, accurate dosing and administration, and hazardous drugs.

"Safety standards are critical to the safe and effective care of oncology and rheumatology patients because of the baseline immunocompromised state of many of these individuals and because of the potential for drug toxicity related to specific agents used in these specialties," said Dr. Mona Gahunia, DHMH's Chief Medical Officer.

"The development of these standards has ensured that oncology providers will have proper procedures to accurately and safely administer chemotherapy to cancer patients. Furthermore, these safety standards can be adapted to allow patients access to cancer treatment services in a range of practice settings," said Paul Celano, MD, President of MDCSCO.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to Brandon Freeman, Doris Lee, Vincent Glee, Darion Smalling, Jean Brown, Rom Escanilla, Joachim Neckere, Conrad Carter, Patricia Ann Weaver, Rachel Cain, Marvies Davies, Gloria Garrett, Emmanuel Oghogho, Shela Sedgwick, Ronald Davis, Jean Noel, Malcolm Terry, Frank Johnson, Matthew Oghogho, Maleke Glee, Lynn Harper, Jose Rojas, Lawrence Ohogho and Romonia Pinkney who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays during the month of February.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Anniversary to Wendell and Florella Wallace, Steven and Denise Bouyer Carter who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries during the month of February.

ANNUAL MEN'S DAY

The United Methodist Men of Asbury United Methodist Church will celebrate Annual Men's Day Sunday, February 15, 2015. The

church is located at 4004 Accokeek Road, Brandywine, Maryland. Dinner will be served at 1:00 PM and service at 3:00 PM. All are cordially invited to attend.

FLY UNDER MY WINGS

Come travel with Fly under My Wings to Niagara Falls, Canada August 7-August 11, 2015. The trip includes Harriet Tubman 2-days Underground Railroad Tour and Maid of the Mist. You must have a Passport to travel. For more information contact Phyllis Slater at (301) 653-7345

COMMUNITY ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

Community Ash Wednesday Service will be at Nottingham Myers Church Wednesday February 18, 2015 at 7:00 PM. The church address is 15601 Brooks Church Road Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Telephone number is 301-888-2171.

XTREME TEENS SKI TRIP

Saturday February 21, 2015 Xtreme Teens will take a trip to McHenry, Maryland Ski Resort. The teens will enjoy a day of

snowboarding, skiing and tubing. You must be between the ages of 13-17. For more information call 301-446-3400.

CANCER CARE

New Hope Fellowship Cancer Care Ministry will be hosting their first Cancer testimony Service at their Life Center. There will be testimony giving thru dance, song and poem. This ministry is to inspire those that are battling with this disease and to remember those that lost the battle to Cancer. There will light hor'derves served following the service.

It's an absolutely free event on March 21, 2014 at the Life Center. The address is 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Person of contact is Shonnita McCall, nhf-cancerareministry@gmail.com.

BODY RECALL

Body Recall at Clinton United Methodist Church is being held two days a week on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The church address is 10700 Brandywine Road Clinton, Maryland. Telephone number is 301-301-868-1281.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Getting Serious? Five Important Money Questions to Ask

Valentine's Day is often a time to reflect on your relationship, and consider the next step. If your relationship is heading toward joint finances, it's essential to talk about it first — openly and honestly.

A 2014 survey (<http://www.nefe.org/press-room/news/financial-infidelity-poses-challenge-for-couples.aspx>) by the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) found that 13 percent said they had failed to share information about their personal debt or income, which had "an effect on the relationship."

This year, consider thinking beyond the roses and candlelight dinners to a potential future of merged finances. Here are five key questions that should drive your conversation:

Where are you financially as individuals? Take time to talk about your household debt — including student loans, credit cards, mortgage and medical bills, and share your credit reports from the three major credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion). Each can be obtained once a year for free (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>). It's also important to discuss assets — not only the savings and investments you hold, but also how future job or education plans can improve the marriage or family's financial health.

What are your money personalities? This is a personal finance question that many financial planners still ask to get a sense of your money management habits. It's intended to identify which person in the relationship is the spender or the saver. It's particularly important to ask each other whether you save or spend to make sure you're on track to achieve your long-term goals.

How do you want to live? This question is about shared financial and personal goals and how you will achieve them together. Discuss how you've been living thus far, and what you might change. Be honest about where you want to live, what kind of home and family you want to have, what kind of career or retirement you want and start discussing concrete ways you both will get there.

How will you handle everyday spending? Determine how you will share accounts, pay bills, budget, save for the future and bank — jointly, separately or both. Figure out how will you jointly manage credit and the smartest ways to save for retirement. If you want a family, decide how you'll plan for kids financially. Finally, work together when problems come up. As with all issues in a relationship, ongoing communication is key.

What if you need help? There are options if you or your partner doesn't know where to start. Licensed financial and tax professionals can provide guidance on issues from basic budgeting (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/personalfinance/savingspending/budgeting/>) to prenuptial agreements. Friends and family are a good resource for recommendations. Also keep in mind that some religious denominations actually offer solid financial planning advice as part of premarital counseling and the NEFE has a quiz (<http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/Tools-Resources/LifeValues-Quiz.aspx>) for potential spouses. For debt issues, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling is a good independent resource that can offer advice on improving credit issues as a couple. The earlier you can put together an advisory team that fits your needs, the better.

Bottom line: If you and your sweetheart are considering tying the knot or expanding your family, don't ignore money issues. It can be a difficult conversation to initiate, but it's an important one to start planning your financial future together.

Liquor from A1

employing 14 full-time inspectors to do the work of six. While the liquor board required each full-time inspector to complete four routine inspections daily, none of the full-time inspectors met this requirement.

After the audit's release, alarmed state officials formed a committee made up of city and state officials that selected a new executive secretary, Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth to replace Daniels in April 2014. Former Baltimore Circuit Judge Thomas Ward was named board chairman. In October, Shelton Jones Jr., a 22-year veteran of the Baltimore Police Department, was hired as chief inspector.

The new members have taken a tougher stance on enforcing the



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Maryland Youth Riding Teams Receive Touch of Class Awards

By PRESS OFFICER
MDA

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Two youth regional riding teams that won national championships at the 2014 U.S. Pony Club Championships in Lexington, KY received the January Touch of Class Award from the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) last week at the Horse World Expo in Timonium. The two teams represent two different equestrian disciplines—Mounted Games and Show Jumping. The MHIB is a program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

MHIB Chairman Jim Steele, MHIB member Dr. Mike Odian, MHIB Advisory Board member Keith Wills, and current Maryland High School Rodeo Queen Madison Iager (a former Touch of Class Award winner) made the presentation at a reception hosted by The Equiery horse magazine.

The Mounted Games Team, called the "Zig Zaggers," is composed of Ashley Button, 11, from Brinklow (Montgomery County); Katelynn Kling, 11,

Brinklow (Montgomery County); Ethan Riccio, 13, Woodbine (Carroll County); Grace Strosnider, 12, Brinklow (Montgomery County); and Laura VanHasselt, 15, Columbia (Howard County). The "Zig Zaggers" defeated 13 other teams from across the nation in the Junior Division and will compete April 26 for another national championship at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event in Lexington.

The Show Jumping Team -- comprised of Kelsey Abrecht, 15, Towson (Baltimore County); Daisy Fenwick, 15, Cockeysville (Baltimore County); and Brianna Price, 19, (Harford County) -- "scrambled" with two other riders from California to defeat seven other teams in the Modified Show Jumping Division.

"Last month we honored another group of five young riders who won the 3-Day Event competition, so this means a total of 13 young Maryland riders were on winning national Pony Club teams," Steele said. "This bodes so well for the future of the Maryland horse industry. We couldn't be happier



PHOTO BY KATHERINE O. RIZZO/THE EQUIERY

From left: Madison Iager (Maryland High School Rodeo Queen), Dr. Mike Odian (MHIB), Kelsey Abrecht (GSHPC), Chris Donovan (coach), Daisy Fenwick (GSHPC) and Jim Steele (MHIB).

that we have this reservoir of young equestrian talent. It also shows that we have excellent riding instructors and facilities in our state."

The Touch of Class Award was initiated by MHIB in 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition. To date, 67 people and 29 horses, ponies, mules and donkeys from

14 different Maryland counties and 24 different equestrian disciplines have been honored. The award is named in honor of Touch of Class, the Maryland-bred mare that won two show jumping gold medals at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

For more information, contact MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord at 410-841-5798 or ross.peddicord@maryland.gov.

Baker from A1

"I am honored to be recognized as a "2014 Washingtonian of the Year" and thank the editors of Washingtonian Magazine for this esteemed honor," stated County Executive Baker. "I also want to congratulate my fellow honorees. I am humbled to be equally recognized with these amazing Washingtonians and their notable accomplishments. Although I am being recognized, this designation is not as much about me and my administration as it is about the success and progress that all Prince Georgians — our County employees, our municipal and State governments, our business community, our nonprofit and faith communities, and our residents — are achieving. Earning this recognition

— the same award that my friend and mentor, former County Executive Wayne K. Curry, won previously, in the same year of his passing means so much to me. Wayne taught me to lead this County boldly and I am so proud of the work that we have accomplished and I am incredibly optimistic about our future. I often say that "Prince George's County is the place to be," and I am thankful to Washingtonian Magazine for sharing this sentiment with their readers."

Acceptance Speech From County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III

"Thank you Washingtonian Magazine for this great honor.

Today is Dr. Martin Luther King's actual birthday. A man who gave this country and

this world some much. He once said, 'Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?' - a question that drives me as I proudly serve Prince George's County every day. And a question that clearly motivates my fellow honorees.

Each day I work to make life better for more than 900,000 residents of Prince George's County and we have made great progress. Nearly \$6 billion in development projects in the pipeline. We are making great progress improving our schools, reducing crime, and improving healthcare. We have taken an innovative approach to supporting and improving neighborhoods through our Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative and we have changed our image in the region.

I got involved in politics because my dad challenged me to get involved and make a difference. I am so proud that Washingtonian Magazine is recognizing the great things going on in Prince George's County, but I know I did not do this alone. I had a lot help from some very smart and committed people. But for me, the real gauge of success is when a business person or resident says to me, "Thanks for all you do. You are making our county proud."

On this day, Martin Luther King's birthday, I challenge us all to continue to ask that persistent and urgent question, "What are you doing for others?" It is this question that I drives me every day as I work to move Prince George's County closer to fulfilling its destiny!"

Schools from A1

ter schools prove is that students learn in different ways, and it's important to provide different options to students. But the duplication of services would force admin costs up and have implications that would cost taxpayers more or take money out of the classroom."

At a ground-breaking event on Wednesday, the co-founders of Green Street Academy, a public charter school in Baltimore, touted a "21st century approach to learning."

With gardens, chicken coops and fish farms as learning spaces in an urban environment, the Academy equips students with the skills to be successful in modern ways, said David Warnock, co-founder of the Green Street Academy and co-chair of the board of trustees. They also have a new partnership with the U.S. Forest Service's Baltimore Field Station.

"This generation does not respond to institution-led education," Warnock said, noting the heavy dependence of today's stu-

dents on technology and social media. "We need to hook 'em, capture their imagination and develop their love of learning."

Green Street Academy received a \$14 million loan from Bank of America, part of the \$23 million in total funds raised so far to move into a larger, "green" building to open in September, Warnock said. The renovated building will allow 425 more students to attend the academy next school year, nearly a 100 percent increase. The 2.5-mile move will also allow 60 percent of students to walk to school, instead of the 5 percent that are able to work in the current location.

A study released on Tuesday by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools ranked Maryland's charter school laws the lowest in the nation for the second year in a row. Eight states do not have charter school laws and were not ranked.

"We find that more often than not local school boards aren't supportive of charters, and sometimes they're downright hostile," said Todd Ziebarth, National Alliance for

Public Charter Schools senior vice president for state advocacy and support. "They think they're losing the money that's attached to those students. But at the end of the day, if public schools and charter schools are cooperating, it's better for a community. The intent is long term. It's an economic boost to the community, not a drain."

Kerwin agreed. "There's so much emphasis and energy put on the inputs that overshadow the ways charter schools create great outcomes," she said.

But a panel presentation by the Maryland State Department of Education to the Senate's Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee on Jan. 22 raised some questions on the success of charter schools in Maryland.

Numbers in the department of education's report reflecting success rates for charter schools excluded statistics from 11 Maryland charter schools that had been shut down.

The first and only bill the legislature has seen thus far on the topic this year calls for the es-

tablishment of a public charter school program in Frederick County governed by an independent charter school board, with members elected by the county council. Charter school teachers in Frederick County would also be exempt from performance evaluation criteria determined by the state.

It was proposed and presented by Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Kelly Schulz, before she resigned her seat as a Republican delegate from Frederick and Carroll.

The bill has had little traction since it was first presented to the House Ways and Means Committee, said Vice Chairman Frank S. Turner, D-Howard, but with so many new members, it's hard to know which way the committee will lean.

Turner, however, has his mind made up.

"Any time we use money for charter schools -- whether direct or indirect -- that's less money that goes to public schools," he said. "My feeling is that what we need to do is strengthen the public school system."

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COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Announces Social Security Administration to reverse Cuts to Field Offices Helping 900,000 Marylanders

Announcement follows increased funding Senator Mikulski fought to include for agency in FY14 and FY15 government funding bills, keeping 63,000 Social Security employees on the job

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced that the Social Security Administration (SSA) is reversing cuts to field office hours. This reverse will keep employees on the job at approximately 1,250 field offices nationwide, including at 23 field offices in Maryland. This change will help the 60 million Americans, including 900,000 in Maryland, that rely on Social Security to better access the benefits they've earned.

"I'm proud to announce that beginning in March, the Social Security Administration is reversing cuts to field office hours, helping millions of seniors and families to better access the benefits they've earned," Senator Mikulski said. "I've fought tooth and nail to preserve Social Security as a critical benefit that's reliable, guaranteed and inflation-proof. Longer hours means more Social Security employees will be on the job to help people sign up for retirement or disability benefits and sort out confusion and concerns. For the 900,000 Marylanders who rely on the promise of Social Security, our promises made are promises kept."

In a letter (available here) to Senator Mikulski praising her commitment to the Social Security Administration, the agency announced

that beginning on March 16, Social Security field offices across the country will remain open for business from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This increase in field office hours reverses a cut that began in 2011 where offices remained open only through 3:00 p.m. In 2013, over 40 million people came to an SSA field office. Forty-seven million people called its 1-800 number. Five million came for their retirement benefits and 2.8 million came for their disability benefits.

As then-Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski has continued to fight to increase funding for the SSA. In the fiscal year (FY) 2014 Omnibus spending bill, Senator Mikulski fought to increase funding for the agency by \$651 million. In the recently-passed Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, Senator Mikulski fought to provide an additional \$109 million increase for the agency. The FY 2015 law also includes report language Senator Mikulski added directing SSA to get public input before eliminating field offices, and to keep paper documents available at field offices, which many beneficiaries rely on.

The Social Security Administration employs 63,000 individuals, including 11,000 at the headquarters in Woodlawn, Maryland.



PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIMEDIA: COURTESY TOMF688

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK

The University of Maryland, College Park (often referred to as The University of Maryland, Maryland, UMD, or UMCP) is a public research university located in the city of College Park in Prince George's County, Maryland, approximately 8 miles from Washington, D.C. Founded in 1856, the University of Maryland is the flagship institution of the University System of Maryland. It is considered a Public Ivy institution, meaning it is a public university with a quality of education comparable to those of the private Ivy League.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



How to End Child Poverty for 60 Percent of Poor Children and 72 Percent of All Poor Black Children Today

Poverty hurts children and our nation's future. This stark statement is backed by years of scientific research and the more we learn about the brain and its development the more devastatingly true we know this to be. Childhood poverty can and does scar children for life. Yet in the largest economy on earth we stand by as 14.7 million languish in poverty. Here's a snapshot of who our poor children are today:

- Every other baby is a child of color. And 1 in 2 Black babies is poor — the poorest child in America.
- 1 in 3 Hispanic children under 5 is poor during their years of rapid brain development.
- More than 1 in 4 urban children and nearly 1 in 4 rural children is poor.
- 1 in 5 of all children in America is poor—14.7 million children.
- 1 in 6 Black children is extremely poor living on less than \$8 a day.
- 1 in 7 Hispanic children under five is extremely poor.
- 1 in 8 Hispanic children is poor.
- Less than 1 in 9 White children is poor; 4.1 million children.

A child of color is more than twice as likely to be poor as a White child. Of the 14.7 million children living beneath the poverty line in 2013, defined as a family of four living on less than \$23,834 a year, or \$16.25 a person a day, over 40 percent lived in extreme poverty on less than \$11,917 a year, half the poverty line — barely \$8 a person a day.

The 14.7 million poor children in America exceeds the populations of 12 U.S. states combined: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming and is greater than the populations of Sweden and Costa Rica combined.

Our nearly 6.5 million extremely poor children exceeds the combined populations of Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming

and is greater than the populations of Denmark or Finland.

It is a national disgrace that so many poor children live in the United States of America — the world's richest economy. It doesn't have to be this way. It's costly. And it's the greatest threat to our future national, economic, and military security.

The Children's Defense Fund has just released a groundbreaking report called Ending Child Poverty Now showing for the first time how America could end child poverty, as defined by the Supplemental Poverty measure, for 60 percent of all poor children and 72 percent of all poor Black children. We can make this happen by investing another 2 percent of the federal budget to improve existing programs and policies that increase parental employment, make work pay, and ensure children's basic needs are met. Poverty for children under 3 and children in single parent households would drop 64 percent and 97 percent of all poor children would experience improvements in their economic circumstances.

CDF contracted with the non-partisan, independent Urban In-

stitute to generate real numbers on the costs to implement improvements to existing policies and programs and the number of children who would benefit. CDF's report shows how relatively modest changes in policies we know work can be combined to significantly reduce child poverty, and implemented right now if our political leaders put common good, common sense and economic sense for children first to improve the lives and futures of millions of children, and save taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

CDF's report estimates a cost of \$77.2 billion a year for the combined proposed policy improvements and suggests multiple tradeoffs our country can make to pay for this huge, long overdue and urgently needed reduction in child poverty without raising the federal deficit including:

- Closing tax loopholes that let U.S. corporations avoid \$90 billion annually in federal income taxes by shifting profits to

See WATCH, Page A16

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Super Bowl Rematch Needed — Tackling the Noise Before (and After) the Big Game

"Every setback has a major comeback. #GreaterIsComing."

— Russell Wilson, Seattle Seahawks Quarterback, via Twitter (@DangeRussWilson)

Far be it from me to join the legions of Monday morning quarterbacks for a game that has been, and will be, dissected for days, weeks and years to come. But whatever one may think of the outcome of the Seattle Seahawks' decision to have QB Russell Wilson throw from the 1-yard line in Super Bowl XLIX's nail-biting, final seconds, it accomplished something more than sealing the fates of two championship teams. It shifted our attention from "DeflateGate" and pre-game sniffles to Wilson — where arguably much of the focus before the big game should have been considering that this 26-year-old from Richmond, Virginia stood on the precipice of both NFL and American history.

Initially tapped by the Seahawks as a 2012 third round draft pick, Wilson, with the presumed limitation of his 5-foot-11 inch frame, was an underrated prospect and an undervalued entity. However, he emerged from his first season as the 2012 NFL Rookie of the Year — with his 26 touchdown passes tying the NFL's single season record by a rookie set in 1998 by Peyton Manning and the Seahawks 8-0 record at home making Wilson the first rookie quarterback in the Super Bowl era to lead his team to an undefeated home record. By the 2013-14 season — only his second in the NFL, Wilson had led the Seahawks to the team's first-ever Super Bowl victory, making him only the second African American quarterback to win a Super Bowl (Doug Williams was the first in 1988) and cementing his standing as a new force in the NFL.

So, with a media landscape as vast and varied as ours, why was this story drowned out by so much less-worthy noise in the days leading to the Super Bowl?

Whether you prefer to call it "DeflateGate" or "Ballghazi," the allegation of underinflated balls is a serious one for the NFL to investigate. The act itself strikes at the very heart of the game and its ob-

ligation to fairness. But for a nation known for its love of feel-good, inspirational stories, putting a spotlight on Wilson's history-making rise could have been a reminder that cheating allegations do not define the pastime — and that "nice guys" are champions too. However, as many media chose to not focus on this angle, in the few words that I have here, I will.

Of course, there is more to Wilson than his prowess on the field. Last year, he launched "Pass the Peace," an initiative to raise awareness and money for victims of domestic violence through his "Why Not You Foundation." In an environment where the NFL remains under a cloud of scandal after a number of high-profile abuse cases, the story of Wilson's effort to help combat this insidious problem should be able to generate as much press interest as Marshawn Lynch's media stand-off or Patriots' QB Tom Brady's pre-Super Bowl cold.

If history had been on the side of the Seahawks, the national conversation the morning after the NFL's biggest game would have been about Wilson being the youngest starting quarterback ever to win two Super Bowls, the only one to win two Super Bowls in his first three seasons and the only Black quarterback to have more than one Super Bowl ring. Instead, many people are discussing an ill-fated pass that Wilson refuses to become his lasting legacy. Making his feelings clear on his Twitter account, he responded that "At 26 years old I won't allow 1 play or 1 moment define my career. I will keep evolving. #Motivation."

When Wilson was a teenager, his father, who died in 2010 from diabetes complications, would conduct mock interviews with him, asking him how he prepared for an imaginary Super Bowl in the future. This wasn't his first Super Bowl run — and I have a strong feeling it will not be his last. I believe Wilson will rise above the noise of the NFL and the media's silence both on-and-off-the-field and continue to make history.

The final-minute interception snatched a hard-fought victory from the Seahawks, but if Wilson's story speaks to us in volumes about anything, it tells us that defeat will never have the last word in his game called life.

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Letting Valentine's Day Re-Ignite Your Romance

Yes, Valentine's Day can seem like nothing but a massive push to sell romantic cards and gifts of flowers, candy or jewelry but, despite all the commercial hype, the reality is that Valentine's Day can be a good opportunity for putting the romance back in a relationship.

It's not uncommon that when someone has been in a relationship for a long time it can become easy to simply take the other person for granted and to let the romantic aspects just fall away. The sad fact is that most failed relationships don't explode; rather they fade over time as romance disappears and one or both partners end up feeling unimportant, neglected and unloved.

No box of candy on Valentine's Day will fix all the problems of a faded relationship, but it can be a start in showing the other person that you still care and are still paying attention.

With Valentine's Day as a starting point, you can then continue the effort. Make sure birthdays and anniversaries are remembered, and then also celebrate special days, like the anniversary of your first date or the vacation you both enjoyed. Make a surprise celebration out of non-special days, just because you want to.

It's also important to simply make time for each other. Romance in a relationship requires paying attention to the other person's feelings and thoughts, not just to the problems, issues and details of daily life.

If necessary, add your partner to your schedule in order to insure that there's time for each other. Maybe you need a weekly "date night," or a set 30 minutes each day to share thoughts, feelings, and future plans.

In our busy lives, it's too easy to just pass each other by. We let problems overwhelm us, and take for granted the love and positive emotions that bring us happiness.

Keeping love alive as a relationship matures takes time and effort, though the work can be enjoyable. Giving your partner a small gift for no reason other than love will bring a loving smile to his or her face, and a warm feeling to you as well. And isn't that what a strong, romantic relationship should be giving you? Valentine's Day may be overly commercial, but the romance and positive emotions of the day can inspire us all to put in some effort to recharge and maintain a healthy relationship.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org

Liquor from A3

In September, the board ruled to extinguish a license owned by Brian McComas, a Baltimore resident who planned to open the Crossbar Biergarten, a German-style beer garden in Federal Hill.

State law says that unused liquor licenses, which have been dubbed "zombie licenses," are void after 180 days. McComas, who owned his license since 2009, had been allowed by the previous board to keep his license active well past 180 days by paying a \$1,300 a year fee.

The board's ruling drew some attention because license owners around the city had long had an easy time getting extensions.

Ward said he did not see the ruling as a big deal: "I don't know what's controversial about following the law," he said in an interview last month.

Administratively, efforts are under way to address all of the audit's recommendations. The scope

of efforts range from the drafting of written policies for inspections to the moving of decades of paper files into a computerized system.

"It's a matter of not having any written protocol for 75 years," Stephan Fogleman, who served as board chairman from 2007 to 2014, said of the magnitude of the board's efforts.

According to the board's recent report to the legislature, inspectors are now being given clear guidelines on inspection procedures, and the board is introducing a new method of measuring inspectors' work—based on a CitiStat program used by other city agencies—to

track how the inspectors are doing their job.

Staff are in the process of scanning old records and building an online system that will allow for easy tracking of files, uploading of inspection records and greater transparency to the public.

The success of the post-audit overhaul, says Michelle Bailey-Hedgepath, hinges on the modernization of the agency.

"I feel very good about it," she said. "I am looking forward to moving to digital."

But not everyone is convinced that the changes at the board are as radical as they're perceived.

Becky Witt, a lawyer at the Community Law Center who runs a blog, Booze News, dedicated to liquor board activities, said the new board has at times gone beyond the law's requirements in issuing violations and has allowed a number of dead licenses to be reopened.

"I don't know where this whole 'New Sheriff in Town' narrative is coming from," she said.

Hiding behind all of the immediate changes the board is making are also decades worth of misfeasance, the audit documented, that could prove difficult to unwind.

Recent research by the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University found that about two-thirds of the city's liquor establishments holding a tavern license in Baltimore are in violation of city laws prohibiting the sale and marketing of alcohol to minors.

An estimated 200 to 800 "zombie licenses" are believed to still be active, but the board's antiquated paper record keeping makes the exact number difficult to know.

Permits Allow Hunting on Maryland Farmers' Fields to Control Crop-Eating Deer

By MAX BENNETT
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS — When Max Dubansky first moved to his farm about 15 years ago, he often saw about 100 deer in his fields.

"We were losing up to \$1,000 in lettuce in one night," Dubansky, 40, said. "Something had to give."

Dubansky owns and operates Backbone Food Farm in Oakland. His farm is right up against woods, which makes it more vulnerable to hungry deer.

"Deer are responsible for \$7 million to \$8 million in crop damage each year," Maryland Department of Natural Resources Deer Project Leader Brian Eyler said.

But the Maryland Department of Natural Resources offers a program to help farmers protect their crops against hungry ruminants.

Deer Management Permits are available at no cost to farmers who suffer economic loss from deer eating or damaging crops.

Those farmers with crop loss or damage can contact their county Department of Natural Resources representative who sends a tech-

nologist or a biologist to evaluate the property.

Based on the acreage, crops, damage, and the status of surrounding farms, the department issues a certain number of permits to the farmer. Each permit allows for a certain number of deer to be killed based on the department's assessment.

If a farmer continues to suffer crop damage after the permitted kills are reached, they can apply to renew the permit.

"Permits are for antlerless deer only," said Western Maryland Regional Wildlife Manager Jim Mullan.

Does are the primary targets for deer management because removing one doe essentially eliminates three deer for the next year, Mullan said.

"When you harvest a doe, you're stopping that doe from any future reproduction," Mullan said. "A healthy adult doe will produce about two fawns."

However, Mullan said, farmers are allowed exceptions for antlered deer if orchards suffer from "rubbing," when bucks rub

antlers on trees to strip the velvety coating off new antler growth or during mating season, which is called the rut.

Mullan said the department tends to limit those exceptions so hunters in the regular season can shoot antlered deer, as many hunters strive to bag bucks with large antler racks.

Farmers who obtain permits can choose who hunts on their land — or can do the hunting themselves.

Eyler said a lot of these special permits are issued during the regular hunting season because it's easier to get a deer that time of year.

The state issued 1,636 permits in 2012, and 1,655 in 2013. Though that's just a 1 percent increase, hunters harvested 10 percent more deer via permits in 2013 — 8,505 vs. 7,650 in 2012.

Licensed hunters bagged 87,541 deer in the 2012-2013 season, and killed 95,865 in the 2013-2014 season — about a 9.5 percent increase.

Eyler said hunters who kill deer on a permit go through the same process as a regular-license kill — submitting a hunter ID number and registering the kill with the depart-

ment — but must also submit the deer management permit number under which they killed the deer.

Once that process is taken care of, hunters can treat their harvest as if it were a regular-season kill.

Dubansky said an effective deer fence helped keep them out, but some still found their way to his crops.

"Once we got the fence up, there were problem deer (that found their way around the fence)," he said.

Deer that got into his fields were taken care of with his permits.

While not a hunter, Dubansky says he thinks the program is great and has used about five permits a year to keep pesky deer out as well as allowing people to hunt on his property during the regular season.

"It's an important tool for farmers," Eyler said. "It gives them a tool for outside of the regular season."

It also helps control the overall deer population in the state.

About 10 years ago, the population peaked at about 300,000, but last year's fall estimate was about 227,000, Eyler said.

Savings from A1

The Obama administration planned to help offset the cost of projects to boost incomes of low- and middle-income households by taxing the 529 accounts, which administration officials said disproportionately benefit higher-income families.

This type of college savings account is designed to help families put aside money for future college costs and receive federal—and sometimes state—tax benefits.

In 2010, families with 529 plans had a median income that was nearly triple that of the median income of families without

such plans and of college students' families in general, according to a U.S. Government Accountability Office report.

The proposal came after the president's rollout of ideas in his State of the Union address to spark a revival of "middle-class economics," but it was quickly shot down by proponents of the 529 accounts' tax benefits.

"[The announcement] won't create any change in Maryland because it basically maintains the status quo," said William E. Kirwan, Chancellor of the University System of Maryland. "I don't think it will in any way disadvantage the cur-

rent arrangements that any students have."

Maryland has two types of 529 college savings plans: the prepaid college trust and the college investment plan.

Both offer tax-deferred growth and tax-free earnings at the federal level and in Maryland, according to the College Savings Plans of Maryland's 2014 annual report. There is also a Maryland state income tax deduction of contributions to either or both plans of up to \$2,500 annually per account, according to the report.

Bipartisan legislation provided federal tax relief for all college savings plans in 1996,

which created Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code and spurred the development of more plans nationwide. Maryland followed with state tax relief for 529 accounts in 1998.

"Any type of college savings account is a very good thing," Kirwan said. "I have them for my grandchildren."

For the fall 2014 semester 4,931 students claimed their prepaid college trust benefits, according to the annual report. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014, 16,433 recipients received distributions from their college investment plans totaling approximately \$207 million, the report said.

3 Tips for Anyone Expecting an Inheritance

Financial Consultants Say Planning Will Help You Avoid Regrets

By MICHAEL ABBOTT AND
CHRISTOPHER BENNETT

The odds are good that you will inherit money or assets in the coming years. And, if you're like most people, you'll save only half.

The largest transfer of wealth in history is underway, with beneficiaries expected to receive \$59 trillion over the next four decades, according to a Boston College study. But those heirs will lose, spend or donate half of their inheritances, if a 2012 study by Ohio University holds true.

"People need to plan for inheriting wealth to avoid the pitfalls that result in so many heirs making emotional or ill-informed decisions they later regret," says Michael Abbott, a veteran financial consultant and CFO of The Abbott Bennett Group, (www.theabbottbennettgroup.com).

It's never wise to make important financial decisions based on emotion, and inheritance often starts with grief — one of the most profound emotions we ever experience, adds Chris Bennett, co-founding partner of the firm.

"Particularly with the death of a parent, people can feel a whole range of emotions — guilt, overwhelming loss, anger, relief," Bennett says. "It's a very bad time to make decisions that can affect you and your family for the rest of your lives."

The average American inheritance is expected to be \$177,000, according to an

HSBC Holdings, a banking company. In Canada, the average is just under \$100,000.

"Whether or not that sounds like a lot of money to you, handled properly it can have a tremendous impact on your life," Abbott says.

He and Bennett share four tips for planning for an inheritance:

• **If you inherit non-cash assets, ask questions before you liquefy.**

People inherit all sorts of assets: real estate, stocks and bonds, IRAs, gold, jewelry, etc. Different types of assets have different tax burdens attached. In order to preserve as much of your inheritance as possible, you need to learn the best way to minimize the tax burden for each asset.

"Once you've liquefied the asset — once you've turned it into cash — it's too late," Abbott says. "Life insurance is an exception. You won't be taxed on that. A ROTH IRA that's more than 5 years old will also be an exception if the amount is exempt under the current federal estate tax rules" (\$5.3 million for 2014.)

• **If you inherit a tax-deferred retirement plan, consider rolling it into an inherited IRA.**

"An IRA or 401(k), for instance, is a tax-deferred asset — the person who left it to you did not pay taxes on it. So if you take it in a lump sum, which some plans require, everything you withdraw will be consid-

ered taxable income for you," Bennett says.

Alternatives include rolling the money into an inherited IRA — one that retains the deceased's name along with language that clearly indicates it's inherited. Don't mix it with your own IRA. Then you can take small distributions over the course of years, and the money will continue to grow.

• **The best planning starts with a conversation with your loved ones now.**

One of the biggest mistakes people make is not discussing inheritance matters while everyone is still alive and well. It allows the heirs to know their loved ones' wishes and to make plans — without emotion — for what they may do with the assets.

"Some adult children won't initiate the conversation because they're afraid of appearing greedy or eager for their parents to die," Abbott says. "Sometimes, the parents want to discuss matters but their children aren't comfortable addressing mom and dad's mortality. Even spouses avoid talking about it. It's the most easily avoidable mistake families make."

If loved ones express a desire to talk about "what you'll get when I'm gone," allow them to. It will give them peace of mind, Bennett says.

If you want to initiate the conversation, look for opportunities, such as when a family you know or a family in the news is dealing with estate issues.

Receiving an inheritance can be a life-changing experience, Bennett and Abbott say. It also represents your loved one's financial legacy.

"Managing it well and preserving it is an important thing you can do in memory of that person you lost," they say.

About Michael Abbott and Christopher Bennett

Michael Abbott has two decades of experience assisting retirees with their 401(k)s and pension plans. He is co-founder of The Abbott Bennett Group, LLC, an independent financial services firm, where he serves as CFO. He is a lifetime member of MDRT (Million Dollar Round Table), an association composed of the world's best financial services professionals, and a member of NAIFA (National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors). He holds a Master of Estate Preservation designation.

Christopher Bennett is a 16-year financial professional who has served as CEO of The Abbott Bennett Group, LLC, since 2003. He holds a Certified in Long-Term Care designation, a Master of Estate Preservation certification, and is a lifetime member of Million Dollar Round Table. Chris is also a member of multiple chambers of commerce, and participates in the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors. He has hosted and conducted hundreds of seminars and workshops.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

“American Sniper?”

American Sniper
Grade: C+
Rated R, pervasive harsh
profanity, some disturbing
war violence
2 hrs., 12 min

There are a few moments in *American Sniper* when it looks like the movie is going to start examining the psychological impact of being the deadliest military sniper in U.S. history. So much killing, even justified killing, the kind that saves your fellow soldiers — that must weigh on a person, right?

We've followed Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper), a swaggeringly patriotic Texas meathead, as he's distinguished himself among Navy SEALs as the best marksman in Iraq, both in quantity and quality, saving untold American lives one headshot at a time. His cohorts call him “The Legend,” which must produce conflicting emotions. We know he leaves behind a wife, Taya (Sienna Miller), and a growing family every time he re-ups for another tour. We can't help but wonder what effect all of this has on him.

And then, curiously, every time it seems like we're moving into that portion of Kyle's story, the movie flees introspection and gets back to the important work of showing how good Kyle is at his job. Back in the States, he reacts with alarm to a sound that reminds him of gunfire — but nope, no, he's fine. Never mind. A fellow veteran mentions how messed up some guys are when they come back; Kyle hems and haws for a second, then ends the conversation. Nothing to worry about. He misreads a harmless situation as dangerous, overreacts, chats with a doctor at the V.A. hospital for a minute, and then he's good to go. Taya delivers a predictable line — “Even when you're here, you're not here!” — and then, later on, says something about how proud she is of how



ROTTENTOMATOES

From director Clint Eastwood comes “*American Sniper*,” starring Bradley Cooper as Chris Kyle, the most lethal sniper in U.S. military history. But there was much more to this true American hero than his skill with a rifle. U.S. Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle is sent to Iraq with only one mission: to protect his brothers-in-arms. His pinpoint accuracy saves countless lives on the battlefield and, as stories of his courageous exploits spread, he earns the nickname “Legend.” However, his reputation is also growing behind enemy lines, putting a price on his head and making him a prime target of insurgents. Despite the danger, as well as the toll on his family at home, Chris serves through four harrowing tours of duty in Iraq, becoming emblematic of the SEAL creed to “leave no man behind.” But upon returning home, Chris finds that it is the war he can't leave behind. (C) Warner Bros

far he's come. Wait, when did THAT happen?

American Sniper, based on Kyle's book and directed with dogged perfunctoriness by Clint Eastwood, is basically *The Hurt Locker* with all the nuance and self-examination removed. What's left — a series of high-tension war anecdotes — is often riveting, and well edited (by Eastwood regulars Joel Cox and Gary Roach) for maximum sweaty-palms effect. Cooper's performance, more intense than we've seen him do before, is solid and as thoughtful as the surface-level screenplay allows.

For a while, that's good enough. Perhaps to hide the fact that there's no real through line, the script (by Jason Hall) hopscotches through time, showing Kyle's upbringing (his dad:

“You're blessed with the gift of aggression”), his love of hunting, his eagerness to serve his country after 9/11. He pals around with a series of soldiers, engaging in camaraderie, talking about their fiancées moments before being shot, that sort of thing.

But in the back of our minds, we know there's got to be more to Chris Kyle — more to the movie — than this. I said before that we can't help but wonder how his experiences are affecting him. Part of the reason we wonder is that we can't imagine where else the movie is going to go if not there. No other threads have been introduced, no subplots that could potentially lead the story in an unexpected direction.

And so when the movie ends without Kyle really struggling, or even examining himself be-

yond a few cursory glances ... well, why did we watch it, then? What message are we supposed to get out of it? That being a sniper is dangerous, intense, and exciting, but doesn't really have any significant downsides as long as you're great at it? Never mind whether this superficiality makes the movie reckless, it makes the movie pointless.

This blithe disinterest in going beneath the surface extends throughout the film. The soldiers constantly refer to Iraqis as “savages” while their own actions are unquestioned — and the film never presents a counterpoint to either point of view, to suggest that maybe some Iraqis are OK, or that there might be shades of gray in the war. Eastwood's view is adamantly black-and-white. And that makes for dull drama.

USDA Provides Greater Protection for Fruit, Vegetable and Other Specialty Crop Growers

By PRESS OFFICER
USDA

WASHINGTON, — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that greater protection is now available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for crops that traditionally have been ineligible for federal crop insurance. The new options, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provide greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops such as vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, and energy crops.

“These new protections will help ensure that farm families growing crops for food, fiber or livestock consumption will be better able to withstand losses due to natural disasters,” said Vilsack. “For years, commodity crop farmers have had the ability to purchase insurance to keep their crops protected, and it only makes sense that fruit and vegetable, and other specialty crop growers, should be able to purchase similar levels of protection. Ensuring these farmers can adequately protect themselves

from factors beyond their control is also critical for consumers who enjoy these products and for communities whose economies depend on them.”

Previously, the program offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price.

The expanded protection will be especially helpful to beginning and traditionally underserved producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage. More crops are now eligible for the program, including expanded aquaculture production practices, and sweet and biomass sorghum. For the first time, a range of crops used to produce bioenergy will be eligible as well.

“If America is to remain food secure and continue exporting food to the world, we need to do everything we can to help new farmers get started and succeed in agriculture,” Vilsack said.

“This program will help new and socially disadvantaged farmers affordably manage risk, making farming a much more attractive business proposition.”

To help producers learn more about the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and how it can help them, USDA, in partnership with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois, created an online resource. The Web tool, available at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap, allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage. It also gives them an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

If the application deadline for an eligible crop has already passed, producers will have until Jan. 14, 2015, to choose expanded coverage through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. To learn more, visit the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at www.fsa.usda.gov/nap or contact your local FSA office at offices.usda.gov. The Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers the program, also

wants to hear from producers and other interested stakeholders who may have suggestions or recommendations on the program. Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 13, 2015 and can be submitted through www.regulations.gov.

These new provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program were made possible through the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit www.usda.gov/farmbill.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Why All Opponents of Gentrification and Police Militarization Should Oppose the DC 2024 Olympic Bid

When Muriel Bowser was sworn in last Friday as the new mayor of Washington, DC, she made clear in her inaugural address outlining her vision for the future of the city that a major goal of hers was “winning the Olympics for Washington, DC, in 2024.” This reveals a set of priorities that are deeply disturbing.

The Olympics, time and again according to a slew of academic research, have revealed themselves to be defined by debt, displacement, and the militarization of public space alongside attendant spikes in police brutality.

In the Washington, DC area, debt, displacement, the militarization of public space and police brutality are otherwise known as “a Wednesday.” But with the Olympics these processes are always accelerated and intensified, making this a proposal from Mayor Bowser that'll careen the city toward a precarious future for its most vulnerable residents. The Olympic Games inevitably induce a state of exception where the normal rules of politics do not apply.

For a city already experiencing gentrification at gunpoint, with a conspicuously parked police van for every new bistro in town, the prospect of hosting the Olympics should be terrifying. As Daniel del Pielago who is an organizer with a leading, deeply rooted community organization called Empower DC said to us, “We know that hosting the Olympics is yet another tool to push out Black and low-income residents from DC. We continue to see our so called leaders prioritizing events and stadiums over the lives of the city's most vulnerable residents.”

Washington, DC sits on the United States Olympic Committee's shortlist of candidates to host the 2024 Summer Games, along with Boston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Last month the cities' bid committees convened in Redwood City, California where they pitched their shiniest presentations to the USOC. DC's five-person contingent included high-powered banker Russ Ramsey and billionaire Wizards and Capitals owner Ted Leonsis—as well as Mayor-Elect Bowser, Olympic gold-medal-winning swimmer Katie Ledecky, and former NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue.

The USOC, which is only allowed to put one city forward to the International Olympic Committee, will make its decision perhaps as early as this week. The IOC, in turn, will pick the host city for the 2024 Summer Games in 2017, giving the “winner” seven years to prepare. Along with Los Angeles, Washington, DC has emerged as a leading contender. Meanwhile in Boston and San Francisco, activists have spoken loudly and clearly that the USOC can take their Games and shove them. Activist action absolutely matters as the IOC always factors in local support when selecting the Olympic host city.

DC's neoliberal privatization project, with lower-income black and brown residents pushed to impoverished suburban enclaves, has met with community resistance by organizations like Empower DC, One DC, and others. The Olympics would provide a pretext to roll over both community organizers and a new generation of activists speaking out against connected issues of displacement and police brutality, like a tank. Based upon what we've seen during the Brazilian World Cup and Olympic preparation in Rio, not to mention Ferguson, it might even be with an actual tank.

While Olympic boosters are claiming the Games will cost between \$4 and \$5 billion, this is about as realistic as someone running a two-minute mile. Every single Olympics since 1960 has gone over-budget, and at a whopping average rate of 179%—and that number doesn't even factor in the greatest heist of them all, the \$51 billion Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014.

So who is the DC2024 Games committee? The group's chair is multi-millionaire investment banker Russ Ramsey with Wizards and Capitals billionaire owner Ted Leonsis acting as Vice Chair. They've already raised \$5 million to push their bid. Ramsey and Leonsis are joined by a quirky hodgepodge of venture capitalists and local powerbrokers, including celebrity chef José Andrés, Washington Mystics President Sheila Johnson, and former DC Mayor, the person who ushered in the city's age of gentrification, the famously bowtied Anthony Williams.

Williams recently wrote in the Washington Post that hosting the Games would give DC an “economic lift.” Contradicting a strong and growing body of economic research that finds the exact opposite, he argued, “Bringing the Olympic and Paralympic Games to Washington—literally hosting the world would boost the whole region but particularly some of the places in our city that need it the most.” Meanwhile, as Holy Cross economics professor Robert Baumann has asserted about mega-events like the Olympics, “There is no economic rationale to host one of these things.”

Yet this hasn't stopped politicians from across the ideological spectrum from supporting DC's five-ring escapade. The bipartisan bedfellows pushing for this project are on the face, bizarre. Linking arms, we have new DC Mayor Bowser, Tea Party darling Jason Chaffetz, the incoming

See Sports, Page A7

Calendar of Events

February 12 — February 18, 2015

Exhibit: Black Artists of DC

Date and Time: Exhibit is ongoing until March 13, 2015
Description: Established in 1999, Black Artists of DC is comprised of artists at all stages of development. The work spans all media, subject matter, and style. Membership is inclusive of age, gender and ethnicity. The links between the artists is their African descent, love of art, a commitment to people, and an intuitive understanding that there can be a profoundly nurturing bond between artists of African descent through the Diaspora.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Rd, Cheverly 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Barnstorming Bess

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 3 pm & 7 pm
Description: Bessie Coleman broke down barriers in 1921 as the first African-American woman to earn a pilot's license. Dressed in an authentic bomber's jacket, boots and scarf, Dr. Daisy Century as Bessie Coleman will provide an exciting portrayal of a beautiful, determined woman, who knew what she wanted and made it happen.
Cost: \$7/person
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: College Park Aviation Museum
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: Friday the 13th

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Teens will have a frightful night of fun with scary movies at the Center and popcorn, of course.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17
Location: Bladensburg Community Center
4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-277-2124; TTY 301-445-4512

Black History Program: Lessons from Liberia

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 10 am-12 noon
Description: Kids come to learn "Lessons from Liberia"! The morning will feature presentations from other community centers, and fascinating facts about the culture and food of Liberia.
Cost: Free
Ages: 3-12
Location: Harmony Hall Regional Center
10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-203-6040; TTY 301-203-6030

Chocolate Lovers Tea

Date and Time: Saturday, February 14, 2014 1:30 pm
Description: At this tea, you'll enjoy a prix fixe menu of fine finger sandwiches, scrumptious cakes and pastries, buttery scones, and your choice of two quality loose leaf teas. The assorted pastries will all be served on china and tiered stands. We'll have plenty of chocolate — taste it in all forms and learn the history. Price includes gratuity and self-guided tour of the mansion. Reservations and advance payment required.
Cost: \$29/person; \$25/members of Friends of Montpelier
Ages: 18 & up
Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site
9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2455
montpeliermansion@pgparks.com

Xtreme Teens: Valentine's Day Sock Hop

Date and Time: Saturday February 14, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Celebrate Valentine's Day with your Xtreme Teens family. Bring a friend, dance to the music and participate in special games and arts and crafts.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17
Location: Columbia Park Community Center
1901 Kent Village Drive, Landover 20785
Contact: 301-341-3749; TTY 301-445-4512

Girl Scout Day

Date and Time: Sunday, February 15, 2015 11 am-2 pm
Description: Girl Scouts are invited to explore women's roles in the history of aviation and to learn about the science of flight through a variety of activities. Each activity that they complete will count towards badge and journey requirements. Please call the museum in advance to register.
Cost: \$4 per person
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: College Park Aviation Museum
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park 20740
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

Carnival Zumba Party

Date & Time: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 7-8:30 pm
Description: Are you ready for a carnival zumba party? Come dressed in bright carnival attire and get ready to dance with Stacey to the Caribbean rhythms. Dress your best, because we'll award a prize for best costume.
Cost: Resident: \$7; Non-Resident: \$9
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Southern Technical/Recreation Complex
7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-203-6030

The Great Performers of the Chitlin' Circuit

Date & Time: Thursday, February 19, 2015 6:30-8:30 pm
Description: When Jim Crow laws were prevalent in the United States, the negro race did not have equal access to public, "White Only" places. The Chitlin' Circuit emerged as a connected string of music venues, diner, juke joints and theaters that catered primarily to African American audiences. Tonight, we'll revel in the era with "An Evening with Pam Ward." Light refreshments will be served.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Prince George's Ballroom
2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover 20785
Contact: 301-341-7439; TTY 301-446-6802

EARTH TALK ... What Fish Can We Eat

Dear EarthTalk:

What are some basic guidelines about seafood consumption, especially for women and in light of all the pollution threats to our oceans and waterways?

— Betsy Draper,
Boston, MA

Between mercury poisoning, overfishing and the environmental impacts of fish farms or "aquaculture," some might expect to see a "Proceed with Caution" sign above seafood counters soon. Others contend that fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet, providing high-quality protein and omega-3 fatty acids. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends eating up to 12 ounces of fish and shellfish per week, but only if they are "lower in mercury."

Mercury can be released into the air through industrial pollution and can accumulate in streams and oceans. The FDA warns that if you regularly eat types of fish that are high in mercury, it can accumulate in your blood stream. They add that mercury is removed from the body naturally, but it may take over a year for levels to drop significantly. For this reason, women trying to become pregnant should avoid eating high-in-mercury fish like shark,

swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish, and gravitate toward low-in-mercury shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock and catfish. According to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's "Super Green List," fish that are low in mercury and also good sources of especially healthy "long-chain" omega-3 fatty acids include Atlantic mackerel from Canada and the U.S., freshwater Coho salmon from the U.S., wild-caught Pacific sardines and Alaskan wild-caught salmon (fresh or canned).

Of course, it's possible to obtain long-chain omega-3s without eating fish. Omega-3s supplement is derived from a strain of algae that naturally produces high amounts of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), the healthiest omega-3s. Although most people think fish are the original source of DHA and EPA, these omega-3s actually come from the algae lower in the food chain.

"When salmon farming began in North America, farmers discovered that without fish oil in their diet, farmed salmon did not contain salmon oil in their tissues," says Udo Erasmus, Ph.D., author of *Fats that Heal, Fats that Kill*. "Fish get their 'fish oil' from the foods they eat. When we trace these supplement oils back to their origin, we find that the oils we call 'fish oils' are actually made by plants at



CREDIT: RODDY SHEER

Wild salmon, high in "long chain" omega-3s, is one of the healthiest foods we can eat.

the bottom of the food chain. One-celled red-brown algae makes fish oils. Fish oils are actually plant-based products."

Algae and other plant-based omega fatty acids also will not deplete the ocean's supply of fish. Industrial overfishing practices have wiped out certain types of fish before they've had a chance to repopulate, and unintentionally killed other marine species besides fish—known as "bycatch"—in their large nets. Upwards of one million sea turtles, for example, were estimated to have been killed as bycatch from 1990-2008, according to a report published in *Conservation Letters* in 2010. The transition to aquaculture, where fish are raised in confined quarters (like the "factory farming" of pigs,

cows and chickens) has its own environmental burdens. According to the Mangrove Action Project, an estimated three million hectares of important coastal wetlands, including mangroves, have already been lost in order to make room for artificial shrimp ponds.

CONTACTS: FDA, www.fda.gov; Seafood Watch, www.seafoodwatch.org; Omega, www.omega.com.

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Sports from A6

chair of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which oversees DC affairs, as well as Newt Gingrich, Howard Dean, and Bob Dole. They appear in a short, slickly produced video along with liberal demigods John Lewis and Eleanor Holmes-Norton. The DC2024 committee not only puts the faces of two civil rights icons at the center of their PR push, but it also slakes people's thirst to see Republicans and Democrats working together on anything. This messaging is a product of the combined efforts of President Obama's re-election guru Jim Messina and Mitt Romney's campaign manager Matt Rhoades who have combined forces—and funds—to push the bid.

It's certainly understandable why people would want to see politicians working together on anything in this town. No doubt some of these folks see the Olympics as a way to show off the city to a global audience. But we should not be led astray by this idiosyncratic band of believers. The price to everyday people living, breathing, and being pushed out of the city would be horrific. Bowser's remarks in making their pitch to the United States Olympic Committee should be particularly chilling. She said, "We're used to putting on national security events; we can move the people; we have a lot of existing facilities and infrastructure. We put on a good case for D.C. being the American city." In other words, we know how to carry out a crackdown.

We can thank Ted Leonsis for laying bare the logic that drives Games boosters. He said in 2011 that "Economic Success has somehow become the new boogie man...This is counter to the American Dream

and is really turning off so many people that love American and basically carry our country on their back by paying taxes and by employing people and creating GDP." This gets the Olympics argument perfectly. John Carlos, the 1968 Olympian once said to us that "They only hold the Olympics every four years because it takes four years to count the money." In other words, the Olympics will surely bring in money, but for whom? In Leonsis' mind, it's money for him and there is nothing wrong with that because he thinks it's his class of people that are "carrying the country, employing people and creating GDP." In other words, what's good for Ted Leonsis is what's good for Washington, DC...even though he lives in an eight-million dollar home on the Potomac River in Maryland.

Leonsis has blended trickle-down economics with dime-store bloviating. Instead of making the positive case for the Games he has instead chosen to bluster: "This is about bringing the world to Washington and bringing Washington to the world. The idea of fostering unity could leave, for the whole of mankind, the greatest Olympics legacy ever. Only Washington could do this."

As is always the case when the Olympics come to town, the foul stench of land grabbing pervades this project. A George Washington University professor recently stated about the area along the Anacostia River: "It's very similar to the London setup...It's a plot of land that's been kind of wasteland, and people said, 'We want to develop that because it's on the water.' Just like Sydney, where they developed that waterfront land, it's there for the taking."

This brazen land snatching is also symbolized by the proposed site of the Olympic Vil-

lage, the place where the athletes stay during the Games. DC2024 has reportedly suggested building the Village in Hill East, an area to the south of RFK Stadium that is the current location of the DC General homeless shelter. The Washington Post wrote, "Housing built there for athletes could then help alleviate the city's affordable housing shortage." Yet similar promises that the Olympic Village would magically turn into high quality, low-income housing has been made in seemingly every Olympics in history and it never happens. One can practically imagine the officials of ancient Greece swearing that the Temple of Zeus would become quality multi-family dwellings after the last race. For the London 2012 Olympics, the Olympic Village was sold at a taxpayer loss to Qatar's ruling Al Thani family's realty company. "Affordable" homes in Olympic Park rent for \$2,000 to \$2,700 per month. And let's not lose sight of the fact that DC2024 are saying nonchalantly that a homeless shelter will be destroyed for the Olympics.

Longtime DC movement leader Reverend Graylan Hagler got it exactly right when he told us, "The obsession that develops to accommodate the Games in local communities has always had a dramatic effect upon the poor. The poor are always displaced, and the homeless are removed from the city where the Olympics occur because the powers to be want to sanitize the venue so that those venues become artificial and deceptive places to enjoy the Games." He pointed to Atlanta, the last US city to host the Summer Games back in 1996, where homeless people we're scooped up and booted from the city in order "to create a superficial and untruthful story of Atlanta's pros-

perity." Reverend Hagler added, "We need jobs and affordable housing for poor and working class people in Washington DC, better schools and political leaders who advocate for and protect poor and working class people."

Dominic Moulden, resource organizer at ONE DC, a grassroots community-building group, told us he was approached to sign on in support of the DC2024 Games, but emphatically declined. Moulden, who has organized in DC for nearly three decades, asked, "Why would any organization promoting racial and economic equity in DC support the Olympics which clearly creates lasting inequity and maintains the structures of social dislocation?" He vowed, "ONE DC will organize, protest, and raise our resident-led voices against the displacement and policing of long time DC residents and all residents if there are plans for the Olympics in DC."

In November 2014, the Washington Post reported that DC2024 honchos "took members of the U.S. Olympic Committee on helicopter rides over the Mall and the Anacostia River to show off the city." Nothing could be more appropriate in symbolizing this bid. From a helicopter, it's a grand idea. From the street, it's a cash grab. It's using sports, civic pride, and people's thirst to see something — anything — bipartisan come out of this town, into a smash-and-grab operation that will remake the city for the benefit of the people Leonsis believes "carry the country on their back." This orgy of corporate welfare they propose reveals that it's actually Leonsis, Ramsey, and their ilk who are being carried. If the Olympics come to DC, it will be schools, social services for the poor, and anyone affected by police violence who will suffer under that weight.

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