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Prince George's County, Maryland Fleet Expands Right-Sizing Initiatives

By PRESS OFFICER
Agile Fleet Control

LARGO, MD – The Prince George's County Fleet Management Division announced new plans to expand its right-sizing initiative by adding a second motor pool site and introducing plug-in hybrids. The new site, located in Largo, MD, will be launched early this year. The announcement was made today by Agile Access Control, Inc. (Agile), creator of FleetCommander fleet and motor pool software in use at the county.

"We are very proud of the more sustainable, effective and efficient

management that our Fleet Management division has achieved with the assistance of FleetCommander," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "In Prince George's County, we strive to not follow best practices but create them. I am very proud of the national recognition of our Fleet Management division and that Prince George's County is leading the nation in innovation."

According to County Fleet Manager Richard ("Rick") Hilmer, the success with automat-

See FLEET Page A3

Hogan Says Western Maryland Will be Priority

By BRIAN MARRON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS -- Gov. Larry Hogan on Friday morning told a coalition from Allegany and Garrett counties that he will put the needs of Western Maryland at the top of his priority list, something he touted as a change from the previous administration.

"People in Western Maryland really felt a huge disconnect between where you live and what happens in Annapolis," Hogan said during a breakfast meeting for the advocacy group Positive Attitudes Change Everything, also

known as PACE in Annapolis. "There was a feeling that there was a war on rural Maryland and I want you to know that at 12 o'clock on Wednesday, that war has come to an end."

PACE is a coalition designed to interact with state government officials about issues concerning Allegany and Garrett counties. The group's main agenda includes transportation and infrastructure, economic development, tourism, education and natural resources. PACE relies on sponsorships and donations

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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY KATELYN NEWMAN

Surrounded by legislative, environmental and health-care professionals, Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo, D-Montgomery, announced a bill mandating an 8-year moratorium on hydraulic fracturing in Western Maryland. Feb. 5, 2015.

Bill Would Mandate 8-Year Moratorium on Fracking, Citing Public Health Concerns

By KATELYN NEWMAN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS--Environmentally stringent and costly drilling regulations are not enough to protect the public's health from hydraulic fracturing's pollutants, according to a coalition of legislators, environmental groups and health professionals who rallied

Thursday in support of a moratorium bill.

Delegate David Fraser-Hidalgo, D-Montgomery, is sponsoring the Protect Our Health and Communities Bill that would delay hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in Western Maryland for the next eight years in order to provide more time to investigate health and environmental ramifications.

At the end of his term, former Gov. Martin O'Malley established costly permit regulations to drill for natural gas in Maryland that reflected a December analysis by the state's environment and natural resources departments, said David Venko, chair of a commission charged with studying safe drilling in the state.

Proponents of the bill said the pending regulations, which would allow for fracturing in the state of Maryland with multiple permits and associated fees, do not go far enough to ensure protection of public health and the environment.

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Eric Franklin, CEO of ERIMAX Inc., Partners with the SBDC to Launch the Eric Franklin Entrepreneurial Accelerator

By PRESS OFFICER
University of Maryland

Upper Marlboro, MD – Eric Franklin, CEO of ERIMAX, Inc., entrepreneur, author, and angel investor has partnered with the Maryland Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the University of Maryland, to launch a platform for entrepreneurial development and training called the Franklin Entrepreneurial Accelerator.

The Eric Franklin Entrepreneurial Accelerator (EFEA) will initially focus on business growth and strategic planning. It is a curriculum for C-level executives and entrepreneurs who want to fast-track their companies' growth, sharpen their critical-thinking skills to successfully compete, and to take their businesses to the next level. Participants will choose their highest priorities and with the help of SBDC facilitators, will develop their own strategic plan.

"Over the years the Maryland Small Business Development Center (SBDC) has identified implementation and critical-thinking as the key areas where businesses fall short," said Ellen Flowers-Fields, SBDC Southern Region Director. "The Eric Franklin Entrepreneurial Accelerator was founded to effectively address those factors and will extend our current SBDC entrepreneur programs as complete entrepreneur life-cycle platforms where growing businesses in Southern Maryland can thrive economically, for enduring success," Flowers-Fields added.

"The SBDC has demonstrated expertise in assisting many businesses over the years to start successful companies. For these businesses to thrive, private industry and government must encourage adaptation and growth. The accelerator will measure its success by the growth and development of each company



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Eric Franklin.

that utilized its programs," said Eric Franklin.

"I am proud to be in the forefront of a new private industry initiative in Maryland that is committed to help growing businesses prosper. With the success of EFEA, we will connect our businesses in Southern Maryland to other entrepreneurial ecosystems and resources across the state and nation. I welcome and in-

vested in developing and maintaining a strong business base in the community to invest in our communities by helping us support emerging businesses," stated Franklin.

The pilot entrepreneur program will launch January of

See ERIMAX Page A5

Prince George's County Receives Broad Support from its Community Partners

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

LANDOVER, Maryland – Over 200 volunteers and staff participated in Prince George's County's annual Point-In-Time (PIT) count of homeless individuals and families that was conducted on Wednesday, January 28, 2015, from 6:00 a.m. until midnight. This event was part of a nationwide effort to identify those experiencing homelessness in our communities.

Armed with advanced technology, along with experienced team leaders, volunteers and staff canvassed homeless encampments, parks, libraries, public transit areas, soup kitchens, shopping centers, eateries and other places known to be frequented by unsheltered homeless people during the cold winter months. This year's count has particular significance because of an expanded and strategic data collection effort targeting identification of veterans and unaccompanied youth, both of which are

historically underreported in these types of enumerations. The PIT is just one of many ways the County collects critical data about its most vulnerable residents and helps provide the narrative needed to truly understand and address the root causes of homelessness.

"The results of the PIT count will help to provide a snapshot of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless in the County and allow our Continuum of Care (CoC) providers to continue to plan and deliver a more effective system of homeless assistance programs and services," said Gloria Brown, Director of the Prince George's County Department of Social Services, which serves as the lead administering agency for the CoC. Additionally, the PIT count provides an important opportunity to create broader partnerships and community awareness about homelessness, not only in Prince

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INSIDE

HHS Awards \$2,500,000 to Improve Health Care Quality, Accessibility and Affordability in Maryland

Maryland will receive up to \$2,500,000 to design health care payment and service delivery models that will improve health care quality and lower costs, Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia M. Burwell announced.
Community, Page A3

A Call to End Child Poverty Now

It is a national moral disgrace that there are 14.7 million poor children and 6.5 million extremely poor children in the United States of America – the world's largest economy. It is also unnecessary, costly and the greatest threat to our future national, economic and military security.
Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Background for Covering 2015 Tax Season

In preparation for the 2015 tax filing season, which officially began last month, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released today a fact sheet detailing information Maryland tax filers need to know as they prepare to file their federal returns.
Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "Blackhat"

Unfortunately, Blackhat proves to be worthier of January's taint instead of Mann's good name. Almost perversely insistent on avoiding anything resembling excitement, and despite its globetrotting locations, this turgid dud lingers for more than two hours before finally, mercifully, arriving at its foregone conclusion.
Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

How are scientists using DNA to conserve wildlife?

— Jake Summerlin,
Newark, NJ

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Beltway overpass sheds cement on Suitland Road

As I passed under the Beltway on Suitland Road this morning (Feb. 12), I noticed a crew working on the underside of the overpass. I found the reason in a story in this morning's Washington Post.

On Tuesday, Feb. 10, a driver reported that pieces of cement fell on her car as she drove Suitland Road under the bridge about 5 p.m.

A spokesman with the State Highway Administration said they were checking the bridge for anything that that looks loose and getting rid of it. Also they are spraying part of the bridge with an epoxy so that "when there are vibrations there won't be falling concrete."

I do know, in cold weather I often notice things that look like stalactites hanging down over Suitland Road. I guess they are actually made of concrete. I hope they don't come down on my car.

County residents 90 years old or better?

The County Department of Parks & Recreation is searching for County residents age 90 and older, for a spring Event. Special recognition will be given centenarians (age 100 and older).

If you know someone who resides in the county and was 90 or better as of January 1, 2015, share the information. Your help will be very much appreciated! Forward the information no later than Feb. 28 by calling a staff member at 301-206-3350 (TTY 301-446-3402).

Changing landscape

Thomas Claggett Elementary in District Heights is slated to be closed at the end of the school year due to under-enrollment and poor performance. Students will be reassigned to District Heights Elementary or John Bayne Elementary.

Local Motors, a Phoenix-based company that makes and sells products created by

3-D printers, plans to open a laboratory, micro-factory, showroom and sales room at National Harbor.

Did you know that Prince George's County has a winery? It is Romano Vineyard in Brandywine and it opened in 2007. It's closed Sunday through Friday, but open on Saturday from noon to 5 p.m. For more information, go online at <http://www.Romanowinery.com/>.

Neighbors

Condolences to Ange Meoli on the death of his cousin, Charles Meole (different spelling) who died in Baton Rouge, La. He would have turned 100 on March 9.

La Reine High School alumnae, of all years, are invited to a very special Queen of Hearts Reunion on March 1. It'll include a tour of the original La Reine High School (now, Drew-Freeman Middle School) in Suitland, followed by Mass and a reception at McNamara. Some of their teachers, including Bernardine Sisters, will be there.

Joint Base Andrews has been named one of two finalists for the 2015 Commander in Chief's annual Installation Excellence Award. It is competing with Royal Air Force Lakenheath, United Kingdom, for bagging rights as the best installation in the Air Force.

Morningside memories

February 1960 (55 years ago): The Ladies Auxiliary enjoyed two Morning Coffees. One was at the home of Henrietta Zdobysz with Alma Broderick and Audrey Holmes as co-hosts. Another Coffee was at the home of Jeanne West with Jean Glaubitz and Hazel Loughmiller co-hosting. Plans were also being made for a March Pot Luck and an April Family-Style Dinner.

May they rest in peace

Bernard "Bernie" Miller, 91, of Pickett Drive, a Safetyway retiree, died Jan. 3. Back in the 1940s when Bernie

came home from serving in the Army, his brother Billy told him, "I've got a girl for you!" The girl was Margie Costenbader, sister of Billy's wife Waverly. Bernie married Margie on Dec. 3, 1946—which means the Miller brothers married the Costenbader sisters. Bernie and Margie lived in Washington until 1963 when they moved to Pickett Drive, two doors down Waverly (Billy had died by then, in a workplace accident). Margie, Bernie's wife of 59 years, died Aug. 16, 2005. Bernie stayed on in Morningside until his death. His daughter Annielaura Doucette and granddaughter Arlene survive him.

Helene B. "Mimi" Wiseman, 96, a cosmetology teacher at Crossland from 1966 to 1979, died Jan 13 at a rehab hospital in Aldie, Va. She was born in Pennsylvania and moved to Washington in 1936 where she first worked as an emergency room nurse at the old Casualty Hospital and as a statistical researcher for the Navy Department. She moved to Florida after retiring.

Harry "Tommy" Clark, 56, of Skyline, died Dec. 21. He was born in Cheverly and graduated from Crossland. He worked as a Special Police Officer for Security Assurance management for nearly 20 years. He was a member and leader of Boy Scout Troop #403 and the Fraternal order of Police, DC Lodge #1. Survivors include Linda Barnes-Clark, six children, three sisters and three brothers and 12 grandchildren.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Melissa Harnes and Paul Bornman, Feb. 20; Ray Short, Feb. 21; Father Bernard Ihrie, Feb. 23; Larry Miller, Kevin Gray and Sibyl Deily, Feb. 25.

Happy anniversary to Clifford and Nancy Lantz, Feb. 26.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

Scholarships are available for high school seniors. Southern Maryland Cooperative is offering \$1500 college scholarships to four high school seniors who are graduating in 2015. To be eligible for SMECO Scholarships students must live with parents or guardians who are SMECO customers. To obtain an application and more information visit www.smeco.coop or see your school career counselor.

GO RED

Women GO RED during the month of February. Love your heart and wear red in support of American Heart Association

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to Winthrop Chew, Francis Deville, Barbara Hall, Elizabeth Hamilton, Ruth Turner, Joyce Sampson, Selena Jackson, Erin McCoy Williams, Cecelia Patterson and Jerrod Cantee who are celebrating their birthdays during the month of February.

ROLLER SKATING

Baden Community Center will be offering roller skating on March 25, April 29 and

May 20 with Mrs. Bowles. Space is limited to 30 children in grades Kindergarten-6th. The cost is \$5.00 per child/per date (includes skates and snack). Permission is required to stay after school. Call 301-888-1500 or TTY 301-203-6030 for additional information. The Center is located at 13601 Baden-Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland.

BOOK DISCUSSION

Come and join us at Surratt's Clinton Library Wednesday, February 25, 2015 at 7:30 PM. The book that will be discussed is "My Beloved World by Sonia Sotomayor" the first Hispanic on the US Supreme Court. The book tells the story of her life before becoming a judge.

HEALTH CARE STRATEGIC PLAN

Saturday, March 7, 2015 from 9:00 AM-1:00 PM residents are invited to come out and hear about the integrated health care system, which will provide access to high-quality healthcare services. You will receive updated information on the new Regional (Medical Center). Reg-

istration will be held 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM. The program will start at 10:00 AM. Location is Prince George's Community College Student Center, 301 Largo Road, Largo, Maryland.

FLY UNDER MY WINGS

Come travel with Fly under My Wings to Niagara Fall, Canada August 7-11, 2015 includes: Harriet Tubman 2Days Underground Railroad Tour and Maid of the Mist. You must have a Passport to travel. Contact Phyllis Slater for more information at 301-653-7345.

LINE DANCE SOCIAL NIGHTS

Come and join us for line dance social nights February 20, Friday, March 6, and Friday, March 20, 2015 from 7:00 PM-9:00 PM. The cost is \$2.00. Address is St. Philips Church Hall, 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland. Points of contact are Ruby E. Hinnant (301) 627-1235 (Cell) 301-943-2816, Shirley A. Cleaves (301) 888-1475 (Cell) 302-690-4260 and Michele K. Chase (301) 888-2510 Cell (240-882-3369).

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Reintroduces The Federal Employee Pension Fairness Act



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

Washington, DC – Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) reintroduced The Federal Employee Pension Fairness Act to repeal the unnecessary and increased contributions of federal employees to their own pensions.

Under current law, recently hired federal employees are forced by the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 to raise their contribution amount to their own pensions from 0.8% to 4.4%. This results in a significant decrease in their take-home pay, making it more difficult to afford daily necessities. In recent years, lawmakers have balanced the budget on the backs of federal workers, who have contributed \$159 billion towards deficit reduction over ten years. This is in spite of the fact that the main pension fund, the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (CSRDF), is fully funded.

"Federal employees are the backbone of our federal government and agencies. Whether protecting our borders, conducting life-saving medical research, or ensuring our food and medicine is safe to consume, public servants perform duties vital to the health, safety, and economic well-being of the American people. Yet after all their sacrifices, during the past four years federal employees, including nearly 52,000 in my congressional district, endured unpaid furloughs, saw the elimination of cost-of-living increases, and were forced to increase their own contributions to their pensions by over 500%.

"Enough is enough. It is our duty to ensure the fair treatment of the federal employees who have served our nation so well, especially during times of economic strain. We must stop saddling our federal workers with such disproportionate burden, and start asking wealthy corporations to pay their fair share. I look forward to the opportunity to work with my colleagues in Congress to pass this bill that would bring needed relief to those who work tirelessly to keep us safe and our government running."

Congresswoman Edwards' legislation would restore the Federal Employee Pension contribution to their original 0.8%, and instead close corporate tax loopholes for companies that are incorporated overseas, but managed and controlled in the United States.

See below for a current list of cosponsors:

Connolly (VA-11), Cummings (MD-7), Cartwright (PA-17), Ellison (MN-5), Holmes Norton (DC), Kaptur (OH-9), Lynch (MA-8), McCollum (MN-4), Napolitano (CA-32), Rangel (NY-13).

Prince George's County NAACP 80th Anniversary Activities

This year, 2015, we are excited and beaming with pride to have reached

80 years of Serving Prince George's County, Maryland. Together, we have relentlessly Fought for Civil Rights, Advocated for Justice and Promoted Equality. Our work has made the difference in count-

the amount of money the team has raised."

In addition to raising money, "Kicks for Cans" was developed to provide players with leadership, teamwork, and community awareness experience.

"As a high school coach, we are an extension of the player's learning experience," says Russell. "Opportunities like this give us a chance to show how the skills they learn on the field - teamwork, leadership, etc., can be used in real life situations."

Senior Phil Brown comments, "Kicks for Cans taught me leadership and organizational skills that will benefit my future. Also, helping with underprivileged families and raising money for others bound our team together."

A cornerstone of the project is that "Kicks for Cans" is led and executed by the players. Each year, a group of players are chosen take on the task of motivating players and collecting pledges for that year's project. In addition, they arrange a day for the entire team to volunteer together harvesting produce with Farming 4 Hunger. These responsibilities are handed down to new student project leaders every year.

"It was a great opportunity to see all of the boys on the team come together and help the community out, whether that was scoring goals and raising money, or donating their time to pick crops at a local farm," says Senior Jake Stevens.

Senior Reis Richardson was this year's Project Lead, Senior Phil Brown was the Varsity team's Pledge Lead, Senior Jake Stevens oversaw incoming donations as well as the Farming 4 Hunger harvest day, and Freshman John Osborne was the Junior Varsity team's Pledge Lead.

"It is admirable what the Huntingtown High School Soccer program is doing for its players," says Jacqueline Miller, President of End Hunger In Calvert County. "Soon their players will never know soccer at Huntingtown High without End Hunger In Calvert County. It will just be part of their DNA ... that's great leadership!"

To ensure the project's continued success, the team is already planning for next year's "Kicks for Cans". Tom and Dawna Johnson are taking the lead as the new Community Service Coordinators as previous Assistant Coach and Community Service Coordinator Jonathan Reid will be relocating. In the future, the team is hoping to expand their vision to other sports teams within Huntingtown High and potentially to other sports teams throughout the county.

To learn how you, your team, or group can get involved with End Hunger In Calvert County, visit their website at endhungercalvert.org or email info@endhungercalvert.org.

EHCC is an association of over 50 businesses, 23 Feeding Organizations, 26 churches and community groups united behind the goal of ending hunger in our county. For more information, visit us online at endhungercalvert.org.

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COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Starting Roth IRAs for Your Grandkids

Many grandparents go above and beyond to offer financial help to adult children and grandchildren. If you're seeking to contribute to your grandkids' financial future, one option might involve opening a custodial Roth IRA (<http://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Roth-IRAs>) on your grandchild's behalf as soon as he or she starts reporting earned income.



While grandparents often find 529 college savings plans advantageous for their personal estate planning as well as supporting their grandchild's educational future, custodial Roth IRAs (<http://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Roth-IRAs>) may allow for more flexibility depending on the child's future needs. For example, a young adult may use tax-free Roth IRA proceeds to fund education expenses not covered by savings or a down payment on a first home. Roth IRAs may also be a useful and collaborative savings tool for important expenses young adults have, such as continuing education or a down payment on a first home.

Unlike traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs are funded with after-tax dollars. That means the account holder doesn't get a tax break at the time of initial or successive deposits, but the money grows tax-free and can be withdrawn tax-free – a benefit for a grandchild who may need a substantial sum in the years to come. Learn more about Roth IRAs by watching this Khan Academy video. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF-x9hDZD7Y>)

Here's an example of how much an initial \$2,000 deposit in a Roth custodial IRA can grow. For an account opened at the time the child is 16, the \$2,000 opening deposit – without any more money added to the account – could be worth roughly \$55,000 at the time the child reaches age 65 assuming a 7 percent expected rate of return.

What if the child needs to make a tax-free withdrawal sooner, such as at age 35, for example? Based on the same earnings calculation as above, he or she would receive a less impressive sum of roughly \$7,200. Of course, it remains a potential solution if there is a severe need for cash.

In 2015, the annual contribution limit for all IRAs is \$5,500. It is possible, though not that easy, for a minor to open a Roth IRA on his or her own, which is why it's good for grandparents – or any qualifying friend or relative – to shop for custodial accounts with low fees and low investment minimums to start. This is compounded annually.

As you evaluate a decision to open a custodial Roth IRA, check with the broker and the account administrator on any institutional or state rules on custodial accounts and what information you'll need to open one. Depending on those rules, there's a chance that grandparents may not be able to open the custodial account directly and you will have to work through their parents or legal guardian to get started.

Also, consider the following:

Make sure you're financially secure. The MetLife study notes that many grandparents tend to overextend their financial support when it comes to family members in need. Seek advice from financial, tax and estate professionals on how much you can reasonably afford to give and the best means to do so.

Coordinate with your grandchild's parents or guardian. It is important for family members to remain open about all money issues, particularly in relation to minors. Discuss what provisions the parents have made for the child and whether your idea complements financial strategies already in place. If not, keep talking and discuss other ways you can help.

Consider your grandchild's potential handling of the account. When your grandchildren reach legal age or meet other key requirements of the account, they can take control of the money. Will they be ready? If not, evaluate other investment vehicles that better meet your objectives.

Bottom line: Setting up a custodial Roth IRA may be a good way for grandparents and grandchildren to work on retirement or other financial goals.

Partners from A1

George's County, but the surrounding Metropolitan area.

Support was heartfelt as community partners including the District Heights Youth Service Bureau, Maryland Multicultural Youth Centers, Promise Place, and Bladensburg Community Center held events to attract homeless youth throughout the county. The Prince George's County Public School's Homeless Liaison's Office also partnered to assist in identifying high

school aged unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness or unstable housing. Individuals, businesses and community groups who could not participate in the count made donations of ready-to-eat food items, water, coats, socks, hats, gloves, blankets, and sleeping bags that were provided to the homeless.

For additional information about the annual Point-In-Time count, please contact Dee-Dee Bass Wilbon at (301) 909-7073

HHS Awards \$2,500,000 to Maryland to Develop an Innovative Plan to Improve Health Care Quality, Accessibility and affordability

By PRESS OFFICER
U.S. DHHS

Maryland will receive up to \$2,500,000 to design health care payment and service delivery models that will improve health care quality and lower costs, Secretary of Health and Human Services Sylvia M. Burwell announced today.

Nationwide, 28 states, three territories and the District of Columbia will receive over \$665 million in Affordable Care Act funding to design and test health care payment and service delivery models that will improve health care quality and lower costs. Together with awards released in early 2013, over half of states (34 states and three territories and the District of Columbia), representing nearly two thirds of the population are participating in comprehensive state-based innovation in health system transformation.

"We are committed to partnering with Maryland to advance the goals we all share: better care, smarter spending, and, ultimately, healthier people," said Secretary Burwell. "We're seeing states do some very innovative things when it comes to improving the ways we deliver care, pay providers, and distribute information. These funds will support states in integrating and coordinating the many elements of health

care – including Medicaid, Medicare, public health, and private health care delivery systems – to the benefit of patients, businesses, and taxpayers alike."

State Innovation Model funds will support states in planning or implementing a customized, fully developed proposal capable of creating statewide health transformation. Examples initiatives include:

- Improving primary care through patient centered medical homes, building upon current Accountable Care Organization models or integrating primary care and behavioral health services.

- Providing technical assistance and data to health care providers and payers that are working to advance models of integrated, team-based care, or transition to value-based payment models.

- Creating unified quality measure score cards that health care payers and providers can use to align quality improvement and value based payment methodologies.

- Expanding the adoption of health information technology to improve patient care.

- Fostering partnerships among public, behavioral, and primary health care providers.

- Strengthening the health care workforce through educational programs, inter-professional training, primary care residencies and community health worker training.

Today's awards include both states that are designing plans and strategies for statewide innovation and states that are taking the next step from designing to testing and implementing comprehensive statewide health transformation plans.

Nearly \$43 million in State Innovation Model Design Awards will support 17 states, including Maryland, three territories, and the District of Columbia to create and refine proposals for comprehensive health care transformation.

Over \$622 million in State Innovation Model Test Awards will support eleven states – Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Iowa, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Rhode Island, Tennessee and Washington – in implementing their State Health Care Innovation Plans. These states join six previous round one Model Test awardees: Arkansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Oregon, and Vermont.

States will engage a broad group of stakeholders including health care providers and systems, long-term service and support providers, commercial payers, state hospital

and medical associations, tribal communities and consumer advocacy organizations. Transformation efforts supported by this initiative must improve health, improve care and lower costs for Medicare, Medicaid, and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) beneficiaries. In addition, CMS will identify best practices among state-led transformations that are potentially scalable to all states.

The State Innovation Models initiative is one part of an overall effort to help lower costs and improve care through the Affordable Care Act. Initiatives like Accountable Care Organizations, the Partnership for Patients and others have helped reduce hospital readmissions in Medicare by nearly 8 percent between 2007 and 2013 – translating into 150,000 fewer readmissions – and quality improvements have resulted in saving 50,000 lives and \$12 billion in health spending from 2010 to 2013, according to preliminary estimates.

For more information on the awards announced today, please go to: <http://innovation.cms.gov/initiatives/State-Innovations/>.

To learn more about other innovative models being tested by the CMS Innovation Center, please visit: innovation.cms.gov.

Fleet from A1

ing the first motor pool more than two years ago has spurred the county's efforts to seek out other opportunities for sharing vehicles and right sizing their fleet, including launching the new motor pool in Largo. "One of the best things about the new motor pool is that we can reduce the number of vehicles without impacting the level of service we provide to the citizens of the County. And, we don't have to hire any more staff to manage it because the solution is automated. Our existing motor pool coordinator can manage it from his location in Upper Marlboro while he handles his other duties. That never would have been possible before we put FleetCommander in place."

Although Prince George's County has operated their motor pool at the CAB for many years, managing the system before implementing the FleetCommander was not efficient. Hilmer says, "In the past, we had to have one person with a clipboard tied to that motor pool location. He was responsible for taking reservations over the phone or in person, handing out keys, collecting keys, and physically being there at all times to assist pool customers. That meant if he took a vacation, was sick, or needed to be out for any reason, we had to make sure there was staffing in place to cover those responsibilities." On the flip side, Hilmer said there were times the motor pool coordinator did not have customers, but he was still required to be physically available for vehicle dispatch in case the need arose. Hilmer said since automating their motor pool with FleetCommander, the motor pool coordinator is able to conduct other county business not necessarily at the CAB site, including managing the new Largo motor pool remotely.

FleetCommander motor pool technology currently in place at the Prince George's County CAB enables them to:

- Visually see the status of the shared fleet via the FleetCommander online dashboard

- Offer customers the capability to easily reserve vehicles themselves online, around the clock

- Manage keys via secure key boxes that enable drivers to pick up and return keys without the need for an attendant to be present

- Offer a completely self-service capability for reserving vehicles and gaining access to keys via a touch-screen kiosk, similar to those used in airports

- Automatically collect vehicle utilization data to facilitate fleet right-sizing and support motor pool composition decisions

- Automate billing and run fleet metrics reports

In planning for the new motor pool site, Hilmer says they used data collected by FleetCommander to analyze average mileage and other data from daily rentals to determine the size and composition of the new motor pool. The new pool will enable the county to reduce its fleet by 12 vehicles and add more efficient hybrid electric vehicles. Hilmer says the mileage data showed that the majority of trips taken by daily rentals could be more efficiently conducted using plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV). As a result, the county purchased six plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEV) and three dual-head electric vehicle charging stations to "green" its fleet and reduce petroleum consumption. Although the plan is to initially reduce the fleet by 12 vehicles when the motor pool is launched, they have identified 8 additional vehicles that may no longer be needed. "We are going to ease into it, and give people time to use the pool and learn that they will always have access to vehicles when they need them before we reduce further," Hilmer says.

Agile estimates between \$3,000-\$5,000 annual savings per vehicle reduced in maintenance, depreciation, insurance, and other costs associated with keeping unneeded vehicles in a fleet.



PHOTO COURTESY AGILE ACCESS CONTROL
Prince George's County's Fleet Management Division set to launch new motor pool at their Largo location.

The Prince George's County fleet is made up of more than 3,200 vehicles serving 4,000 drivers. The Fleet Management Division is responsible for the overall management of a fleet of vehicles used by 18 agencies of the county government, 12 municipalities, 40 volunteer fire departments and two non-profit organizations.

Another benefit of the new motor pool will be the ability to offer pool vehicles as backup to county employees who use their assigned vehicles to conduct business on a daily basis. "Many of our public safety officials use fleet vehicles as mobile offices. The new pool will be available to those with mobile offices to use the pool in the event their vehicles are out of commission for whatever reason," Hilmer says.

"The Prince George's County Fleet Management Division is a wonderful example of how our customers can significantly reduce the manpower needed to facilitate the sharing of vehicles, while being committed to increasing transportation and energy efficiency. We look forward to the launch of their Largo motor pool site and hearing about more Prince George's County successes in 2015," says Agile President Ed Smith.

About Agile Access Control, Inc. FleetCommander creator Agile Access Control, Inc. is a

technology company headquartered in Chantilly, Va., which serves fleet and motor pool managers in the university, government, utility, non-profit, and commercial sectors. Agile's FleetCommander software is a powerful, highly configurable, web-based application that streamlines the use of vehicles through easy-to-use software, and presents real-time data in the form of intuitive dashboards, graphs, gauges, online forms, and a wide variety of reports. The suite of FleetCommander technology tools also includes Agile FleetShare™, car sharing technology that offers keys-in-the-car access to geographically dispersed vehicles with a scanned ID card at the windshield; unstaffed check-in at kiosks, secure key control and key boxes; in-vehicle utilization and diagnostic devices; GPS solutions, and much more – all tied into the FleetCommander fleet and motor pool software. Resulting in lower vehicle and personnel costs and higher customer satisfaction, FleetCommander can be used as a stand-alone, customized fleet management system or integrated with an organization's existing fleet systems. For more information, contact Agile Access Control, Inc. at 408-213-9555 x1 or www.agilefleet.com.

COMMENTARY

Cong. Chris Van Hollen House Democratic Minority Whip



Van Hollen, McKinley, Walz, Gibson, Huffman, Reichert Reintroduce Bipartisan IDEA Full Funding Act

Washington, DC — Congressmen Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), David McKinley (R-WV), Tim Walz (D-MN), Chris Gibson (R-NY), Jared Huffman (D-CA), and Dave Reichert (R-WA) reintroduced the bipartisan IDEA Full Funding Act. In 1975, Congress took the critical step of passing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), providing a promise that every child with disabilities would have the opportunity to reach his or her full potential. At that time, the federal government committed to pay 40 percent of the average per pupil expenditure for special education. However, that pledge has never been met, and current funding is at just 16.1 percent. The IDEA Full Funding Act would require regular increases in IDEA spending to finally meet our commitment to America's children and schools.

"We are proud to introduce the IDEA Full Funding Act to ensure that the federal government pays its fair share of the costs of educating students with disabilities. Forty years ago, the government committed to supporting our students and the teachers who work to help every American child reach their full potential," they said. "This legislation will guarantee funding increases for IDEA to ensure that our schools fulfill the promise of a first-class education for every child."

"Forty years ago, Congress made a promise to the Nation, to students with disabilities and their families, and to educators to invest in special education. But that promise has gone unfulfilled. Today, I applaud the bipartisan leadership of Representatives Van Hollen, Huffman, Walz, Gibson, McKinley, and Reichert to fulfill this promise and provide children with disabilities and schools with the resources they need and deserve. Our parent community stands ready to support the IDEA Full Funding Act," stated James H. Wendorf, Executive Director, National Center for Learning Disabilities.

"It has been nearly 40 years since Congress pledged to help states and local schools fund the cost of educating our country's students with disabilities. Sadly, Congress has never come close to fulfilling that worthy goal. We are proud to support the bipartisan leadership shown today with the introduction of the IDEA Full Funding Act, which would provide our students with the resources they need to succeed. We thank Representatives Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), David McKinley (R-WV), Tim Walz (D-MN), Chris Gibson (R-NY), Jared Huffman (D-CA) and Dave Reichert (R-WA) for their leadership in support of students with disabilities," said Mary Kusler, Director of Government Relations, National Education Association.

"This important federal legislation now before us is vital toward ensuring that our nation honors its obligation to students with disabilities," said Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director, National School Boards Association. "NSBA fully supports the IDEA Full Funding Act, and applauds its focus on creating a long-term, 10-year plan that will adequately fund the federal share of costs for special education. Improving educational outcomes and raising student achievement for students with disabilities is crucial."

AASA Executive Director, Daniel Domenech said, "Full funding of IDEA remains AASA's top legislative priority. In fully realizing its habitually underfunded commitment to students with disabilities, Congress actually serves all students. One act of funding provides a critical and necessary level of support for students with disabilities while relieving local school districts from the fiscal burden of covering the chronic shortfall, freeing up and returning local dollars to the general budget, to serve all students. AASA remains strongly committed to this policy and applauds Congress members Van Hollen, Huffman, McKinley, Gibson, Walz, and Reichert for their continued leadership on this important issue."

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



Malcolm X to El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz — The Metamorphosis of a Militant in Mecca

"You may be shocked by these words coming from me. But on this pilgrimage, what I have seen, and experienced, has forced me to rearrange much of my thought-patterns previously held, and to toss aside some of my previous conclusions. This was not too difficult for me. Despite my firm convictions, I have always been a man who tries to face facts, and to accept the reality of life as new experience and new knowledge unfolds it."

— Malcolm X, Letter from Mecca, April 1964

There is perhaps no American civil rights leader who generated as many divergent opinions as Malcolm X. As we near the 50th anniversary of his assassination on February 21, 1965, our nation will inevitably scrutinize his life, his work and his lasting impact on our country and our continuous struggle to address racial inequality and its heinous consequences.

Depending on one's perspective or politics, Malcolm X was a hatemonger filled with a blind, race-based rage. Another view paints him as an inspiring figure, pulling himself up from a life of crime to become a leading human rights figure. I would put forth the view that Malcolm X was much more than any one-dimensional interpretation of his life or its seminal moments and that he was a man who literally and figuratively journeyed far in his short 39 years — reinventing himself countless times along the way.

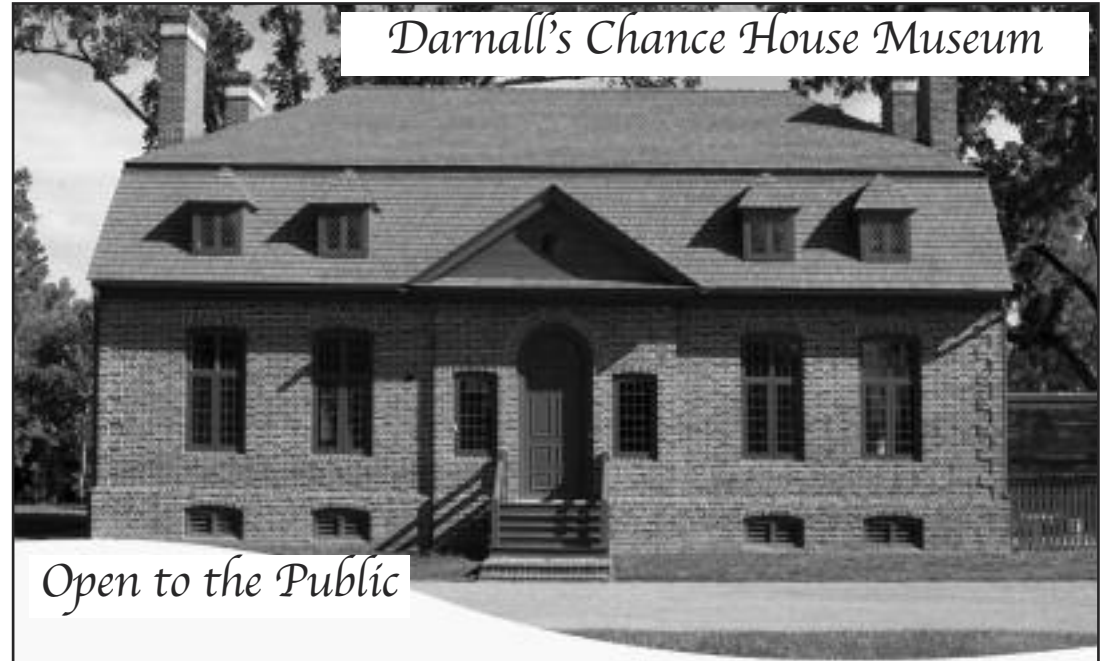
Born Malcolm Little on May 19, 1925 to a Grenadian mother and African American

father — also a well-known activist — Malcolm became accustomed to the cruelties of racism at an early age, losing his father in a suspected attack by white supremacists. His early life was a blur of broken homes, petty crime and incarceration. Introduced to the teachings of the Nation of Islam during his time in jail, Malcolm X traded prison for a pursuit of racial justice and equality for Blacks in America.

While his initial approach may not have always been championed by or aligned with other civil rights leaders of the time, Malcolm X's later life transition and his embrace of multiculturalism is an important story to be acknowledged and retold. But often, supporters and critics alike attempt to isolate the "by any means necessary" civil rights leader to one part of his journey. For example, and ironically, many gun advocates invoke Malcolm X's own words as they seek to reinforce their arguments and support for their professed right to almost unfettered access to firearms.

In his famous "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech, Malcolm X said, "I must say this concerning the great controversy over rifles and shotguns. The only thing that I've ever said is that in areas where the government has proven itself either unwilling or unable to defend the lives and the property of Negroes, it's time for Negroes to defend themselves. Article number two of the constitutional amendments provides you and me the right to own a rifle or a shotgun."

See MALCOLM X Page A7



Darnall's Chance House Museum

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: PG PARKS & RECREATION

DARNALL'S CHANCE HOUSE MUSEUM

Opened to the public as a historic house museum in 1988, Darnall's Chance House Museum is dedicated to the interpretation and study of the history and culture of 18th century Prince George's County, Maryland with special emphasis on the lives of mid-18th century women. The Museum will seek to interpret the story of the widow Lettice Wardrop Thomson Sim, who lived at Darnall's Chance in the decades just prior to the American Revolution. The house and grounds will reflect 1760, the year Lettice Wardrop's first husband died and a room by room inventory was taken of the contents of the house. Darnall's Chance will also strive to accurately reflect the African-American community on the site and town life in mid-18th century Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



A Call to End Child Poverty Now

"America is going to hell if we don't use her vast resources to end poverty and make it possible for all of God's children to have the basic necessities of life."

—Martin Luther King Jr.

"They have become great and rich

they have grown fat and sleek.

...

they judge not with justice

the cause of their fatherless ...

and they do not defend the rights of the needy."

—Jeremiah 5:27-28

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,

In the strife of Truth with Falsehood for the good or evil side;

Some great Cause, God's New Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,

Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,

And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

—James Russell Lowell

It is a national moral disgrace that there are 14.7 million poor children and 6.5 million extremely poor children in the United States of America — the world's largest economy. It is also unnecessary, costly and the greatest threat to our future national, economic and military security.

There are more poor children in America than the combined residents in six of our largest U.S. cities: Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and San Antonio with a combined total population of 14.6 million residents. There are more children living in extreme poverty in the United States (6.5 million) than there are total residents in 33 states and the District of Columbia.

The younger children are the poorer they are during their years of greatest brain development. Every other American baby is non-White and 1 in 2 Black babies is poor, 150 years after slavery was legally abolished.

America's poor children did not ask to be born; did not choose their parents, country, state, neighborhood, race, color, or faith. In fact if they had been born in 33 other industrialized countries they would be less likely to be poor. Among these 35 countries, Amer-

ica ranks 34th in relative child poverty — ahead only of Romania whose economy is 99 percent smaller than ours.

The United Kingdom, whose economy, if it were an American state, would rank just above Mississippi according to the Washington Post, committed to and succeeded in cutting its child poverty rate by half in 10 years. It is about values and political will. Sadly, politics in our nation too often trumps good policy and moral decency and responsibility to the next generation and the nation's future. It is way past time for a critical mass of Americans to confront the hypocrisy of America's pretension to be a fair playing field while almost 15 million children languish in poverty.

The Children's Defense Fund just released a groundbreaking new report, Ending Child Poverty Now, that calls for an end to child poverty in the richest nation on earth with a 60 percent reduction immediately. And it shows that solutions to ending child poverty in our nation already exist and for the first time how, by combining expanded investments in existing policies and programs that work, we can shrink overall child poverty 60 percent, Black child poverty 72 percent, and improve economic circumstances for 97

percent of poor children at a cost of \$77.2 billion a year. These policies could be and should be pursued immediately, improving the lives and futures of millions of children and eventually saving taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars annually.

Child poverty is way too expensive to continue. Every year we keep 14.7 million children in poverty costs our nation \$500 billion — six times more than the \$77 billion investment we propose to reduce child poverty by 60 percent. MIT Nobel Laureate economist and 2014 Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Dr. Robert Solow in his foreword to a 1994 CDF report Wasting America's Future presciently wrote: "For many years Americans have allowed child poverty levels to remain astonishingly high ... far higher than one would think a rich and ethical society would tolerate. The justification, when one is offered at all, has often been that action is expensive: 'We have more will than wallet.' I suspect that in fact our wallets exceed our will, but in any event this concern for the drain on our resources completely misses the other side of the equation: Inaction has its costs too

See WATCH, Page A16

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Disagreements Between Friends Shouldn't End The Friendship

Relationships are important to all of us. While we might enjoy having a little "alone time" every now and then, the reality is that we all need interactions with other people on a regular basis.

What's important about our long-term relationships is not simply that we meet and talk with others, but that these are people we care about, with whom we share emotional ties, and to whom we turn for encouragement, support and advice.

The relationships that we consider special are usually with people with whom we share a number of similarities and/or life experiences. These relationships can result from marriage, business relationships or social interactions, but they rest on common foundations and are important to us and our overall well-being.

But even in the closest of relationships, whether romantic or between friends, there will still sometimes be areas of disagreement. An important element in establishing or maintaining a healthy, long-term relationship is how such disagreements are handled.

There are basic qualities that allow us to disagree without destroying a relationship. Qualities of honesty, openness and trust play important roles. When disagreements occur, it's essential to agree to be honest with one another and then to actually do just that. For a strong relationship to grow, both members of the relationship must commit to this goal.

This is sometimes called the "ABC" method of sustaining a relationship. The "A" stands for affirming the value of the relationship. That means the two of you agree that the relationship itself is more important than either of your views on any particular issue.

The "B" stands for behavior, for letting the other person know that when there are disagreements, you won't let them affect the basics of the relationship. It means that neither of you will set ultimatums or try to force your point of view on the other person.

The "C" stands for clarifying issues when there is a disagreement. Rather than your "interpreting" the words and actions of the other person, you have to be open and honest with that person and let him or her explain and clarify the intent and meaning of what has been said.

Long-term relationships are a vital part of a happy life. To make them last and grow takes work, and that means finding room within the relationship for the occasional disagreements that are naturally going to exist between any two people.

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

ERIMAX from A1

2015. Interested businesses may obtain more information or apply at: <http://www.marylandsbdc.org>

About Eric Franklin

Eric Franklin is the President and CEO of ERIMAX, Inc. an information technology and acquisition management company headquartered in Maryland that provides services to more than 20 Federal agencies in nine states across the nation. Franklin has a long history of advocating for small, women-owned, and minority businesses. He is a past recipient of the Leading Edge CEO of the Year Award and was named as Maryland Minority Small

Business Champion of the Year by the U.S. Small Business Administration. He is also the author of, "Peanut Butter Principles: 47 Leadership Lessons Every Parent Should Teach Their Kids".

About SBDC

The SBDC is a partnership that links private enterprise, government, higher education, and local economic development organizations to provide high-quality training, confidential consulting and market and industry research to small businesses in all stages of development. Founded in 1989, the SBDC provides assistance to more than 10,000 entrepreneurs each year through a combination of consulting, training, and outreach events.

Maryland Background for Covering 2015 Tax Season

By PRESS OFFICER
US DHHS

In preparation for the 2015 tax filing season, which officially began in January, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services released today a fact sheet detailing information Maryland tax filers need to know as they prepare to file their federal returns.

This tax season marks the first time individuals and families in Maryland will be asked to provide basic information regarding their health insurance on their tax returns. Consumers will have questions about this new process and the Administration is committed to providing the information and tools tax filers need to understand the new requirements.

In the coming weeks, the administration will continue to provide additional resources to help consumers prepare for tax filing season, including online tools to help individuals connect with local tax preparation services and determine if they are eligible for an exemption.

For more information about this effort – or to request an interview with an official from the Department of Health and Human Services, contact press@cms.hhs.gov or call 202-690-6145.

FACT SHEET: Health Coverage and Federal Income Taxes

The 2015 tax season is the first time individuals and families will be asked for some basic information regarding their health insurance on their tax returns.

While the vast majority of tax filers – over three quarters – will just need to check a box on their tax return indicating they had health coverage for all of 2014, people who purchased coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplaces, or decided not to enroll in coverage, should be aware of the additional steps that will be a part of the tax filing process starting this year.

Consumers will have questions about this new process and the Administration is committed to providing the information and tools tax filers need to understand the new requirements.

Individuals and families with non-marketplace coverage for all of 2014.

Most tax filers – over three quarters – will just need to check a box on their tax return to indicate that they had coverage all year. These people met the Minimum Essential Coverage requirement, which means that they had the basic health coverage necessary to meet the Affordable Care Act's standards. These individuals and families will not receive any new forms

in the mail and they will not be required to fill out new forms when they file their 2014 income tax returns.

What consumers need to know:

- When you file your tax return, you'll need to check a box to indicate that you and your family had health insurance for all of 2014. Types of health coverage necessary to meet the Affordable Care Act's standards (Minimum Essential Coverage) include:
 - Most job-based plans, including retiree plans and COBRA coverage
 - Medicare Part A or Part C
 - Medicaid
 - The Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
 - Most individual health plans you bought outside the Marketplace, including "grandfathered" plans. (Not all plans sold outside the Marketplace qualify as minimum essential coverage.)
- If you're under 26, coverage under a parent's plan
- It's important to note that filing electronically is the easiest way to file a complete and accurate tax return. Last year, approximately 85 percent of taxpayers e-filed. Electronic Filing options include free Volunteer Assistance, IRS Free File and professional assistance.

Resources available to help:

- Learn more about taxes if you had 2014 health coverage from another source
- IRS Resource Guide: Health Care Law: What's New for Individuals & Families - <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p5187.pdf>

Individuals and families who had a health plan through the Health Insurance Marketplace in 2014.

Last year millions of people purchased quality, affordable coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace, and most benefitted from a tax credit to lower the cost of their monthly premium. Now that tax season is here, individuals and families enrolled in a health plan through the Marketplace will need to provide some basic information about their health insurance when they file their taxes. All Marketplace consumers will receive a new statement – called a Form 1095-A – that includes all the information they need about their coverage to file their return.

What consumers need to know:

- You will receive Form 1095-A in the mail from the Marketplace by early February. In most states, you can also download a copy of your statement through your Marketplace account starting in late January or early February.

• It's very important to wait for your Form 1095-A to arrive before you file your taxes. If you haven't received a Form 1095-A by early February, you should contact the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596. TTY users should call 1-855-889-4325.

• When you get your Form 1095-A, you should check the information on your form – such as the number of people in your household – for accuracy.

• If you find an error on your Form 1095-A, you should call the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596 to find out how to get a corrected form.

• You should keep your Form 1095-A with your other important tax information, like your W-2.

• If a tax credit lowered your monthly premiums for health insurance in 2014, you will use your Form 1095-A to input some basic information when you file your taxes.

• When you signed up for health insurance, you had to estimate your income for 2014. Your estimated income determined the size of your tax credit.

• Now that tax time is here, you need to compare your estimated income with your actual income – and this could impact the final amount of your tax credit.

• If your income or household size changed throughout the year, it could impact the final amount of your tax credit.

• You may see a smaller refund or owe money back if you underestimated your income.

• You may also get a bigger refund if you overestimated your income.

• If you owe money back, there are several repayment options available. For example, if you are unable to pay immediately, you may be eligible for a payment plan or an installment agreement.

• If you did not receive a tax credit to lower your monthly premiums in the Marketplace, you can visit [HealthCare.gov/taxes/tools/](http://www.healthcare.gov/taxes/tools/) to get information you'll need to enter into your tax forms to see if you might qualify.

• If your Marketplace coverage started partway through 2014 and you were uninsured earlier in the year, or if you were uninsured for only a short period of time during the year, you may be eligible for an exemption from the requirement to have health coverage.

• You can claim the exemption on your tax return when you file. The process is fast and easy. You'll simply select the exemption that applies to you and enter the corresponding code.

Individuals who didn't have health coverage in 2014.

While those who can afford health coverage but chose not to buy it may have to pay a fee, individuals who could not afford

coverage or met other conditions can receive an exemption. If you qualify, receiving an exemption is simple and easy, and means you won't have to pay a fee. It is important for individuals to know that exemptions are available and to understand the steps they need to take to request one.

What consumers need to know:

• You can claim most exemptions on your tax return, but some exemptions are only available through the Marketplace.

• There are a variety of exemptions available, including if:

• The cost of coverage was too expensive. This applies to you if the lowest priced plan available to you would have cost more than 8 percent of your income. Visit HealthCare.gov/taxes/tools/ to get information you may need to claim the exemption for coverage being unaffordable to you in 2014.

• You were uninsured for only a short period of time.

• You experienced a hardship, such as if you had medical expenses that resulted in substantial debt, if a close family member passed away, or if you experienced domestic violence, among other hardships. You will need to apply to the Health Insurance Marketplace to qualify for this exemption.

• For a complete list of exemptions and more information, read Information about Health Insurance Marketplace exemptions, or visit HealthCare.gov/taxes/.

• When you file your taxes, you will enter information about the months you had coverage and any exemptions you qualify for on your tax forms.

• If you could have afforded coverage in 2014 but chose not to buy it - and you don't qualify for an exemption - you will have to pay a fee with your federal tax return.

• The fee is based on your income, and how many months you didn't have coverage.

• If you didn't have health coverage for all of 2014, you'll pay the higher of \$95 per adult and \$47.50 per child, who didn't have coverage, limited to a family maximum of \$285, or 1% of your income, subject to certain caps.

Additional help is available.

• If consumers have questions about their taxes, need to download forms, or want to learn more about the fee for not having insurance, they can find information and resources at www.IRS.gov or www.healthcare.gov/taxes/. They can also call the Marketplace Call Center at 1-800-318-2596.

• Some people who signed up for health insurance through the Marketplace can get free tax assistance. For more information, visit www.IRS.gov/freefile or www.IRS.gov/VITA.



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Hogan from A1

from citizens and community leaders for financial support.

A principal initiative of PACE is the North/South Appalachian Highway project. The project aims to connect U.S. Route 219 at I-68 north to U.S. Route 220 at I-68 south, but the State Highway Administration has yet to determine the direct route, according to Brenda Smith, executive director of The Greater Cumberland Committee.

This would create 20,000 construction jobs and 10,000

permanent jobs in the region of Western Maryland, the Laurel Highlands of Pennsylvania and the Potomac Highlands of West Virginia, Smith said.

U.S. Senator Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, who also spoke at the breakfast, agreed that the North/South Highway is the most important priority for transportation in Western Maryland. Tourism is also on the group's priority list, and Cardin highlighted the region as a draw for visitors, with popular walking and biking trails.

Smith said she feels inspired by Hogan's comments on

Western Maryland and is optimistic he can come through for the region.

"I don't think you can be anything but hopeful when you've been as far down as we've been," Smith said.

Community leaders appeared encouraged by the new, Republican governor's remarks and his position on the issues concerning Western Maryland, a largely Republican stronghold in the majority blue state of Maryland. The legislature's Western Maryland delegation includes members from Allegany, Garrett,

Carroll, Frederick and Washington counties.

"(I am) more confident than I was six months ago," said J. Robert Smith, PACE's Allegany County co-chair. "I think the governor knows where Western Maryland is. ... We've been heard."

Others in attendance include Comptroller Peter Franchot, a Democrat; and state Senator George Edwards, Allegany, Garrett and Washington, and state Delegates Jason Buckel, Allegany, Mike McKay, Washington, and Wendell Beitzel, Garrett and Allegany, all Republicans.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review Blackhat

Blackhat
Grade: C-

Rated R, some profanity, two F-words, some moderately strong violence, mild sexuality
2 hrs., 13 min

Looking at the known facts before seeing the film, *Blackhat* could go either way. On the one hand, it's directed by Oscar-nominated Michael Mann, a smart filmmaker with some established credibility (*Heat*, *Collateral*, *The Last of the Mohicans*). On the other hand, it stars Chris Hemsworth as a hunky computer hacker, and it's being released in the studio dumping grounds of January. (Mann's last six films all had prime spots in the summer or during end-of-the-year awards season.)

Unfortunately, *Blackhat* proves to be worthier of January's taint instead of Mann's good name. Almost perversely insistent on avoiding anything resembling excitement, and despite its globetrotting locations, this turgid dud lumbers for more than two hours before finally, mercifully, arriving at its foregone conclusion. Written by first-timer Morgan Davis Foehl, the implausible story avoids the pitfall of most hacker movies by getting the hacker away from the keyboard and out of the house, yet due to its Mann-handling it's almost as dour and lifeless as if it were 133 minutes of typing.

Hemsworth plays Nicholas Hathaway, the best and best-built hacker in the business, currently in prison for his misdeeds. When a cyber breach causes a nuclear meltdown in China, and another one messes with the American



Set within the world of global cybercrime, *Legendary's Blackhat* follows a furloughed convict and his American and Chinese partners as they hunt a high-level cybercrime network from Chicago to Los Angeles to Hong Kong to Jakarta.

stock exchange, Chinese intelligence teams up with the FBI (personified by Viola Davis) to get Hathaway out of the clink and onto the payroll so he can help prevent further attacks. The search for the culprit takes them to L.A., Hong Kong, and Indonesia, and along the way Hathaway essentially goes from furloughed prisoner to deputized FBI agent — joining the team on raids, carrying a gun, doing martial arts against bad guys. As one does.

The Chinese part of the team includes a fearsome brother-sister combo, Dawai (Leehom Wang) and Lien (Wei Tang), the latter of whom provides Hathaway with a love interest. In an

example of the film's weird understanding of human behavior, Hathaway and Lien have only just started hooking up when Dawai demands to know what will happen if Hathaway breaks the conditions of his furlough and is re-incarcerated.

"Nine more years in prison?" he says. "What kind of life is that for her?" Like they're married already, and it's the 19th century. Mann's tone is cool and dispassionate, even when the characters are expressing heated emotions. It's like he doesn't know how humans feel.

Mann occasionally does something visually interesting, like a POV shot from underneath a computer keyboard, or the in-

side view of a USB port, but those stimulations are infrequent. For the most part, in fact, the film is ugly to look at, shot on garish digital video that matches the grey, emotionless mood. That dullness is in contrast to the plot, which is ludicrous almost on a James Bondian level. If Mann would lighten up and embrace the fun of it, we'd all be having a better time. Things do liven up slightly for the Jakarta finale, when heroes and villains finally come face to face and the violence becomes realistic, but by then we're past caring, really, what happens to anyone. This is what a dull person imagines a thriller is like.

State Fire Marshal Provides Facts About Home Fire Sprinklers

By PRESS OFFICER
MD State Fire Marshal

STATEWIDE (January 29, 2015) – More than 2,500 fire deaths occur throughout the U.S. each year. Eight out of ten of those fire deaths resulted from home fires. In Maryland, during 2014, 50 fire deaths occurred in one and two family homes out of the reported 62 total fire deaths recorded in the state. "Most home fire deaths can be eliminated with the installation of residential fire sprinklers," stated State Fire Marshal Brian S. Geraci. "The advantage of having fire sprinklers in your home far surpasses the ability of a working smoke alarm alone. A smoke alarm will notify you of a fire, however a fire sprinkler can react and in most cases extinguish a fire before it reaches excessive heat and lethal doses of carbon monoxide as well as other dangerous toxins released during an uncontrolled fire".

Residential fire sprinklers are designed to allow more time to escape the effects of

fire. The added benefit, in most cases, is a single fire sprinkler operates and either controls the fire or extinguishes it entirely before excessive irreparable fire damage occurs. Additionally, the quick action of a fire sprinkler helps to protect first responders by containing the fire to the fire origin, thereby reducing the chance for injuries and/or death. It should also be noted that residential fire sprinklers promote the longevity of the volunteer fire and rescue system.

Many myths and falsehoods about fire sprinklers exist in the minds of Marylanders. The following facts and safety tips are provided to educate the public with factual information about the life saving benefits of residential fire sprinklers.

- Home fire sprinklers save lives and property by reacting during the early stages of the fires occurrence.

- Smoke does not affect fire sprinklers. Home fire sprinklers react to high heat temperatures of 135° - 165°.

- The risk of dying in a home fire decreases significantly when the home is equipped with a fire sprinkler system.

- Home sprinklers are easy to maintain by ensuring nothing is hanging from or blocking individual sprinkler heads. A simple test by the homeowner or a contractor can be performed annually to ensure proper water flow.

- Only the sprinkler closest to the fire operates and sprays water directly on the fire. Due to the quick response of the fire sprinkler, the fire is almost always controlled and/or extinguished prior to the fire departments arrival.

- Homeowners experience lower insurance premiums with installed fire sprinkler systems. Insurance companies offer discounts from 5% to 30% off the fire portion coverage of the home.

- Fire sprinklers are environmentally friendly. The amount of water run-off, pollution and fire damage is reduced by as much as 71%. According to the National Fire Protection Associ-

ation (NFPA), water usage to fight a home fire can be reduced by as much as 91%.

- Materials found in homes today burn faster and at a higher heat release rate as compared to furnishings and small appliances made twenty or more years ago. Fires tend to grow much faster, which allows even less time to escape the deadly heat and toxins produced during a fire.

- In 2014, 61% of the fatal home fires in Maryland occurred between 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. when Marylanders are most vulnerable – while sleeping.

When considering moving into a home or when having a new home constructed, be sure to demand residential fire sprinklers as a requirement to protect your family, friends, pets and property.

Additional information about residential fire sprinklers may be found at these listed websites:

www.nfpa.org
www.homefiresprinkler.org
www.firesafefire.org
www.mdsp.org/firemarshal

The Edge of Sports by DAVE ZIRIN

On the Death of the Irreplaceable Mike Marqusee

Radical journalist Mike Marqusee, the greatest professional influence on my life, has died, and I'm wrecked about it. Losing Mike is like losing several pints of blood. I'm left dizzy by the prospect of his absence. On the most basic level, there is my own sense of debt. I'm a sportswriter because Mike Marqusee made me one.



I divide my life not "before and after I had kids" or "before and after I moved out of my mom's house in New York City" but "before and after I read *Redemption Song: Muhammad Ali And The Spirit of the Sixties*" in 1998.

Not only did *Redemption Song* rediscover quotes, speeches and dimensions of Ali's politics and personality that had long been buried, but it revealed to me that sports writing could be something different and even something dangerous. Until this time, I was a young political activist and a die-hard sports fan with those obsessions in decisively separate worlds. The political sports writing I had read was dense and sleep-inducing. The exciting sports writing I consumed was like junk food, leaving me hungry and a little nauseous after gobbling it up. *Redemption Song* was revelatory. Here was sports writing that would make your adrenaline rush with every Ali jab in the ring as well as every Ali political riff, all brought together with Mike Marqusee's rambunctious and deftly humorous prose.

When I started writing about sports, my task was how to do it without ripping off Mike Marqusee, either in style or substance. I often failed. As a newly minted, self-proclaimed sports journalist, I often felt like I was in a fog of writer's block. Asking me to forgo shameless borrowing from Marqusee was like asking me to give up my compass. This desire to mimic his style only mushroomed as I started reading his other books, brilliant analysis of subjects—unlike Ali—I had no interest in previously. Mike Marqusee had me consuming stories of cricket and Bob Dylan like they were tales of the 1998 Chicago Bulls.

Then I was able to meet Mike Marqusee. He was traveling from his home in London to give a talk about his Bob Dylan book *Wicked Messenger*. I was terrified to meet him. Getting to know your idols can be a painfully disillusioning experience. I was also nervous because I thought he might say, "Hey, you're the guy who keeps ripping me off!" Neither was the case. Mike was about as kind, generous, and as principled a person you could ever hope to meet.

Mike Marqusee was born in the United States but lived his adult life across the pond. I asked him, other than his love of cricket, how that marked his writing. "I think it's meant that I have no qualms about loving sports and no qualms about being a proud socialist," he said. "I get all of the joy without the baggage." Mike wore his politics and his love of play proudly and both were beacons for those looking for some wisdom, direction or just a kind word. He also never kept his politics at the "armchair" level but took it to the streets and the organizing meetings where his goal was always figuring out how to make a contribution to building a fighting left that was possessed by the flair and imagination that marked his writing. But Mike also listened, and not just in the realm of politics. He cared deeply—even when he was very sick—about how I was doing, during times when no one would have ever blamed him for thinking about himself. I will always believe that there is no dignity in death, but Mike came damn close to making me reassess that. Even when in great pain from his cancer, Mike was a radical voice, rejecting, as he wrote in *The Guardian*, "the stress on cancer patients' 'bravery' and 'courage' [which] implies that if you can't 'conquer' your cancer, there's something wrong with you, some weakness or flaw." From his bed, he thundered, "What we need is not a war on cancer but a recognition that cancer is a social and environmental issue, requiring profound social and environmental changes."

In 2008, Mike Marqusee penned his most challenging, brilliant and controversial book, *If I Am Not For Myself: Journey of an Anti-Zionist Jew*. The audacity of even taking on this topic speaks volumes. The sensitivity with which Mike weaves stories from his own family to argue that being a principled Jew means standing up to Israel still awes me. Mike, this expert on Ali, Dylan and cricket, wanted to put his own life at the service of the idea that being Jewish did not mean being a supporter of the state of Israel and that in fact being Jewish meant a particular responsibility to call out its hypocrisy. Over the weekend, as I learned that Mike was in his last hours, the horrors of the Charlie Hebdo killings were in the news. Benjamin Netanyahu arrived uninvited to a Paris synagogue and said to the Jews of Paris, "There is one country which is their historic home, a state which will always accept them with open arms." This statement speaks to the worst traditions of Israel: exploiting the spilling of Jewish blood to call for ending the journey toward a multicultural society and instead collectively retreat to the Middle East. In this packed synagogue, the response to Netanyahu's call for French Jews to abandon their country, was—in Bibi's face—the loud and proud singing of "La Marseillaise." Even though I knew he was ailing and in his last hours, I could have sworn I saw Mike Marqusee agitating in the back, raising his arms for more people to join in song, like a modern twist on Rick in *Casablanca*. But unlike Rick, Mike Marqusee stuck out his neck for everyone. Rest in Power, Mike. You have earned the rest, but we will need your power to move forward in your absence.

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE!
in *The Prince George's Post*
Call Brenda Boice at 301 627 0900

Calendar of Events

February 19 — February 25, 2015

Xtreme Teens: Black History Reflections

Date and Time: Friday February 20, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Join us for a festive Black History Month event! Reflect on the lives of the women and men who fought to get us where we are today. Show your appreciation through spoken word, speech impersonations, and much more; you can even come in costume. Prizes will be given to the best costume and presentation.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17

Location: Berwyn Heights Community Center
6200 Pontiac Street, Berwyn Heights 20740
Contact: 301-345-2808; TTY 301-445-4512

Xtreme Teens: Mardi Gras Celebration

Date and Time: Friday, February 20, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Teens will have the chance to celebrate Mardi Gras in an authentic fashion. Rock out with a mask or beads, while dancing the night away to music by DJ Richard.

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

Class Acts Presents "Lesole's Dance Project"

Date and Time: Friday, February 20, 2015 12:30-1:30 pm
Description: Dance your way to the tip of the African continent! Participants will experience three exciting cultures from traditional Ndlamu dance from Zulu villages to the clothing, customs and live drumming that encapsulate the spirit of South Africa.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome

Location: Glassmanor Community Center
1101 Marcy Avenue, Oxon Hill 20745
Contact: 301-567-6033; TTY 301-203-6030

Xtreme Teens: Family Night at the Movies

Date and Time: Saturday, February 21, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Teens will enjoy a movie with their families at the Center on the big screen. Light refreshments will be served.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: All ages

Location: Bladensburg Community Center
4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-277-2124; TTY 301-445-4512

Xtreme Teens: Skate & Dance

Date and Time: Saturday, February 21, 2015 7-10 pm
Description: Here's to a night of fun! Teens will enjoy indoor skating in the gym, while dancing or listening to their favorite music.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17

Location: College Park Community Center
5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park 20740
Contact: 301-441-2647; TTY 301-445-4512

The Plummers' Kitchen

Date and Time: Sunday, February 22, 2015 12:15-3:15 pm
Description: Using the open hearth in the dependency kitchen, the Riversdale Kitchen Guild will cook foods typical of the Plummer family and other 19th century African American residents of Riversdale. Cooking festivities includes a tour of the historic house.

Cost: \$3/adult; \$2/senior; \$1/student;
FREE ages 4 & under

Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Riversdale House Museum
4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737
Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

Black History & Beyond!

Date & Time: Sunday, February 22, 2015 2-4 pm
Description: Join us as we celebrate the strength and resilience of the African American community at this Black History Month event. Today's event will feature a dynamic keynote speaker and engaging breakout workshops. The afternoon will conclude with an art exhibition and a light reception.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome

Location: Tucker Road Community Center
1771 Tucker Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-203-6030

African American History Tour & Excursion

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 9 am-4 pm
Description: Travel with us as we explore some of the greatest landmarks in Prince George's County and Washington, D.C., including the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial. Afterwards, we'll stop at a local restaurant for lunch. Pre-registration is required

Cost: \$5/person (Fee includes transportation only;
please bring extra money for lunch)

Ages: 17 & up
Location: Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road, Landover 20785
Contact: 301-583-2582; TTY 301-583-2483

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EARTH TALK ... Better Living Through Conservation Genetics

Dear EarthTalk:

How are scientists using DNA to conserve wildlife?

— Jake Summerlin,
Newark, NJ

Traditionally, conservation biologists have relied on field observation and sample and statistical analysis to help them understand the dynamics behind species loss, but today genetics is taking on an increasingly important role in helping quantify the biodiversity around us and even save some threatened species.

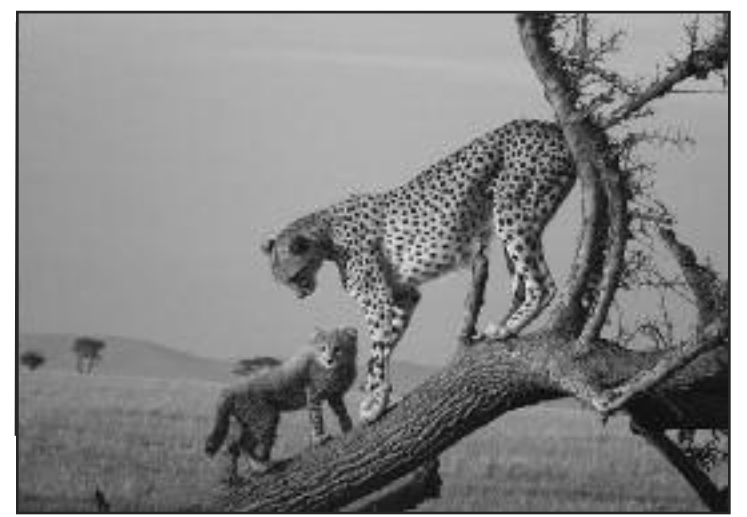
According to researchers at King Saud University who reviewed various DNA analysis technologies used in wildlife conservation for the Saudi Journal of Biological Sciences, the newly emerging discipline of conservation genetics has proven instrumental in creating better management plans for so-called "genetically deteriorated" wildlife populations. "Accurate classification of these threatened species allows understanding of the species biology and identification of distinct populations that should be managed with utmost care." They add that DNA analysis can be instrumental in preventing illegal hunting and poaching and "for more effective implementation of the laws for protection of the endangered species."

Conservation genetics is particularly useful for clarifying

whether a particular wildlife population needs special protection as a genetically distinct sub-species. According to Susan Haig of the U.S. Forest Service, conservationists are using DNA analysis to determine kinship lineage in selecting which individuals to reintroduce to a population for recovery. "DNA sequencing procedures ... allow for identification of parentage, more distant relatives, founders to new populations, unidentified individuals, population structure, effective population size, population-specific markers, etc." reports Haig, adding that the result is more sophisticated information crucial to setting species recovery priorities.

One way genetics is being used is to help endangered African cheetahs. "The 10,000 that are left share 99 percent of their DNA between individuals," reports biologist and blogger Christina Smyth, adding that the low genetic diversity makes the cheetah population highly susceptible to disease and extinction. "By using genetic analysis to look at how closely related individual cheetahs are, cheetah breeding projects are able to breed selectively as an attempt to reintroduce genetic variation back into the population."

Another favorite example of Smyth's is how geneticists are helping estimate past population sizes of whales to help manage and conserve current populations. "They are using



CREDIT: ED YOURDON, FLICKR CC

DNA analysis is helping conservation biologists reintroduce genetic variation in populations of wild African cheetahs and other endangered wildlife.

current levels of genetic diversity along with known mutation rates to look at what the whale population was like before whaling. So far their numbers have increased previous estimates by up to ten times! These numbers could completely change our thoughts and approaches to whale related conservation and management."

The non-profit Revive and Restore is best known for its advocacy of so-called "de-extinction"—that is, bringing back extinct wildlife species and reintroducing them to the landscapes they used to call home—but also aims to provide "genetic assistance" to existing threatened wildlife species.

"Endangered species that have lost their crucial genetic diversity may be restored to reproductive health," reports the

group. "Those threatened by invasive diseases may be able to acquire genetic disease-resistance." The group is hoping to apply what it learns from a pilot project restoring genetic diversity to an endangered population of black-footed ferrets to other species' recovery efforts.

CONTACTS: Revive and Restore, www.longnow.org/revive; "DNA marker technology for wildlife conservation," www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1319562X11000234.

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Fracking from A1

(http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Land/mining/marcellus/Documents/Final_Marcellus_Shale_Report.pdf)

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan is against the moratorium bill, said spokeswoman Erin Montgomery, because the state is "sitting on a wealth of clean natural gas in Western Maryland."

"Fracking has been studied for over three years now, and we don't need another eight years of studies before making a decision," said Montgomery. "If it can be done in an environmentally safe way then we should move forward with it."

But bill proponents point to studies that indicate the costs to the environment and public health outweigh the economic benefits.

"I ran a small business for 11 years so I get the whole economic argument, but I believe that when you take the totality of all the costs involved it's not a good practice for Maryland," Fraser-Hidalgo said.

The likelihood of unhealthy effects of fracking on air quality, the health care system and noise, among other environmental and health-related factors studied, is "high" or "moderately high", according to the University of Maryland's Institute for Applied Environmental Health (<http://sph.umd.edu/node/59736>).

As of Wednesday, a coalition of 100 environmental groups,

businesses, health centers, faith agencies and advocacy groups is backing Fraser-Hidalgo's bill.

Members of the coalition want to evaluate the impacts of shale development in other states where it is already under way before allowing it in Maryland, said Dr. Gina Angiola, a member of the board of directors of Chesapeake Bay Physicians for Social Responsibility.

"I'm very concerned because I don't believe that regulations - there's no evidence that regulations or regulatory approach can adequately protect public health," Angiola said.

But Delegate Wendell Beitzel, R-Garrett and Allegany, said that whether through the moratorium or the strict regulations O'Malley established, fracking will essentially be banned in Western Maryland.

The pending rules "were drafted with the thought in mind that the regulations themselves would be so restrictive that a gas company would not come to Maryland to operate," Beitzel said.

If the pending regulations are put into place on Feb. 23, the expected start date, only 15 percent of Garrett County would be available for drilling, he said, and the expenses and number of permits required to drill would turn most companies away.

"I think we're being deprived, especially landowners, of their ability to utilize their property - to utilize the resources on their



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY KATELYN NEWMAN

During the announcement of the hydraulic fracturing moratorium bill, healthcare professionals and environmental activists held signs protesting fracking in Maryland.

property -- for whatever purposes they desire," said Beitzel, who said he believes hydraulic fracturing would provide economic stimulation to Garrett County if properly regulated.

More Information on Fracking:

What is hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking?"

Imagine a well that, instead of pulling water out, forces water into the ground to draw up oil and natural gas.

This high-pressure injection of water, sand and chemicals into the bedrock breaks it up, according to the U.S. Geological Survey.

As the rock breaks, it releases natural gas and/or oil that travels back up the well.

The U.S. Geological Survey estimated that the Marcellus Shale -- the underground natural gas reservoir in the Appalachian Basin -- contains a mean of about 84.2 trillion cubic feet of gas and an average of almost 3.4 billion barrels of total natural gas liquids.

Hydraulic fracturing of oil and natural gas, known as "traditional hydraulic fracturing," has occurred in the U.S. since the late 1940s, but no permits have been issued to date in Maryland for gas exploration or production from the Marcellus Shale, according to the Maryland Department of the Environment (http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Land/mining/marcellus/Documents/Hydraulic_Fracturing_FactSheet_2012.pdf).

Malcolm X from A4

However, Malcolm X's call to bear arms was no call to forego background checks. It was no call to sell guns anonymously on the Internet. It was no call to supply ordinary citizens with military-style weaponry. It was, and remains, a clear-cut indictment of race-based, systemic inequality and violence. He added, "If the white man doesn't want the black man buying rifles and shotguns, then let the government do its job."

The ballot was always the immediate option.

Ten days after that speech, Malcolm X left the United States on April 13, 1964 for a life-altering trip through the Middle East and Africa, including a pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, the holiest city in Islam. It was during his experience of the pilgrimage that his next transformation would occur. In letters from his trip, he described scenes of unimagined interracial harmony among "tens of thousands of pilgrims, from all

over the world. They were of all colors, from blue-eyed blondes to black-skinned Africans." As he began to see that unity and brotherhood were not impossible realities between "the white and the non-white," his fight for equality never changed. It only became more inclusive.

In a letter to then Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) President James Farmer, Malcolm, now El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz, wrote, "I am still traveling, trying to broaden my mind, for I've seen too much of

the damage narrow-mindedness can make of things, and when I return home to America, I will devote what energies I have to repairing the damage."

Unfortunately, Malcolm X's newfound approach to the pursuit of racial equality was cut short less than a year later under a fatal hail of bullets in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom. But rather than end his journey to mend our wounded nation, we can each walk a few steps in his remaining miles to ensure equality and justice for all.

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