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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY GRACE TOOHEY
State Delegate Kris Valderrama, D-Prince George's, speaks at a news conference Tuesday, March 10, 2015, as a sponsor of the Women's Pay Equity Act, with co-sponsor state Senator Susan Lee, D-Montgomery. The legislators spoke with advocates from Maryland Working Families, all calling for true pay equity, fair work schedules and the right to rest.

New Data Prompts Three Bills That Call for Job Equity for Maryland's 1.3 Million Hourly Workers

By GRACE TOOHEY
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS — Derek Dutch is a little worried about what his employer, the IKEA in College Park, might think of him speaking out about his job before state legislators. But, the 35-year-old said, something is truly wrong with the way hourly workers like him are often treated, so he's speaking up.

"I've always been a person who will fight," Dutch said.

He said he logs about 22 hours a week, but recently his employer has been sending him home early once he completes his work—even if his hours aren't done—because they can then pay him less.

"It works against you," Dutch said, who would ideally like to be a full-time employee.

"I don't want them to treat me special, I just want what's fair."

IKEA representatives were unavailable to comment Tuesday evening.

Walmart employee Cynthia Murray said one important issue she sees for co-workers is unfair scheduling plans.

Murray, who has worked in the Laurel store for 15 years, said that the company regu-

larly switches employees' schedules with little notice, leaving them little time to prepare and adjust. She said this can be especially hard on parents and families, who try to plan around their schedules, and can't afford to lose their job by not showing up.

See WORKERS Page A5

Rushern L. Baker, III Presents FY 2016 Budget

By Press Officer
PG County Government

Upper Marlboro, MD - On March 13, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III in accordance with the Prince George's County Charter presented his FY 2016 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets. The Proposed FY 2016 Budget for all funds is \$3.63 billion, an increase of \$197 million or 6% over FY 2015. The General Fund accounts for 84% of all spending in FY 2016 and will increase by \$182.3 million, or 6%. County source revenues increase by \$180.6 million or 11%. The growth is primarily

due to proposed rate increases to the real property, personal property, telecommunications and hotel tax rates which results in increased funding to education and public safety priorities.

"As we all know, education and public safety are the two key quality of life issues that attract people to live in any jurisdiction and the most sought after counties in this region, this state, and this nation are the ones that are safe and have the best public education systems," said Prince George's County Rushern L. Baker, III. "Our continued growth and suc-

See 2016 BUDGET Page A7

Help Your Community at Good Neighbor Day 2015

By Press Officer
PG County Parks & Recreation

COLLEGE PARK, MD — The Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation, the City of College Park and the University of Maryland are teaming up to host Good Neighbor Day on Saturday, March 28, 2015, at College Park Community Center.

In its fifth year, Good Neighbor Day provides an opportunity for the community to participate in various community service projects in College Park in addition to self-help workshops, health and wellness screenings, a food drive and a 5K run.

"It's a chance to work with neighbors in common space," said Teresa Gardner-Williams, Volunteer Services & Community Partnerships Manager for the Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation. "You get to meet new people and at the end of the day you'll be able to see what you've done."

Clean-up efforts this year include landscaping at Paint Branch Elementary School, University of Maryland's North Gate and the Hiker-Biker Trolley Trail near Lake Artemesia. Participants also

See NEIGHBOR DAY Page A3

Shortage of IT and Cyber Security Industry Talent Linked to Cost and Availability of Training

Hiring Managers Looking for Security Skills in 2015, Learners Want Collaborative Training Environments

By PRESS OFFICER
Weiss PR, Inc.

Greenbelt, MD — February 10, 2015 — When it comes to how companies are approaching IT training for their employees, most have significant training requirements, and many predict the demand for available IT training will grow over the next year, while the bulk of them want employees with security compliance and governance skills. The costs associated with IT training, however, present a considerable barrier to meeting these needs, according to survey published today by Cybrary.

When Cybrary, the world's first and only tuition-free massive open online course (MOOC) for IT and cyber security, asked 405 senior-level technology professionals about their companies' plans for IT training in 2015, 61 percent said employees in their company need it, while 55 percent predicted an increased need this year and beyond for available

IT training for employees. Security compliance and governance, followed by programming and app development and business intelligence and analytics, ranked as the top IT skills desired by hiring managers in 2015.

About 42 percent of companies plan to hire more IT staff over the next year, 40 percent weren't sure about hiring needs, and the remainder said they had no plans to hire. Most companies plan to spend the same amount of money on IT training for 2015 as they did in 2014, which accounts for as much as 10 percent of overall IT budgets. Less than a quarter allocate 10 to 20 percent of their IT budgets to training, while 11 percent said they don't provide any money for IT training because it's too expensive.

"The data we've compiled suggests that companies do not provide enough means for IT training, despite a lack of IT tal-

See SECURITY Page A3

Experts Call for Improvements To The Set-aside Program To Ensure Small Business Success

By ALICIA MCELHANEY
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—While the federal government's set-aside program for small businesses is generating much economic success, experts say improvements to reduce fraud and to help mid-size companies remain competitive need to be made.

In discussing the findings of the study by the University of Maryland Center for Public Policy and Private Enterprise, one business owner said Thursday that the federal government needs to make sure small businesses succeed even after their government contracts end.

"Being an entrepreneur in one of the greatest nations on earth is the best feeling," Deepak Hathiramani, founder and chairman of Vistronix, said at the National Press Club during a panel discussion. "However, incentives are misaligned with what reality is. How many businesses are sustained after graduating from the small business program?"

Hathiramani said he experienced this first-hand when his information technology company, which started as a small business,



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Jacques Glaser (left) gave opening remarks for a panel discussion Thursday about his study on the federal government's set-aside program for small businesses. Panelists included (from left) Andrew Hunter, Stan Soloway and Deepak Hathiramani.

encountered painful setbacks when it reached the mid-tier level, and only later managed to reach large-tier status.

"When an agency awards a company a contract that's several times the size of the company, it's setting the company up for failure," Hathiramani said.

The study offered suggestions to remedy this problem, including stricter contract criteria such as considering

whether the company has enough qualified workers or immediate resources to get the work done.

The study also covered the issue of fraud in the set-aside program.

The set-aside programs typically operate on a "kind of corporate 'honor system,'" the report said, in which the business owner simply certifies that he or she is a female or minor-

ity, rather than having to prove it. It is unclear how much fraud of this type occurs because few federal agencies have time to verify the applications and "policing of the system is left up to firms willing to file a complaint."

"I have not seen any data that says that one sector or the

See SET-ASIDE Page A5

INSIDE

Maryland's Chief Judge Appoints Chief of Staff

Schneider reports directly to Chief Judge Barbera and will manage the daily operations of the chief judge's chambers, including supervising staff, handling communications, inquiries, and scheduling, providing research, reviewing reports, advising, and, as directed, communicating on the chief judge's behalf. Community, Page A3

Who Are We? What Do We Americans Truly Value?

Among high-income countries the United States ranks first in Gross Domestic Product and first in the number of billionaires, and second worst in child poverty rates — ahead only of Romania whose economy is 99 percent smaller than ours. Commentary, Page A4

Amid Controversy, D.C. Marijuana Law Goes Into Effect

Initiative 71 makes it legal for anyone over 21 in Washington, D.C. to possess up to two ounces of marijuana and to grow up to six marijuana plants in their homes. The marijuana must be consumed on private property and cannot be sold, but rather must be traded or shared. Business, Page A5

Movie Review: Focus

I, for one, am almost always fooled by the tricks in con-artist movies. Even when I should know better, I think, "Uh-oh! They blew it! Their caper's not going to work! How will they get out of this?" And then it turns out they knew what they were doing all along, the setbacks were part of the plan, and I am delighted. Every time. Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

The collective impact of all the iPhones and other devices we buy, use and then discard must be mind-boggling at this point. Has anyone quantified this and what can we do to start reducing waste from such items?

— Jacques Chevalier, Boston, MA Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Lincoln Assassination's 150th remembered with drama, Civil War re-enactors, book-signings and ghosts

Mark your calendar for April 18-19 and come to the Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House in Charles County. Join in commemorating the 150th anniversary of the assassination of President Lincoln, which changed the course of American history.

See the play, "The Assassin's Doctor," presented by the Port Tobacco Players, visit living history exhibits and wander through an encampment of Civil War re-enactors. There'll be speakers, historical impersonators portraying Abraham Lincoln, Robert E. Lee and Ulysses Grant, book-signings, Zekiah Swamp walking tours, and a display of Civil War dolls.

Southern Maryland Ghost Hunters will lead a ghost tour after hours. Ghost tours are limited and require advance registration.

This special event will be the weekend of April 18/19. Hours are: Saturday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Event Admission is \$5 per car. House Tour Admission is \$8 for adults, \$2 for ages 6 to 16, free for members. Information: 800-766-3386. The Dr. Mudd House is at 3725 Dr. Samuel Mudd Road (off Poplar Hill Road) in Waldorf.

Also, the Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House and Museum seeks volunteer tour guides, actors and storytellers for its living history program. Contact Donna Peterson, 301-452-2158 or email, weourselves2@msn.com.

Where to install a Camp Springs sign?

Where should a CAMP SPRINGS sign be installed, marking the large community where so many of us live, shop, go to church and go to school.

Karyn Crichton, community planner with Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission has sent an email to a dozen or more who have expressed an interest in participating in The Central Branch Avenue Corridor Revitalization Plan, which was approved two years ago, on April 2, 2013.

Of the many projects recommended in both the Central

Branch Avenue Plan and the Greater Camp Springs/Morningside Sustainable Community Action Plan, a gateway sign for Camp Springs might be a feasible first project for the community. The funds are immediately available and must be used this fiscal year, which ends June 30, 2015.

Not only where should the sign be installed, but also, what should it say? If you have suggestions, email Karyn.Crichton@ppd.mncppc.org.

Davies Concert Series continues

Davies Concert Series, now in its 44th year, will present Brian Quenton Thorne, tenor, and Francis Conlon, pianist, in concert on April 12. The program will be a mixture of standard and contemporary pop classics from Gershwin to Billy Joel as well as musical theater classics and modern songs.

There will be a pre-concert performance by student artists Abigail Gertsman, violin, and Lydia Kivrak, piano, who will play "The Swan" by Saint Saens.

Admission: adults, \$15; ages 18 & younger, \$5. Davies is at 7400 Temple Hill Road. For more directions and other information, visit the Davies Concert Series Website: http://www.dmuuc.org/music_daviesconcerts.html.

Steak in a Sack half-century old

When I mention Steak in a Sack, in Marlow Heights, I often hear county old-timers say, "Is that place still there?" Well, it is, and it is celebrating more than 50 years in business. I particularly like to have breakfast there. It's open Sunday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. It's also great for carryout. Call 301-423-0195 or 301-423-0196.

Changing landscape

Capt. Billy's Crab House, Pope's Creek, which was established in 1947, is under new management. (I hope it hasn't changed!) It's now open 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Thursday through Sunday. For information, call 301-932-4323.

Sheehy Ford, in Camp Springs, is under construction, but is Open For Business.

A big building is going up next door to Clinton Hardware. I understand it will house offices and shops.

My neighbor Stacie Smith tells me the beauty supply store in Andrews Manor has reopened.

May they rest in peace

Mary Elizabeth Steger Trindal, author of "Mary Surratt: An American Tragedy," died Dec. 31, 2013, in Harrisonburg, Va. Her book is possibly the best biography of Mary Surratt. It was at her tavern in Clinton, that John Wilkes Booth stopped to pick up carbines as he fled Ford's Theatre after fatally shooting President Lincoln.

Rita P. Buckingham, 80, formerly of Silver Hill, died at her home in New Castle, Pa., Feb. 10. A graduate of Strayer University, she worked for the FBI and as executive secretary for Senators Hiram Fong and S.I. Hayakawa. She retired from government service after 31 years and worked for Association Growth Enterprises in Largo. Some years ago she was a member of St. Philip's Parish in Camp Springs. Her husband Robert Ellis Buckingham predeceased her. Survivors include daughter Angela Lytle, son Andrew Buckingham, two grandchildren and three sisters.

Milestones

A special birthday greeting to Ben Surratt who turns 80 on March 29. He often calls me with news.

Happy birthday to Walter Dimes, March 27; Robert Hay Jr. and David Righter, March 28; Kimberly Smith, March 29; Akwete Bedewi, March 30; Mark Cummings, March 31; and Wayne Booth, Susan Frostbutter, Douglas Mangum and James Whipple, all of whom celebrate birthdays on April Fools Day, April 1.

Happy anniversary to Antoinette and Charles Mattison on March 29, and to Walter and Fannie Dimes who were married April 1, 1989, in Frederick, Md.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE

Join us in an enlightening program for children and adults about keeping our children safe Wednesday, April 15, 2015 at 5:00 PM. The program will be at Upper Marlboro Library 14730 Main Street, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone number is 301-627-9330.

READ TO ROVER

Read to Rover at Baden Memorial Library Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 4:00 and Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 4:00 PM. Each child will read for 15 minutes. Bring therapy dog will be glad to listen. Registration is required. Call Baden Library Branch Brandywine, Maryland 20613 at 301-888-1152 for details.

SPRING TEACHER RECRUITMENT

Prince George's County Public Schools will host a Spring Teacher Recruitment Fair Saturday March 28, 2015 from 8:00 AM-1:00 PM. The Recruitment Fair will be at Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

To obtain additional information, please e-mail the Office of

Recruitment and Retention at hr.recruitment@pgeps.org or call 301-780-6404/301-952-6348/301-952-6398.

BADEN COMMUNITY CENTER

The center offers Zumba and Fitness for adults. Zumba is a fusion of Latin music dance themes that create a dynamic and exciting work out. Smartlink #1605724. Learn basic yoga to improve health and flexibility and/or practice skills previously learned March 30, 2015-Monday April 20, 2015. The address is 13601 Baden-Westwood 888-1500: TTY: 301-203-6030.

JELLY BEAN JAM

Join us to celebrate Easter Saturday, April 4, 2015 1-4 PM for a Jelly Bean Jam. The day will be filled with games, prizes, egg hunts and DJ (additional fee for pictures). The event is for ages 3-12. Fee is \$5 residents and \$6 non-resident.

The address is Upper Marlboro Community Center 5400 Marlboro Race Track Road Upper Marlboro, MD, 20772. Contact number is 301-627-2828; TTY 301-203-6030.

ST. PHILIP'S LINE DANCE SOCIAL NIGHTS

Social nights are Fridays, April 3 and April 17, 2015 from 7:00 PM-9:00 PM. The cost is \$2.00. Point of contact are Ruby E. Hinnant 301-943-2816, Shirley A Cleaves 302-690-4260 and Michele Chase 240-882-3369. The church hall is located on Baden Naylor Road Brandywine, Maryland.

CHILDREN'S GLOBAL READINESS ACADEMY

Children's Global Readiness Academy is one Language Academy with two great programs and locations. Spring Break April 6-10, 2015. Summer Camp will be offered in two sessions. Session I June 22- July 24- Language and the City and Session II- July 27-August 21 Language and the STEM. Call 301-842-4056 or visit www.cgrkids.org for more information.

CHRISTMAS IN APRIL

Christmas in April event will be April 5, 2015. Volunteers will make repairs at a home in Cheltenham, Maryland. Please contact Pfc. Cagier at 301-877-3624 for more information on how you may help and for the location.

Neighborhood Events

Maryland Is the 4th Best State for Women

Happy Women's History Month! With the percentage of women in public- and private-sector leadership roles increasing this past year and women outpacing men in college enrollment, the leading personal finance social network WalletHub conducted an in-depth analysis of 2015's Best & Worst States for Women.

To find the most suitable environment for the American woman, WalletHub examined the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia across 13 key metrics. The data set ranges from median earnings for female workers to women's preventive health care.

Women's Quality of Life in Maryland (1=Best, 25=Avg.):

- 3rd – Median Earnings for Females (Adjusted for Cost of Living)
- 18th – Unemployment Rate for Women
- 3rd – % of Women Living in Poverty
- 2nd – Share of Women-Owned Businesses
- 14th – High School Dropout Rate for Women
- 16th – % of Women Who Voted in the 2012 Presidential Election
- 11th – Female Uninsured Rate
- 25th – Women's Life Expectancy at Birth
- 3rd – Women's Preventive Health Care

For the full report, visit: <http://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-women/10728/>

Anthony Brown Statement on Rep. Donna Edwards Running for Senate

"Representative Donna Edwards brings a record of progressive values and real results to the Senate race and I applaud her for seeking to serve all Marylanders. Donna and I have worked together to reduce domestic violence in our communities, provide our Veterans with the services they've earned and deliver hundreds of high paying BRAC jobs to Joint Base Andrews in Prince George's County. Time and again, Donna has proven that she puts working families ahead of Wall Street special interests, that's why she's emerged as a leading voice of opposition to the extreme agenda of the Republicans in Congress. I am encouraged that such a broad and diverse field of Democratic candidates are rising to carry on the tradition of effective leadership that Senator Mikulski embodies."

4th Annual 5K for the Bay Coming to Annapolis April 11 (Annapolis, MD)

On Saturday, April 11, the Chesapeake Bay Trust will host its 4th Annual 5K for the Bay at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. This 3.1 mile run/walk, sponsored by the Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company, will start at 9:00 am with all proceeds benefitting Chesapeake Bay restoration and education. Since it launched in 2011, the 5K for the Bay has grown exponentially, with a sellout crowd of more than 600 participants last year. The race is on track to sell out again this year, so participants are encouraged to register as early as possible. Registration is \$30 for adults, \$10 for students 10 to 17 years old, and kids 9 and under are free. Leashed pets and children in jogging strollers are welcome and participants can register online at www.cbtrust.org/5KfortheBay.

"We are so pleased to see the 5K for the Bay grow so fast from just 200 runners our first year to more than 600 participants last year," said Molly Alton Mullins, the Chesapeake Bay Trust's director of communications and race director. "We attribute this growth to the fact that this event has something for the whole family to enjoy in one of Maryland's most beautiful parks. All while we are supporting a great cause we care deeply about—restoring our beloved Chesapeake Bay."

All race registrants will receive a performance race tee shirt and participant bag featuring giveaways from race sponsors and supporting businesses. There are prizes for the fastest male and female runners in multiple age categories. Pre-race packet pick-up will take place Friday, April 10 from 3:00-6:00 pm at Fleet Feet in Annapolis. There is a 20 percent discount available for groups of six or more which makes this event an excellent opportunity for local businesses, religious institutions, schools and other organizations looking to put together teams to compete.

"We are so thankful to our sponsors who made this year's 5K possible, especially our title sponsor the Chesapeake Bay Roasting Company, for their fantastic support," continued Alton Mullins. "We are really excited to put together an outstanding race featuring great food donated by Panera, Wegmans and Buffalo Wild Wings, as well as music, mascots and more!"

Other 2015 race sponsors include Annapolis Subaru, Dogs and Cats Veterinary Referral & Emergency, Environmental Quality Resources, Sila Heating and Air Conditioning, Gutter Helmet by Harry Hamlet, Premier Fitness, South River Federation, Tails on Trails, K&B True Value, Bay Bred, Bowie Baysox, SPCA of Anne Arundel County, Capital SUP, and Fleet Feet Annapolis. Each participating company has donated in-kind services, monetary contributions or overall race support. To sign up or for more information, visit www.cbtrust.org/5KfortheBay.

The Chesapeake Bay Trust is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the Chesapeake Bay and its rivers through environmental education, community outreach and Bay restoration. Since 1985, the Trust has awarded more than \$70 million in grants to organizations, schools, and community groups to restore area shorelines, educate schoolchildren about the environment, green local neighborhoods and clean-up rivers and streams. The Trust is supported by the sale of Maryland's Treasure Chesapeake license plate, donations to the Bay Fund on the Maryland State income tax form, donations from individuals and corporations, and partnerships with private foundations and government agencies. Fully 90 percent of the Trust's expenditures are directed to its Chesapeake Bay restoration and education programs.

Tackling the Second Leading Cause of Cancer Death in the U.S. and Maryland

Screenings Can Save Lives Baltimore, MD (March 12, 2015) – March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, a time to raise aware-

ness of colorectal cancer. This type of cancer develops in the colon or the rectum and is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States and in Maryland. The American Cancer Society estimates that in 2015, about 2,360 new cases of colorectal cancer will be diagnosed in Maryland and 860 deaths will occur due to the disease.

The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and community partners are working together to educate Maryland residents about colorectal cancer and to urge doctors and health care providers to recommend colorectal cancer screening for eligible patients. For those who qualify, DHMH has programs that provide free colorectal cancer screening.

"Screenings save lives," said Dr. Laura Herrera Scott, DHMH Deputy Secretary for Public Health Services. "Early detection of pre-cancerous polyps or the beginning stages of cancer can lead to treatment and a cure."

There are several type of screening tests available including colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, fecal immunochemical test (FIT), and fecal occult blood test (FOBT). DHMH encourages individuals age 50 and over and those under 50 with a family history of colorectal cancer to speak with their doctor about when to be screened and which method is recommended.

Some risk factors for colorectal cancer are:

- age (most colorectal cancers are diagnosed after age 50),
- cigarette smoking,
- obesity, and
- excessive alcohol use.

For more information about DHMH's screening programs and the eligibility criteria, please visit: http://phpa.dhmh.maryland.gov/cancer/SitePages/crc_home.aspx. For additional information on colorectal cancer, please visit <http://www.cancer.org/cancer/news/specialcoverage/how-ac-s-fights-colon-cancer>.

Thompson Creek Windows Reviews as a SmartCEO's 2015 Future 50 Winner

Lanham, MD | February 25, 2015 – Thompson Creek Window Company, the mid-Atlantic's leading home improvement replacement products company, today announced it has been honored with the SmartCEO Future 50 award. Washington D.C.'s SmartCEO profiles the 50 awarded companies, which represent the area's fastest growing companies based on a combined three-year growth rate of revenue and employees. The 2015 Future 50 winners collectively generate \$3.5 billion in annual revenue and employ 13,000 individuals in the Greater Washington area.

"The companies we honored this year are growing in spite of the economic hardships we have all been facing. These companies are investing in themselves, investing in their people and rising above the rest. They deserve to be recognized and celebrated because they are moving the economy and the region forward," says Jaime Nespor-Zawmon, president of SmartCEO Events. "We are proud to recognize them for their achievements and growth."

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Is Your Teen Ready for a Summer Job?

For many teens, there's nothing more exciting than receiving the first paycheck from a summer job — a sure-fire ticket to fun and freedom. It's also a great opportunity for parents to encourage proper money management.

Parents or guardians need to do some necessary paperwork first. Working teens will need his or her own Social Security Number (SSN) to legally apply for a job. They will also need a SSN to open a bank account to deposit their paychecks. Depending on state law, children under 18 may have to open bank accounts in their custodial name with their parents or guardians. It is also important for parents to check in with qualified tax or financial advisors about their teen's earned income, particularly if it may affect any investments under the child's name.

After that, it's about encouraging teens to get a jump on their job search. The recent job market for American teens has been tough and investigating particular kinds of openings should start months in advance of summer hire. Networking is also important — teens can reach out to friends, neighbors and other trusted adults about potential jobs in the community. Also, it is never too early for teens to learn resume writing and job interviewing skills. The Practical Money Skills website's Landing a Job (<http://www.practical-moneyskills.com/personalfinance/lifeevents/work/landingjob.php>) page offers useful background to help teens get started.

Parents can also assist by monitoring job categories their kids are interested in, encouraging them to meet application deadlines and being aware of federal, state and local child labor laws (<http://www.youthrules.dol.gov/know-the-limits/index.htm>) to steer them from unscrupulous employers.

Technology changes quickly, so tech-savvy teens may be ahead of the game when it comes to searching for work online. Leading job search engines are a destination for seasonal job openings, and many allow users to customize searches for specific positions and employers. However, teens may need to be reminded about their social media activity before they begin any job search — anything a teen posts publicly on the Internet may be seen by a potential employer.

Banking is another major step in the life of the working teen, though they don't need to wait for that first job to get started.

Many parents open bank accounts for their children as early as their first allowance — after all, digital banking makes it easier to monitor and transfer money without a trip to the branch or ATM. Paychecks — on paper or via digital deposit — make familiarity with the banking system an even greater necessity. Check with their bank to see what types of accounts are offered for children and teens — some banks offer a wide variety of custodial accounts where parents can track and assist their child's spending and saving activity.

A teen's first job is a great opportunity to introduce budgeting, saving and long-term investment skills. Your child may be working over the summer to save for a particular desired item — a cellphone or a trip — or more extensive goals like future college expenses. The Practical Money Skills site offers a budgeting tutorial (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/personalfinance/savingspending/budgeting/>) and budgeting calculators (<http://www.practical-moneyskills.com/calculators/budgetGoals.php?calcCategory=budget>) for a range of purposes.

When the job offer comes, there's one more thing parents can do. Getting hired means a flurry of paperwork that can be confusing; parents can help their children review those documents before signature. Most will apply to tax withholding, but such documents might also include special workplace agreements that might not always be clear to young workers. When that first paycheck arrives, consider sitting down to inspect a teen's first paper or electronic pay stub. Many people don't understand their withholding even as adults, so children can benefit greatly from this lesson at the start of their working lives.

Bottom line: A teen's first summer job is a great way for parents and children to collaborate on job-hunting and money management skills that will produce benefits for a lifetime.



Maryland's Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera Appoints Chief of Staff

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Judiciary

(ANNAPOLIS, Md. — March 11, 2015) Maryland Court of Appeals Chief Judge Mary Ellen Barbera has named Suzanne Schneider as her chief of staff. Schneider, who had been the assistant court administrator for the Montgomery County Circuit Court, will begin her new duties March 11.

As chief of staff, Schneider reports directly to Chief Judge Barbera and will manage the daily operations of the chief judge's chambers, including supervising staff, handling communications, inquiries, and scheduling, providing research, reviewing reports, advising, and, as directed, communicating on the chief judge's behalf. In addition to leading the state's highest court, Chief Judge Barbera is the head of Maryland's judicial branch and is responsible for the administration of the state court system, overseeing a budget of \$468 million with nearly 300 judges and about 4,000 employees.

"Suzanne brings a wealth of varied experience and skills to

this role," Chief Judge Barbera said. "She has an impressive track record of problem-solving, prioritizing, multitasking and consensus-building. These wide-ranging attributes and abilities make her an outstanding choice to help achieve the Judiciary's goal of improving service to all the people who have business with our courts."

"I am looking forward to this new challenge and new opportunity to serve the people of Maryland, and I am honored to have been chosen by Chief Judge Barbera," Schneider said. "I plan to work closely with my colleagues in the Judiciary to help ensure that the Judiciary's operations run smoothly and efficiently and to provide Chief Judge Barbera with the information and tools she needs as the leader of Maryland's courts."

A member of the Maryland bar since 1993, Schneider has served as the assistant court administrator, differentiated case management coordinator, family division coordinator, and juvenile division coordinator for the Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Maryland. Prior to joining the Circuit Court, Schneider

prosecuted criminal cases as an assistant state's attorney, specializing in financial and high tech crimes, while also serving as administrative services coordinator for the Office of the State's Attorney for Montgomery County.

Schneider initiated the criminal law reform program for the American Bar Association (ABA-CEELI) in Uzbekistan from 1999 to 2000 as a volunteer liaison and served as the first resident country director for the ABA-CEELI Rule of Law Program in the former Soviet republic of Georgia from 2000 to 2001. Between 2005 and 2009, she completed long-term consultancies for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's Criminal Justice Reform Unit and for the International Atomic Energy Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT). More recently, she has served as a consulting expert for a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) judicial strengthening project and for U.S. Department of Justice Criminal Courts Technical Assistance Projects



PHOTO COURTESY
MARYLAND JUDICIARY

Suzanne Schneider

(CCTAP) administered through the American University's Justice Programs Office.

Schneider graduated from the Georgetown University Law Center in 1993, the Johns Hopkins University Writing Seminars in 1985, and Rice University in 1984. She completed the National Center for State Courts' Institute for Court Management Court Executive Certification in 2014 and is certified as an ICM instructor in the human resources and high performing courts courses.

Neighbor Day from A1

have the option to help construct a community garden.

"It's a great opportunity to get together and meet who is in the community," said Gloria Aparicio Blackwell, director of the University of Maryland's Office of Community Engagement. "What I value most about this is working in partnership [with Parks and Recreation and the city]. It's not about one entity bringing the resources or the expertise. It's bringing all the assets that we have here and working together for something that's going to be a common good for all of us."

In addition to the service projects, there will be a chance for volunteers to learn how to better themselves. A mobile medical unit will be on site to host vision

and hearing screenings. There will also be a workshop on financial literacy, covering the basics of budgeting and saving, a workshop on building and maintaining a community garden, and an expo featuring local service and community organizations.

"It's an opportunity for the community to get involved, and I'm excited about that," said Corey Poole, facility director at College Park Community Center.

Prior to the service projects, there will be an informal walk/run, the Lose It to Win It 5K, hosted by the UMD School of Public Health, along Lake Artemesia. Check in is at 7 a.m. with an 8 a.m. start time.

There will be a food drive leading up to Good Neighbor Day which will benefit the College Park Community Food

Bank and the University of Maryland Campus Pantry. Non-perishable food items will be collected at the locations below until March 26, 2015.

Pickup locations:

A1 Huda Elementary School; AllState College Park; Center for Educational Partnership (Riverdale); Christian Community of College Park; College Park Academy; College Park City Hall; College Park Public Works Facility at Davis Hall; College Park Community Center; College Park Fire Department; College Park United Methodist Church; College Park Youth, Family & Senior Services Building; Center for the Advanced Study of Language; First Baptist Church of College Park; Friends Community School;

Hope Lutheran Church; Mom's Organic Market (College Park); Paint Branch Elementary School; The Varsity; and University View.

Good Neighbor Day

When: Saturday, March 28, 2015 — 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Register at www.goodneighborday.umd.edu

Where: 5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park, MD 20740

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pgpr.com and stay connected on Facebook and Twitter. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.

Security from A1

ent and ever-increasing technology and cyber security challenges," said Ryan Corey, co-founder, Cybrary. "Additionally, the current state of IT training makes it very difficult for employees to advance in their careers and for people to break into the IT industry, thereby eliminating a lot of talent from the start."

The greatest impediment to IT training is cost, according to respondents, while 35 percent cited a lack of other resources, including time and staff. Another

obstacle was lack of management buy-in. When companies do invest in IT training for employees, it's predominantly for those who need it (41 percent), and often just for those in IT. More than 50 percent believe the cost of quality IT training will climb in 2015. The most important and/or popular areas for training are in security, Microsoft, and Cisco, followed by CompTIA and VMware.

In terms of what makes for a preferred IT training environment, most respondents want a reputable company, variety in content and courses, affordabil-

ity, and collaboration with other IT learners. According to Corey, IT and cyber security professionals enjoy sharing industry accomplishments and knowledge, making collaborative learning a critical element in IT training.

Cybrary conducted this survey from November 2014 — January 2015. For a complete copy of the results, go to <http://www.cybrary.it/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/Cybrary-Survey-Presentation.pdf>

About Cybrary.IT

Founded in 2015, Cybrary.IT gives aspiring and practicing IT

professionals what they have long deserved and been denied: access to free, high-quality, open-source and results-focused IT and cyber security training that will help start and advance their careers. A MOOC provider whose top managers have nearly 15 years of experience in IT training, Cybrary.IT offers free online training to anyone, anywhere and at every skill level in systems administration, network administration and cyber security. For more information on how Cybrary.IT is liberating IT knowledge by liberating training, visit <http://www.cybrary.it/>.

Groundbreaking Mortgage Initiative for Homebuyers in Prince George's County Fully Utilized in less than Four Months

By PRESS OFFICER
DHCD

Crownsville, MD - DHCD announced today that the funds set aside to provide down payment assistance under the Maryland Mortgage Program Triple Play Initiative in Prince George's County have been utilized.

MMP TriplePlay has been one of the most popular initiatives in the long history of the Maryland Mortgage Program. State and county officials announced that because of the unprecedented demand, a modified version of the groundbreaking initiative will continue, building

upon the nearly 400 homebuyers already served.

"The success of the MMP TriplePlay Initiative illustrates the economic impact of a well-designed homeownership program that meets the needs of today's homebuyer," said DHCD Secretary-designate Kenneth C. Holt.

"The homebuyer market is more diverse than in the past and increasingly consists of members of the Millennium Generation" Secretary Holt continued. "The Hogan-Rutherford administration is committed to pursuing innovative programs such as MMP TriplePlay that help those

families earn a piece of the American dream."

The initiative was the result of a unique partnership between the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Prince George's County and the Office of the Attorney General. Working together, the partners recognized homeownership as the most effective use of a portion of the \$10 million that was set aside for Prince George's County as part of the landmark Mortgage Servicing Settlement between the nation's attorneys general and the five largest lenders. The support of the Prince George's

County Association of Realtors played an important role in the success of the effort, Holt said.

Through the MMP TriplePlay Initiative, families looking to buy a home in Prince George's County through the Maryland Mortgage Program were eligible for \$10,000 in downpayment and closing cost assistance in a no-interest deferred loan with an additional \$10,000 grant if they purchase their home in targeted areas in the county; 0.25 percent reduction in the Maryland Mortgage Program's already low interest rate and a waiver of the state's fee on the Maryland

HomeCredit, which allows homebuyers to claim a federal income tax credit of up to \$2,000 for as long as the loan is outstanding.

MMP TriplePlay was launched in November and "sold out" in less than four months.

Under the extended version of the program, which officials have dubbed the DoublePlay Initiative, eligible homebuyers may still receive the 0.25 percent rate reduction from the Maryland Mortgage Program already low interest rates and the fee waiver. In addition, all Maryland Mortgage Program borrowers may be el-

igible for \$5000 in down payment assistance in the form of a no-interest deferred loan.

The Maryland Mortgage Program has been the state's flagship mortgage purchase program for more than 30 years. Program loans are administered by a network of more than 60 private lending institutions across the state, including about 30 lenders in Prince George's County. Additional benefits of the program include pre-purchase home buyer education.

For more information on Maryland Mortgage Program offers, visit MMP.MARYLAND.GOV.

COMMENTARY

Victor R. Ramirez

Maryland State Senator, District 47
Prince George's County



Legislative Session 2015 Week 8 Wrap-Up

Week eight of the 2015 Legislative Session has finished. The various standing House and Senate Committees are holding hearings late into the evenings in order to give serious thought and consideration to every piece of legislation that passes through its chambers. Below I provide details on two of my own bills that received favorable reports from committee, a preview of legislation that will be heard this week, and other information of interest.

FAVORABLE COMMITTEE REPORTS

I am pleased to announce that two bills I am sponsoring received favorable reports in committee.

SB 315 – Domestic Violence – 2-Year Protective Order received a favorable report from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. This legislation clears-up existing domestic violence law to specify that a court may issue a final protective order for up to two years by consent of the respondent. This law will help strengthen the legal tools that courts have to help keep victims of domestic violence safe.

SB 316 – Vehicle Laws – Obstruction Hanging from Rearview Mirror, received a favorable report from the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and is now being heard before the House Environment and Transportation Committee. This legislation prevents law enforcement from pulling over vehicles for having an object hanging from the rearview mirror, such as an air-freshener. This law would change 'obstruction hanging from a rearview mirror' to a secondary offense meaning that a law enforcement officer would have to first pull over the vehicle for some other lawful reason before citing the driver for this particular infraction. Thousands of Maryland drivers are pulled over every year just because they have an air-freshener hanging from their rearview mirror. This restriction leads to pretextual stops on our residents.

LEGISLATION BEING HEARD THIS WEEK BEFORE COMMITTEE

The following legislation that I am sponsoring will be heard this week before committee:

SB 693 – Ambient Air Quality Control – Cumulative Air Impact Analysis, will be heard March 10th before the Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee. This legislation recognizes that certain communities are more likely to host polluting industries that negatively impact the health of its residents. This bill will require a "Cumulative Air Impact Analysis" to be performed in certain communities when there is a new air permit to construct a polluting facility. Cumulative Impacts Analysis is a scientific methodology that looks at the total pollution and health burden experienced by a community, instead of looking at each permit individually as if other nearby facilities don't exist.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT REFORM LEGISLATION

SB 863 – Watershed Protection and Restoration Programs – Revisions, is being heard on March 10th before the Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee. This legislation removes a mandate for the fee, while still forcing counties to be accountable for their stormwater management plans. The legislation requires applicable local governments to submit a financial assurance plan in which each of the 10 federal MS-4 counties shall demonstrate what combination of revenues, bonds, and operating funds will be used to meet the federal requirement. This legislation also exempts veterans organizations from the fee, similar to the current exemption for volunteer fire departments. The legislation also proposes a cap for local nonprofits, and providing a path for local governments to charge the state a stormwater remediation fee.

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski, Murray, Boxer Announce New Bill to Advance Women's Health Care

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) together with Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-Wash.) and Senator Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) today announced the 21st Century Women's Health Act, a new bill that would protect and build on progress made on women's health care. The 21st Century Women's Health Act invests in women's health clinics and the primary care workforce, and promotes critical preventive services like contraception coverage. The bill also works to provide compassionate assistance for survivors of rape by ensuring all hospitals provide emergency contraception, spreading awareness, and working with community-based groups to help prevent sexual violence.

"Fighting for women's health has been one of my life-long priorities," Senator Mikulski said. "When I first came to the Senate, women's health wasn't a national priority. We've changed that paradigm but there's more to be done. I'll continue to fight for women to get the preventive care and treatment they need to live healthy lives. We must raise awareness, raise consciousness, and raise hell so that women are not left behind when it comes to their health."

"I am so proud today to be introducing the 21st Century Women's Health Act. As we continue to fight back against those who miss the Mad Men era, the 21st Century Women's Health Act lays out important ways we can and should move forward on women's health, from maternity care, to preventive health services, to continuing to expand access to birth control, to ensuring survivors of rape have access to emergency contraception in every hospital. Period," Senator Murray said. "The 21st Century Women's Health Act would mean that more women across the country have the information and access they need to be in the driver's seat about their own health care and their own futures."

"At a time when the GOP congress is trying to drag women back to the last century, we are offering a bold agenda to strengthen women's health

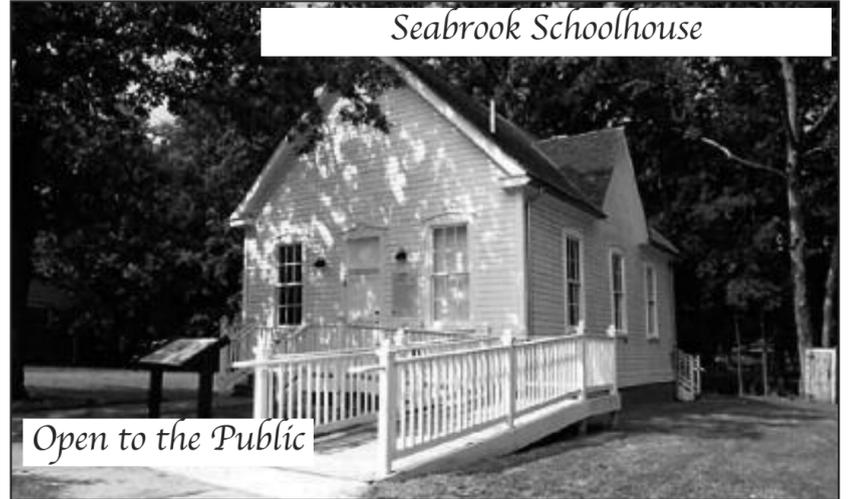
in this century," said Senator Boxer.

In a call with reporters and advocates, Murray highlighted that at a critical time in the fight to protect a woman's right to make her own choices about her own body, the 21st Century Women's Health Act would challenge elected officials to be on the right side of history when it comes to women's health, equality, and opportunity. Murray was joined on the call today by Dana Singiser, Vice President for Public Policy and Government Affairs, Planned Parenthood Federation of America and Dr. Laurel Kuehl, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest's Washington Medical Director.

"We applaud Senators Murray, Mikulski, and Boxer for the introduction of the 21st Century Women's Health Act in Congress today. This aptly-named bill not only brings women into the 21st century — it launches us forward," said Cecile Richards, President, Planned Parenthood Federation of America. "At Planned Parenthood, we've seen the progress that comes when women can make their own health care decisions, without politicians standing in the way. Together, through this bill and other efforts, we will keep working to ensure that women across the country have the information and access they need to make decisions about their health care and their futures."

"Women deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and this bill helps give them the tools they need to lead happy, healthy lives," said Dr. Laurel Kuehl, Washington Medical Director, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest. "I'm lucky to practice in a state where elected officials understand that it's best when decisions are left between me and my patients. I know that for my colleagues across the country — things aren't that easy. That's why it is so important that we have champions in Congress like Senator Murray working to expand access to health care instead of standing in the

See Women's Health, Page A5



Seabrook Schoolhouse

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: ???

SEABROOK SCHOOLHOUSE

The Seabrook Schoolhouse was built in 1896 by the residents of the Seabrook community and provided education for grades one through eight until the early 1950s. This one-room schoolhouse is one of the few surviving one-room schoolhouses in Prince George's. The building is unique in that it was built to resemble the Victorian Gothic architectural style of the cottages that were originally built in the community. The schoolhouse has been restored and continues its legacy of education. It is open for tours by appointment and features a multi-faceted, overall program that includes interpretive exhibits and artifacts and programs. Located at 6116 Seabrook Road, Lanham, MD. For further information, call Marietta House Museum at 301-464-5291.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



Who Are We? What Do We Americans Truly Value?

Too much and for too long, we seem to have surrendered personal excellence and community values in the mere accumulation of material things. Our Gross National Product, now is over \$800 billion dollars a year... if we judge the United States of America by that... Gross National Product counts air pollution and cigarette advertising, and ambulances to clear our highways of carnage. It counts special locks for our doors and the jails for the people who break them. It counts the destruction of the redwood and the loss of our natural wonder in chaotic sprawl. It counts napalm and counts nuclear warheads and armored cars for the police to fight the riots in our cities. It counts Whitman's rifle and Speck's knife, and the television programs which glorify violence in order to sell toys to our children.

Yet the Gross National Product does not allow for the health of our children, the quality of their education, or the joy of their play. It does not include the beauty of our poetry or the strength of our marriages, the intelligence of our public debate or the integrity of our public officials. It measures neither our wit nor our courage, neither our wisdom nor our learning, neither our compassion nor our devotion to our country, it measures everything in short, except that which makes life worthwhile. And it can tell us everything about America except why we are proud that we are Americans.

— Senator Robert F. Kennedy

What do we stand for as a nation and who do we wish to be? In a 1968 speech at the University of Kansas, Senator Robert Kennedy correctly worried too many used our nation's wealth as the standard of greatness rather than the human values that should matter most. Our Gross Domestic Product — now \$17.7 trillion — includes many things for us not to be proud of. So we should ask ourselves how well America is doing on the things that should matter most — the well-being of our children and families and the quality of justice and life in our communities and nation?

Among high-income countries the United States ranks

first in Gross Domestic Product and first in the number of billionaires, and second worst in child poverty rates — ahead only of Romania whose economy is 99 percent smaller than ours. It is a national disgrace that children are the poorest group of Americans with 14.7 million living in poverty.

We are first in military spending — \$11.1 billion a week — and first in military weapons exports.

We are first in the number of people incarcerated and worst in protecting our children against gun violence. A Black boy born in 2001 has a one in three chance of going to prison in his lifetime and a Latino boy a one in six chance of the same fate. Children and teens in America were 17 times more likely to be killed by gun violence than those in 25 other high-income countries combined.

We are 30th in preschool enrollment rates and 17th in reading, 23rd in science, and 31st in math scores for our 15-year-olds. Nearly 60 percent of all fourth and eighth grade public school students in the U.S. and more than 80 percent of Black and almost 75 percent of Latino children in those same grades could not read or compute at grade level in 2013.

We rank first in health expenditures but 25th in low birth weight rates, 26th in child immunization rates, 31st in infant mortality rates, and second worst in teenage births — just ahead of Bulgaria.

If we compare Black child well-being in America to child well-being in other nations, the U.S. Black infant mortality rate exceeds that in 65 nations including Cuba, Malaysia, and Ukraine. Our incidence of low-birth weight Black infants is higher than in 127 other nations including Cambodia, the Congo, and Guatemala.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child spells out the basic rights children should have everywhere and is the most widely and rapidly ratified international human rights treaty in history. For years the United States and Somalia, which had no recognized government, were the only United Nations members that had failed to ratify the convention. In January 2015 Somalia became the 195th nation to do so. The United States now stands only with new U.N. member state South Sudan as the two coun-

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The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Facing Big Problems Shouldn't Be A Solo Activity

When someone faces a problem, it's not uncommon for the person to think that burden is his or hers alone. But few of us live in isolation. When we face a very difficult or serious situation it generally ends up affecting those closest to us as well – our families.

Involving family members can often be an enormous help in coping with problems. Close family members can provide support and understanding, and often can play a key role in helping find and treat the causes of a problem.

Getting families to work together is so important that there is now a field within the counseling profession that specializes in family counseling. First formally developed in the 1950s, family counseling focuses on the family as the client, rather than just seeing a single person as the only one with the problem.

While family counseling is not right for every situation, there are signs that can indicate family counseling might be a good approach for what's troubling you.

One such sign is if you believe that you would feel better if others in the family knew of the dilemma you are struggling with. Family counseling helps make that happen.

Similarly, if you find family relationships aren't going well, or a family member's behavior is affecting the quality of family life or is contributing to or complicating your problem, then a professional counselor is a wise choice.

Family counselors work in a variety of ways. There may be times when a counselor will suggest that the entire family come in for one or more sessions. At other times it might be advisable to see the couple in the relationship, or to work individually with family members. A counselor takes into account the type of problems being faced and the family dynamics as well as his or her own counseling approach. Ask before beginning treatment how a counselor generally works and the type of approach usually used.

Finding a professional counselor specializing in family counseling is usually easy. Your physician, family clergy or school counselor should have recommendations, as might your local mental health agency. In the phone book or online you'll find specialties listed under professional counselors.

While families are sometimes reluctant to seek help as a group, when they do they usually find it helps break down barriers to healthy communication and intimacy, thus creating more productive ways of operating as a family.

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

Business Spotlight

Watch Out for These Tricky Tax Scams

Tax season is upon us. While the process can go smoothly, scammers are out in full force targeting unsuspecting tax filers. The Better Business Bureau serving Metro Washington DC and Eastern PA is urging taxpayers to be aware of these common tax scams:

Watch out for calls claiming to be from the IRS. Unless you initiate the call, the IRS will never demand immediate payment of taxes owed by phone without having first mailed an official notice to you. Watch out for callers who claim to be employees of the IRS. These con artists can sound convincing when they call, using fake names and bogus IRS identification badge numbers. They may know a lot about their targets, and they usually alter the caller ID to make it look like the IRS is calling. Victims are told they owe money to the IRS and that it must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If the victim refuses to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license. In many cases, the caller becomes hostile and insulting. Sometimes the caller may even say a refund is due to try to trick the victim into sharing private information. In either event, just hang up. If you know or think you might owe taxes, call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040. IRS workers can help you with a payment issue.

Be wary of emails purporting to be from the IRS. In many cases, these emails direct you to "update your IRS e-file immediately." The emails may mention USA.gov and IRSgov (without the dot between 'IRS' and 'gov'). The most important thing to know is the IRS does not initiate taxpayer communications through email. Taxpayers who get these messages should not respond, open attachments or click on the links as you may compromise your computer with malware or open yourself up to identity or other theft issues. Instead, forward the fake emails to the IRS at phishing@irs.gov.

Do your research before selecting a tax preparer. Be wary of tax preparation services that promise larger refunds than the competition, and avoid tax preparers who base their fee on a percentage of your refund. Some unscrupulous tax preparers encourage consumers to claim income that was not earned or expenses that were not paid in order to secure larger refunds. Check your return thoroughly and make sure you are not receiving any deductions or credits to which you are not entitled. Ideally, your tax preparer should either be a certified public accountant, a tax attorney, an enrolled agent, or a certified e-file provider. Either way, they should have a preparer tax identification number (PTIN) if they are going to be compensated for preparing or assisting taxpayers with any U.S. federal tax return, claim for refund or other tax form submitted to the IRS. Check out bbb.org for free reviews on tax preparers.

Amid Controversy, D.C. Marijuana Law Goes Into Effect

By ALICIA MCELHANEY
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—On Thursday, February 26, 2015, at midnight, for the first time in his life, Allen St. Pierre got legally stoned.

While St. Pierre, executive director of NORML, a national advocacy group for the legalization of marijuana, said he possessed illegal marijuana for his entire adult life, he celebrated when Initiative 71, Washington, D.C.'s ballot measure to legalize marijuana went into effect by not only lighting up, but also by planting his own cannabis seeds.

"In D.C., it was clear this initiative was going to pass," St. Pierre said, referring to last November's referendum when marijuana legalization was approved with 70 percent of the vote. "We did volunteer call outs in the two weeks leading up to the vote, but there was no cajoling necessary to get it to pass."

Initiative 71 makes it legal for anyone over 21 in Washington, D.C. to possess up to two ounces of marijuana and to grow up to six marijuana plants in their homes. The marijuana must be consumed on private property and cannot be sold, but rather must be traded or shared.

After much dispute between Congress and the D.C. Council on whether possession of marijuana

in Washington, D.C. is legal (and whether the federal or local government has power to determine that), the law went into effect at 12:01 a.m. Thursday with Mayor Muriel Bowser's blessing.

Despite legalization of marijuana possession in the District, the D.C. Council is still working on rules and regulations for the marijuana industry. However, this will take time, in part because the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which oversees the D.C. government, opposes the law and attempted to use the federal spending bill passed in December to block it.

"The interplay between D.C. laws and Congress is for the most part preventing them from taking any action on that sort of legislation," Robert Capecchi, deputy director of state policies for the Marijuana Policy Project, said.

Rep. Andy Harris, R-Cockeysville, is one of the members of the oversight committee firmly against the measure.

"Congress took clear action to stop enactment of legalization of marijuana in D.C.," Harris said. "I agree with my colleagues at the oversight committee that any movement to legalize marijuana in D.C. is a willful violation of the law."

St. Pierre said the committee's opposition was bizarre.

"It is a script for a comedy se-

ries or at least a comedy plot on Saturday Night Live," St. Pierre said. "How dare [Congress] lash out at these elected officials who turned to 70 percent of their voters."

Both St. Pierre and Capecchi praised Bowser and the D.C. Council for continuing with implementation of Initiative 71 despite Congress's qualms.

"I think they've been wonderfully courageous," Capecchi said. "I think they saw through the bologna and stood up for their constituents."

Despite attempts to block D.C. from allowing marijuana sales, advocates and businesses are already planning for the days when selling and buying pot is legal in the District.

ComfyTree, a cannabis education and entrepreneurship group, will host a Cannabis Expo and Job Fair Saturday and Sunday at the Holiday Inn Capitol to teach locals about growing marijuana and to help them find jobs in the industry.

"We want to give useful information to people, but to not make them pay an arm and a leg for it," Tiffany Bowden, ComfyTree co-founder and chief happiness officer said.

And while ComfyTree will work to educate locals, the Drug Policy Alliance is working to advocate for marijuana taxation that

is grounded in racial justice, Dr. Malik Burnett, a policy manager at the group said.

Burnett said the alliance wants legislation to include people with criminal records in the new marijuana marketplace. The group is also advocating for revenues generated by marijuana taxation to go to the Office of Returning Citizens and to after school programs in wards 7 and 8.

"Revenues generated from the sale of marijuana should be used to restore the harms caused to communities of color by the war on drugs," Malik said. "We want money to go toward helping formerly incarcerated individuals returning to the community."

Instead of celebrating legalization by lighting up like St. Pierre, Burnett spent early Thursday morning riding around D.C. with the Metropolitan Police Department to see how the legislation was being implemented.

After a quiet day, the department made two arrests late Thursday afternoon for possession with intent to distribute marijuana. Lt. Sean Conboy of the Metropolitan Police Department Public Information Office said at 7:50 p.m.

"The point that I made to the officers is that the sky hasn't fallen," Burnett said. "[Their] lives are largely the same as they were. They laughed and were largely in agreement."

Workers from A1

Walmart spokesman Kory Lundberg said that all stores give employees schedules two-and-a-half weeks in advance, and they do not have any on-call shifts. If the store needs coverage, Lundberg said, a manager can call employees to see if they want to work an extra shift but they wouldn't be required.

But Dutch and Murray's stories aren't uncommon, said research analyst Aditi Sen for Center for Popular Democracy. Her center's latest research found that there are 1.3 million hourly workers – which Sen said is about half of the state's workforce – in Maryland. About 22 percent of hourly workers in the state hold part-time jobs, which women are more likely to hold, the research found.

This new data, which was released Tuesday, and narratives from Maryland workers and families,

Women's Health from A4

way. From contraception to childbearing, a woman's reproductive well-being is a major part of her health and her economic well-being."

"The 21st Century Women's Health Act is the right approach at the right time to improve and protect women's health," said Debra L. Ness, President, National Partnership for Women & Families. "This legislation would pro-

have inspired three new bills in the General Assembly. The Women's Pay Equity Act, Fair Scheduling Act, and Overwork Prohibition Act were discussed in the House Economic Matters Committee Tuesday, all asking for better standards for Maryland's workers.

"(My data) shows how many people across the state would benefit, and it's such a diverse group of workers that would benefit," Sen said. "It touches all of our communities."

Charly Carter, the executive director of Maryland Working Families, recalled her own childhood growing up with a single mother who had to work an overnight shift and then went to school during the day—but the one thing they could count on was a fixed schedule.

"No one is guaranteed success in America but everyone deserves a chance to succeed," Carter said.

Set-Aside from A1

other is worse than the other (with abuses)," said Stan Soloway, president and CEO of the Professional Services Council, an advocacy group for government contractors. "In terms of actual fraud, we know it exists, I just haven't seen any data that shows how it exists."

mote prevention and make it possible for more women to control their reproductive health and make their own health care decisions. By doing so, it would enhance the economic security of women and families. We commend Senators Patty Murray, Barbara Boxer and Barbara Mikulski for championing this vitally important bill."

"It is time for Congress to strengthen – not obstruct – women's access to health care, and the 21st Century Women's Health

Act does just that. This bill takes a number of important steps to advance women's health and well-being. Access to health care, including reproductive health care, is critical to the health and economic security of women and their families," said Gretchen Borchelt, Acting Vice President for Health and Reproductive Rights, National Women's Law Center.

Delegate Cheryl Glenn, D-Baltimore, is sponsoring a "Right to Rest" bill, which would require employers pay one and a half times normal pay for overtime work, but only when workers agree to extra hours.

"We are a business-friendly state," Glenn said. "But we know that our businesses have to take care of our workers, and that works for everyone."

State Senator Susan Lee, D-Montgomery, and Delegate Kris Valderrama, D-Prince George's, are both sponsoring the Women's Pay Equity Act, which would expand the Equal Pay for Equal Work law

to prohibit wage discrimination on gender identity and allow employees to inquire and discuss specifics of co-workers' wages.

Though Maryland is one of the best states when it comes to the wage gap, Lee said, women still earn about 85 cents to every dollar when compared to men in the state.

Though the federal government has passed laws to ensure equal pay, Lee said, there are loopholes that need to be tightened -- which the state can do without waiting on Congress.

With more than 90 sponsors on the Pay Equity act from both the House and Senate, Carter said she is hopeful that bill can pass, but she expects the other two bills to face challenges.

"It might take more than one time, but we're in it for the long haul," Carter said. "It hurts the entire state when people aren't reaching their full potential."

Our country is stronger today because more women are empowered to make their own health care choices. We need to protect that progress and keep building on it. That's why, at a critical moment in the fight to protect a woman's right to make her own choices about her own body, Senator Murray is introducing the 21st Century Women's Health

FACT SHEET: The 21st Century Women's Health Act

Gansler, professor and Roger C. Lipitz Chair in Public Policy and Private Enterprise. "That's not always easy in big companies, especially when it comes to disruptive innovation."

Panelist Andrew Hunter, director of the Defense-Industrial Initiatives Group, a defense industry and national security contracting

think tank agreed, and said the government needs to focus its contracting goals on innovation and solving problems like fraud and mid-tier failure.

"The government needs to be extremely focused on what their goals are," Hunter said. "We're going to get what we ask for, not necessarily what we want."

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review
Focus

Focus
Grade: B
Rated R, a lot of harsh profanity, some sexual dialogue, mild sexual activity
1 hr., 44 min

Focus is about con artists, and the title refers to the fact that humans are easily distracted and thus subject to being conned. Some of us are easier marks than others, of course. I, for one, am almost always fooled by the tricks in con-artist movies. Even when I should know better, I think, "Uh-oh! They blew it! Their caper's not going to work! How will they get out of this?" And then it turns out they knew what they were doing all along, the setbacks were part of the plan, and I am delighted. Every time.

Co-written and directed by the duo of Glenn Ficarra and John Requa (I Love You Philip Morris, Crazy Stupid Love), Focus is a crime caper with a romantic angle, aimed at adults, and reminiscent of Out of Sight or Duplicity. It doesn't have any great elements, but it does have several good ones, including its stars, Will Smith and Margot Robbie. Smith plays Nicky, an experienced, unflappable con-man who's particularly gifted in the art of pickpocketing. He meets Jess (Robbie), an up-and-coming thief — and, not incidentally, a smokin' hot babe — who wants to join Nicky's team and learn the tricks of the trade. They collaborate on some thievery and some sex, each finding the other's skills in both fields to be more than adequate.



ROTTENTOMATOES

A con artist (Will Smith) takes on an inexperienced apprentice in this crime comedy from the filmmaking duo behind Crazy Stupid Love, Glenn Ficarra and John Requa. ~ Jeremy Wheeler, Rovi

Nicky's team of light-fingered felons, most of them nameless and inessential to the story, are a wonder to behold. In a sequence set in New Orleans the week of a major tourist-drawing sporting event (prime time for pickpockets), we see them in action, their smooth choreography of distractions and handoffs as flawless as a ballet. Nicky says it's best to stick to small stuff and get rich by volume, urging Jess to stay away from big scores, though he doesn't always follow his own advice. A few allusions to Nicky's personal gambling habits and an interlude with an avid high-stakes bettor (played by BD Wong) suggest a variety of ways this story could go.

It's ultimately no more creative or genre-defying than the typical movie about con artists, and it has the same limitation as most of them — namely, when the main characters are inveterate liars, it's hard to know when their emotions are sincere. We can be entertained, thrilled, and amused by their escapades, but we don't really connect with them, you know? That's a problem when, as in this instance, the con artists are romantically involved. We're not going to let ourselves be caught up in the romance when we're always on guard, suspecting one or both of them is playing the other one.

Nonetheless, Focus keeps us guessing by jumping ahead a few years and moving to

a new location for its second half, and by introducing a romantic rival, wealthy auto-racing maven Garriga (Rodrigo Santoro), and his gruff, fearless bodyguard (Gerald McRaney, gloriously cranky). These two, along with Nicky's corpulent co-conspirator Farhad (Adrian Martinez), are wild cards in a story that's really about Nicky and Jess, whom we like despite being unsure of their motives. Smith's star power remains bright after all these years (a marvel in itself, given how few B-or-better movies he's actually made), and Robbie, a charismatic new talent, holds her own with him. And yes, I was fooled, and subsequently delighted.

Women's Health from AS

Act and challenging elected leaders to put themselves on the right side of history when it comes to women's health, equality, and opportunity. The 21st Century Women's Health Act would help break down outdated barriers to a woman's reproductive freedom, ensure deeply personal health care choices are put back where they belong—in the hands of American women—and in doing so, help expand opportunity for women across the country.

The 21st Century Women's Health Act would:

Expand comprehensive preventive health services, including full access to contraceptive coverage for all women served by Medicaid. All private health insurance plans are now required to cover all U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved forms of contraception and all services like breast pumps and breast feeding counseling. To ensure coverage equity across programs, this legislation would extend this requirement to women, men, and families who are served by Medicaid.

Establish a women's health nurse practitioner training program to expand access to primary care. Nearly two-thirds of Americans see a nurse practitioner (NP) for their primary care health needs. NPs are critical to ensuring access and play an increasingly important role in meeting demand for primary care. To expand access to primary care providers, the 21st Century Women's Health Act provides training grants for NPs in Title X clinics who specialize in women's health care. The grants are for a three-year period

and can be made permanent or replicated nationally as a model that works to increase quality and lower the cost of care for women and their families.

Improve maternal safety and quality of care. The 21st Century Women's Health Act grants states the power to start or enhance existing Maternal Mortality Review (MMR) Committees. MMRs examine pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths to identify ways to prevent future deaths. Only about half of all states have active committees today, creating a significant knowledge gap. Incentivizing the creation and improvement of MMRs will improve data collection and help eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes.

Create a new ombudsperson role to support women's access to health services. The Affordable Care Act made great progress in expanding women's access to health care services. But too often state policies, high costs to patients, and the ongoing need for clinician training in contraceptive methods continue to hinder women from accessing the forms of contraception that have the lowest rates of failure and highest rates of adherence. There have been numerous attempts to allow insurance companies and employers with personal objections to deny women coverage for all FDA approved contraceptive methods, and due to misinformation from insurance companies and pharmacies, many women are struggling to access critical health benefits. As a result, one in 20 women has been denied access to care by a health care provider because of a religious, moral, or personal objection. The 21st Century

Women's Health Act will create a Women's Health Ombudsperson who can advocate for women, be their voice, and enforce their right to access the best health care services for their needs.

Provide compassionate assistance and awareness for survivors of rape. Although the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that doctors routinely discuss emergency contraception with women of reproductive age during their annual visit, only half of OB/GYNs offer emergency contraception to all of their patients. Unfortunately, emergency contraception remains an underused prevention method in the United States, especially for survivors of sexual assault. It is estimated that 25,000 to 32,000 women become pregnant each year as a result of rape or incest. If used correctly, emergency contraception in conjunction with prompt medical treatment could help many of these rape survivors avoid the additional trauma of facing an unintended pregnancy. However, only 13 states and the District of Columbia require hospital emergency rooms to provide emergency contraception upon request to survivors of sexual assault. Additionally, nine states have enacted restrictions on emergency contraception, including six states that allow pharmacists to refuse to dispense emergency contraception.

The 21st Century Women's Health Act would ensure that when survivors of sexual assault present at hospitals and clinics, they are provided with free emergency contraception, period, no matter where they live or who owns the hospital. In addition, the Act provides for prevention partnerships with community-based organizations to pre-

vent sexual violence.

Help women report instances of inappropriate charges for birth control and other critical health care needs. The 21st Century Women's Health Act would help ensure that women are not wrongly forced to pay more for health care services now covered under the Affordable Care Act by creating a reporting database for women to inform Health and Human Services of inappropriate charges.

Examine reproductive health access across the country. Some women in the U.S. must travel 50 miles or more for access to reproductive health services like abortion. Eighty-nine percent of counties lack abortion clinics, and hundreds of laws have been passed at the state and federal level to restrict a woman's access to reproductive health services and family planning services. These developments make it harder for a woman to access her constitutionally protected rights in the 21st Century. This Act would study the harmful effects of trends across the country to restrict access on a woman's overall health and morbidity.

Launch a public awareness campaign for women's preventive services. The Affordable Care Act made preventive services, like mammograms, immunizations and contraception coverage, breast-feeding counseling, domestic violence screening, and others available at no cost to women and their families. To ensure women are fully informed about their rights and health care options, the Act would launch a public awareness campaign among community-based organizations, pharmacists, providers and other stakeholders.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Dean Smith: On the Passing of a Death Penalty Abolitionist



Dean Smith, perhaps the most visible white anti-racist of the last half-century, died on Sunday, February 8, 2015 at the age of 83. He also of course coached a little bit of basketball. In legendary fashion, Coach Smith led the University of North Carolina Tar Heels for thirty-six seasons, and retired with the most wins in college hoops history. His players spanned multiple eras, from Billy Cunningham to Michael Jordan to James Worthy to Vince Carter. They also all swore by him, loyal to the last. Jordan, by consensus the greatest player of all time, said in a statement released on his passing, "He was more than a coach—he was my mentor, my teacher, my second father. Coach was always there for me whenever I needed him and I loved him for it."

When Coach Smith is remembered this week, we will see tributes to both his basketball acumen as well as his words and deeds against the Jim Crow laws that plagued North Carolina at the start of his career. This included his recruitment of Charlie Scott, the first black player to suit up for Tar Heels. Coach Smith endured threats to his job as well as his life and was undeterred.

But these are in many respects easy and palatable things to celebrate. After all, even Rand Paul realizes that opposing the Civil Rights Act is political suicide. It is worth remembering however, the parts of Dean Smith's politics that were daring then and remain controversial today. As Jay Bilas—A Duke grad—said on ESPN, "Dean knew what was right and stood up for what was right no matter what the cost was professionally or personally."

There is no issue where this rings truer than that of the death penalty. Current approval of the death penalty in the US is at its lowest level in forty years, but is still favored by 63 percent of the population. Dean Smith opposed capital punishment publicly his entire life, even when support for it nationally was over 80 percent and even in a state where the death penalty was a matter of bipartisan consensus. Smith often invoked his religious beliefs to explain his opposition to capital punishment, but he had to go beyond the realm of the religious to explain his opposition in North Carolina, where pro-death row politicians have never been shy about using the Bible as justification for the noose. Therefore, Dean Smith also spoke about the racism that infests death row cases. He spoke about his fears that the innocent could be killed. He spoke about the system of capital punishment being, in his words, "barbaric." As he once said, "If it's a deterrent, as some people say, why don't they hold the execution in a shopping mall so everyone can attend?"

He also never hesitated speaking truth to power. This was never clearer than in 2003 when Coach Smith was part of a delegation visiting North Carolina's governor Jim Hunt, pleading for the life of a mentally ill death row prisoner named John Noland. Smith had met Noland on one of his trips to "the row." As reported by Bonnie DeSimone of the Chicago Tribune, Smith erupted at Hunt, saying, "You're a murderer!" He then stuck out his finger at Hunt's apparatchiks saying, "And you're a murderer—and I'm a murderer. The death penalty makes us all murderers."

Remarkably, this received very little publicity at the time, and one can't help but wonder how social media would have dissected this man. Coach Smith did not only oppose the death penalty. He stood up to the war in Vietnam, opposed nuclear weapon proliferation and supported LGBT rights. Perhaps most controversially, he did not merely do this on his own time but engaged his players in dialogue and debate. He even took them to North Carolina's death row and the notorious Angola Prison in Louisiana to actually interact with prisoners. He had a moral calling to leverage his legend to make change. It's long been rumored that Dean Smith advised Michael Jordan and his family to not seek the death penalty against the two men who murdered Jordan's father in 1993. Smith denied this, but the Jordan family did not in fact seek lethal injection for the killers and the currency of the story speaks volumes.

I contacted Reverend William Barber II, organizer of the Moral Mondays movement in North Carolina to ask about what it meant to have Dean Smith as a recognized abolitionist. He said,

"Dean Smith was clear in his opposition to the death penalty. He knew death did not solve death and that the sentencing was racially biased. He knew that like a fixed game the results were unfair. Right now in North Carolina, we have had over seven individuals, mostly black, in recent years exonerated from death row declared wrongfully

Calendar of Events

March 26 — April 1, 2015

Xtreme Teens: Monster Golf

Date and Time: Friday, March 27, 2015 7-10 pm
 Description: Bring a friend and travel with us to Columbia, Md for Monster Golf. Teens will play glow-in-the-dark mini golf with other teens. Departure is at 7:15 pm, with a return time of 10 pm. To attend, teens must have their permission slips signed by a parent/guardian.
 Cost: Resident: \$15; Non-Resident: \$15
 Ages: 10-17
 Location: Beltsville Community Center
 3900 Sellman Road, Beltsville, MD
 Contact: 301-937-6613; TTY 301-445-4512

Xtreme Teens: Spring Carnival

Date and Time: Friday, March 27, 2015 7-10 pm
 Description: Teens, here's your chance to experience a carnival at night! Tonight there you and fellow teens can enjoy various carnival games, cotton candy and popcorn. The only requirement? Just have fun!
 Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10-17
 Location: Kentland Community Center
 2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover 20785
 Contact: 301-386-2278; TTY 301-445-4512

Maryland Spring Festival

Date and Time: Saturday, March 28, 2015 8 am
 Description: Horse Show
 Cost: Free for spectators
 Location: The Show Place Arena
 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD
 Contact: 301-952-7900; TTY 301-952-7998

Xtreme Teens: Ice Skating

Date and Time: Saturday, March 28, 2015 7-10 pm
 Description: Teens will travel with us to Wells Ice Skating Rink for a night of ice skating. Departure is at 7:30 pm with a return time of 10 pm. Teens must have their permission slip signed by a parent/guardian to attend this trip.
 Cost: Resident \$5; Non-Resident \$5
 Ages: 10-17
 Location: Berwyn Heights Community Center
 6200 Pontiac Street, Berwyn Heights 20740
 Contact: 301-345-2808; TTY 301-445-4512

World Dance Showcase

Date & Time: Saturday, March 28, 2015 8-10 pm
 Description: An opulent performance of mesmerizing movement, vivid costumes and fascinating music, the program features dance pieces from China, England, India, Indonesia, and Russia.
 Cost: \$15/person; General admission; \$10/person (students, seniors and groups of 20 or more)
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Maryland Boating Safety Class

Date and Time: Saturday-Sunday, March 28-29, 2015 8:30 am-1 pm
 Description: This Maryland Boating Safety Course is required for all power boat operators. With this course, participants can earn their Certificate of Boating Safety Education. This is a two day course and attendance is required on both days to complete the course. Instructed by volunteer members of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary.
 Cost: Resident: \$25; Non-Resident: \$25
 Ages: 12 & up
 Location: Bladensburg Waterfront Park
 4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg 20710
 Contact: 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544

Gospel Concert with Jeff Majors

Date & Time: Sunday, March 29, 2015 4-6 pm
 Description: Renowned Gospel harp musician Jeff Majors will bring his unique, groundbreaking sound to the Playhouse. If you add \$10 to your ticket purchase, you will receive an autographed CD.
 Cost: \$25/person; general admission; \$20/person (seniors, students & groups of 20 or more)
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Tumbling Workshops

Date and Time: March 30, 2015 8:30- 9:30 pm
 Description: Looking to improve your tumbling technique? The gymnastics venue is offering workshops to do just that! These workshops are a great way to focus on your specific tumbling needs, whether you're a beginner or advanced tumbler, our experienced instructors can help you achieve your goals! Spaces are offered on a first-come, first-served basis.
 Cost: \$12/per participant
 Ages: 8- 18 years
 Location: Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
 8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD 20785
 Contact: 301-583-2400; TTY 301-583-2483

Slim Bodyology: Fantastic You

Date & Time: Tuesday, March 31, 2015 10:15 am & 12 noon
 Description: Nationally renowned Slim Goodbody performs an amazing health and body musical that introduces children to the importance of nutrition, fitness, hygiene, and positive self-image. This performance is sponsored by the GEICO Philanthropic Foundation and is free to Title 1 Schools in Prince George's County.
 Cost: \$8/person; General Admission; \$6/person; groups of 20 or more
 Ages: Recommended for grades K-5
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

EARTH TALK ... E-Waste Blizzard

Dear EarthTalk:

The collective impact of all the iPhones and other devices we buy, use and then discard must be mind-boggling at this point. Has anyone quantified this and what can we do to start reducing waste from such items?

— Jacques Chevalier,
 Boston, MA

With a record four million pre-orders for Apple's best-selling iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus, it's more evident than ever that consumers want the latest in smartphone technology at their fingertips. A new report by analysts at German market research firm GfK determined that global smartphone sales exceeded 1.2 billion units in 2014—a 23 percent increase over 2013.

With so many new smartphones and electronics being purchased, are users disposing of their older devices properly? According to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) data, approximately 2,440,000 tons of electronics, such as computers, mobile devices and televisions, were disposed of in 2010. Twenty-seven percent, or 649,000 tons, of that "e-waste" was recycled. Because some materials in electronics, such as lead, nickel, cadmium and mercury, could pose risks to human health or the environment, the EPA "strongly supports" keeping

used electronics out of landfills.

"Recycling electronic equipment isn't quite as easy as leaving it in a bin in your front yard, as we've learned to do with paper and plastics, but the health and environmental benefits of recycling e-scraps are tremendous," said EPA Region 5 Administrator Mary A. Gade. "Also, we know that half of the devices thrown away still work."

If Americans recycled the approximately 130 million cell phones that are disposed of annually, enough energy would be saved to power more than 24,000 homes in a year. If we went ahead and recycled one million laptops, too, we would save the energy equivalent to the electricity used by 3,657 U.S. homes in a year. Furthermore, for every million cell phones we recycle, 35,274 pounds of copper, 772 pounds of silver, 75 pounds of gold and 33 pounds of palladium can be recovered. Recovering these valuable metals through recycling precludes the need for mining and processing that much new material from the Earth, thus not only conserving natural resources but preventing air and water pollution as well.

Thankfully, recycling old smartphones and other electronic devices is an easy, typically cost-free process for consumers. Electronics retailer Best Buy offers the most comprehensive appliance and electronics recycling program in the United States, with more than 400



CREDIT: RODDY SCHEER

If Americans recycled the 130 million cell phones we throw away every year, we would save enough energy to power some 24,000 homes.

pounds of product collected for recycling each minute the stores are open. Best Buy offers free recycling for most electronics and large appliances, regardless of where they were purchased, allowing the company to achieve its ambitious goal of recycling one billion pounds of electronics and appliances by the end of 2014.

Some charitable organizations, like Cell Phones for Soldiers, also offer free cell phone recycling. Since 2004, the non-profit has prevented more than 11.6 million cell phones from

ending up in landfills. All cell phones donated to Cell Phones for Soldiers are sold either to electronic restorers or a recycler, depending on the phone's condition. The proceeds from the phones are used to purchase prepaid international calling cards for troops and provide emergency financial assistance to veterans. "Cell Phones for Soldiers truly is a lifeline," says Robbie Bergquist, co-founder of the non-profit. "To withstand time apart and the pressure of serving our country, the family connection is a critical piece to survival."

CONTACTS: EPA Electronics Recycling, www.epa.gov/ecycling; Cell Phones for Soldiers, www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com.

EarthTalk® is written and edited by Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss and is a registered trademark of **E - The Environmental Magazine** (www.emagazine.com). Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

2016 Budget from A1

cess rely heavily upon the perception that our streets and neighborhoods are safe and that our school system is improving and can compete with neighboring jurisdictions. The proposed FY 2016 budget shows that Prince George's County is serious about education and we understand that a great school system is the most important investment that this generation can do for our children."

The proposed budget is premised on achieving three primary objectives: (1) achieving academic improvements in K-12 education across all public schools, (2) maintaining the County's commitment to providing a full range of public services and (3) ensuring our long-term financial integrity. With these objectives as the foundation, the FY 2016 presented fiscal plan has a combination of spending increases and reductions which include revenue provisions. To watch the Proposed FY 2016 Budget presentation and for more resources and information please go to <http://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/sites/OMB/Resources/Bgt16/Pages/default.aspx>.

The proposed FY 2016 operating budget includes the financial resources necessary to support higher educational achievement. The outcome of this investment will be a County school system that will be most noted for rapidly improving its schools by implementing high quality educational programs and academic rigor for all students. Additionally, the proposed budget for FY 2016 builds upon the many successes the County has achieved in making our communities and neighborhoods safer. The respective budgets for Public Safety agencies and Courts provide the resources necessary to protect County resi-

dents and businesses, and continue the high caliber of performance attained during the first term of the Baker Administration.

In FY 2016, real property tax receipts are projected to total \$776.5 million, an increase of \$127.0 million or 19.6% over the FY 2015 budget. The growth is primarily due to the FY 2016 education revenue package which recommends a \$0.15 increase in the real property tax rate from \$0.96 to \$1.11 per \$100 of assessable value in FY 2016. The County is authorized to increase the real property tax rate based on Chapter 6 of the 2012 Laws of Maryland (Senate Bill 848). This law allows the County's property tax rate to be set higher than the rate authorized under the County's charter. The bill requires that any additional revenue generated as a result of the higher property tax rate is for the sole purpose of funding the approved budget of the local school system. The proposed rate adjustment is expected to generate an additional \$104.9 million for the school system. Excluding the additional revenue assigned to the system, the County's real property tax revenues are projected to increase by \$22.1 million or 3.4% in FY 2016 from the FY 2015 budget.

To mitigate the impact of the proposed real property tax increase, the County will offer a Local Homeowners' Tax Credit Program in FY 2016. The Homeowners' Tax Credit Program will be supplemental to the State's property tax relief program that allows a property tax credit for households whose total gross income is \$60,000 and below. The County's supplemental tax credit will equal 25% of the State's homeowners' tax credit amount. On an individual basis, on average, the estimated supplemental credit equates to an additional

\$375 annual benefit to homeowners. To view a chart that explains the Homeowners' Tax Credit Program, please click here.

Similarly, the FY 2016 proposed budget continues efforts to improve the health and well-being of County residents. The respective budgets for the human services agencies provide for continued support of their delivery systems which result in better access to care and services for our residents in need. In particular, it provides additional resources to assist vulnerable populations, such as our veterans, and to improve our response to domestic violence. In addition, the FY 2016 proposed budget maintains the commitment to grow our economy by expanding our commercial tax base and creating jobs. Supporting this effort are the budgets for the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement, Prince George's Community College, and funding for the Economic Development Incentive Fund.

"The FY 2016 proposed operating budget provides a framework for propelling the County into new heights and structurally rebalancing our budget," added County Executive Baker. "The proposed measures are bold yet necessary in order to ensure the fiscal health and future of our County. These proposed actions require sacrifices by everyone—residents, businesses and county employees. However, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to transforming this County into a premier and nationally recognized jurisdiction."

The FY 2016 proposed budget includes the following:
 • An education revenue package which allows the County to make a historic investment in the Prince George's County Public School System. With this proposal, the County will invest an additional \$135.7 million in the

school system. The education proposal is funded through increases in the real property, personal property and telecommunications tax rates. The additional revenue generated from the rate increases will be dedicated to the Board of Education in order to directly assist in boosting student achievement through expanding effective programs.

• An increase in the hotel tax from 5% to 7% - a rate that recognizes our growing travel and tourism industry and will be comparable to our neighboring jurisdictions in Maryland. This is estimated to generate approximately \$3.1 million in additional revenue.

• An increase in various building, licensing and related permitting and technology fees, to allow the County to continue its significant investments and commitments of improving customer service and support technology upgrades at the one-stop shop within the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement.

• Implementation of a Reduction In Force (RIF) of 110 filled positions in the General Fund.

• Five day furlough of all County employees funded through the General Fund.

• Furthermore, to assist in maintaining the County's 'AAA' bond rating, the FY 2016 proposed budget is based on conservative estimates and avoidance of using fund balance for ongoing expenditures to preserve the County's General Fund reserves - Charter-mandated 5% and the financial policy-required 2%

Adhering to the Prince George's County Charter, the FY 2016 Proposed Budget must be submitted by March 13, 2015 to the Prince George's County Council. The Council must adopt the FY 2016 Proposed Budget on or before June 1, 2015.

Dean Smith from A6

charged and convicted who would have been executed. This is more than any other state in the country. Based on this reality we can surmise that through the death penalty and the faults of racial and class bias we have probably killed innocent black and poor white persons in our state. We should have and still need to listen to Coach Smith's vocal opposition and abandon the death penalty."

His legacy of fighting for the school's African American Studies department and caring about the exploitation of college athletes also stands in sharp contrast to the current state of the Tar Heels basketball program. As UNC Professor Altha Cravey, a member of the school's Progressive Faculty Network said to me, "Dean Smith taught courage, fairness and leadership. As I learn more about the way he lived his life—confronting white su-

premacry, opposing imperialist war— understand more what we have lost. It is ironic to note that the university's so-called leaders—the ones celebrating his life today—have been engaged in five years of stonewalling, whitewashing and cover-up about misdeeds in UNC's basketball program, the very program in which Dean Smith demonstrated that doing the right thing is always more important than winning or looking good."

The state of UNC basketball and its grade-fixing scandals are, of course, not just a UNC problem but reflect the far deeper rot in the NCAA's system of for-profit amateurism. It is difficult to think about Dean Smith and not feel like today's mercenary, multi-millionaire coaches suffer dramatically in comparison. There was only one Dean Smith, but it would be the best possible tribute to his memory if more coaches—and more people—made the effort to emulate his character.

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