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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JAMES LEVIN

(From left) Technician Chris Blackistone, firefighter Daniel Seal and firefighter Amber Daugherty "rescue" a dummy from a second floor window of a building being used for training exercises by the Prince George's County Fire Department in Bowie, Md. on Wednesday, March 25, 2015.

Fire Department Provides In-Depth Look at Rescue Training

By BRIAN MARRON
Capital News Service

BOWIE — Blinded by smoke and surrounded by Darth Vader-like breathing noises, reporters stepped into the boots of firefighters Wednesday with the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department.

Donned in authentic fire protection gear, from the overalls to the helmet, media members followed county firefighters as they embarked on training and rescue drills at the vacant Market Place Mall in Bowie.

The training consisted of two drills, each with the same objective of entering and clearing a burning building, putting out the

fire and rescuing possible victims trapped inside. The building was filled with thick, non-toxic smoke that made seeing one's own hands nearly impossible.

Some reporters were camped inside the building with thermal imaging cameras to watch the action while others helped lay out, unravel and guide the hose toward the simulated fire.

From the heavy smoke to the mannequin weighing up to 185 pounds to portray victims, the drills simulated the most realistic conditions possible -- minus the extreme heat associated with actual fires, according to Battalion 1 Chief Christian Wargo.

See FIRE TRAINING Page A6

Maryland History Day Winners to Compete at National History Day

68 Students Advance; 82 Receive Special Awards

By PRESS OFFICER
MHC

(Baltimore) — More than 600 talented middle and high students, along with their proud parents and teachers, converged on the campus of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County on Saturday, May 2, 2015 to compete in the annual Maryland History Day state contest. Representing 10 counties and Baltimore City, 68 students were selected to advance to the National History Day competition. Additionally, 82 students won special awards at the contest.

A program of the Maryland Humanities Council (MHC) now in its 15th year, the statewide competition involves nearly 23,000 students at the school level, representing 18 counties and Baltimore City. Students research topics that address the National History Day theme and participate in school and county competitions to qualify for the state contest. The 2015 theme is "Leadership and Legacy."

Winners were chosen at their district level for both

See WINNERS Page A3

County Council Urges Governor Hogan to Release \$20 Million Slated for County Schools

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

In a joint letter to Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, the Prince George's County Council and County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, strongly urge the Governor to release \$20 million in FY 2016 state-appropriated funds supporting Prince George's County's 125,000 public school students.

The crucial school funding, which received overwhelming bipartisan support in both houses of the General Assembly during the 2015 legislative session, will not require any tax or fee increases, and is solely dedicated to education spending.

Council Chairman Mel Franklin says continuing to

See SCHOOLS Page A3

Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III Delivers 5th "State of the Economy" Address to Business Leaders

County Executive Baker's speech, "Investing in Education: The Time is Now!" focuses on importance of investing in PGCP's in order to grow County's economy.

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

Upper Marlboro, MD - Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III delivered his 5th "State of the Economy" address entitled "Investing in Education: The Time is Now!" to business leaders during a breakfast hosted by the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable held at the Colony South Hotel & Convention Center in Clinton, MD. To watch the speech, please click here. Residents are also encouraged to visit the Investing in Education Homepage on the Prince George's County website to learn more about this investment.

"Investing in the Prince George's County Public Schools is what we must do to change our trajectory," said County Executive Baker. "If

we don't take ownership for investing in our children's success, who will? If we want to improve property values and bring more businesses here, this is what we must do. If we want to grow and expand our commercial tax base, this is what we must do. If we want to be the new economic engine of the State, this is what we must do. And if we want the best for our children and the families of Prince George's County, this is what we must do. Our County is moving in the right direction. But we must embrace this challenge and lay the foundation for your children and this County for generations to come."

As a follow-up to today's "State of the Economy" address, tomorrow, County Executive Baker will participate in the groundbreaking for a new Dave and Buster's Restaurant

See ECONOMY Page A3

Patuxent River Park and Clearwater Nature Center Certified as Maryland Green Centers

By NATE RABNER
Capital News Service

GREENBELT, MD - Patuxent River Park and Clearwater Nature Center, both Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation sites, were recognized by the Maryland Association of Environmental and Outdoor Education (MAEOE) as 2015 Maryland Green Centers.

Patuxent River Park was recertified while Clearwater Nature Center received first-time certification.

Maryland Green Centers partner with local schools modeling sustainable school practices, providing resources and forming partnerships that positively impact students, teachers and the community.

"This recognition reiterates our endeavor to be a leader in sustainability efforts in the County," said Kyle Lowe, Acting Division Chief of the Natural and Historic Resources Division. "Part of the mission of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is to educate the public on the importance of the environment



PHOTO COURTESY U.S. NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Canoeers and kayakers enjoying an idyllic early fall afternoon on a quiet tree-lined stretch of the upper Patuxent River, Maryland, Upper Patuxent River.

and to preserve green space for future generations. The staffs at Patuxent River Park and Clearwater Nature Center are setting an exceptional example in these areas with their amazing public program offerings and beautiful sites."

Patuxent River Park utilizes rain barrels, rain gardens, energy conservation products, a recycling program, habitat restoration and nesting boxes to enhance the environment and to provide an example of being "green" to the community.

The top projects that Patuxent River Park uses to promote green practices are: its Teacher Watershed Workshop; an American Indian vil-

See PATUXENT Page A7

INSIDE

A Look At What Passed The Maryland Legislature And What Didn't

The Maryland General Assembly proposed 2,248 pieces of legislation during the 2015 legislative session. More than 650 bills made it to the governor's desk, of which Hogan signed 121 into law Tuesday morning.

Community, Page A3

Baltimore Rising: Women Leading at the Frontline of the Fight for Justice

In her 2014 State of Black America® essay, Mayor Rawlings-Blake painted a bleak picture, noting that in Baltimore city, more than 1 in 5 African-American adult residents live in poverty, and 1 in every 3 African-American children and teens are also living in poverty.

Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Department of Agriculture Aims to Connect Farmers with Markets

The current Maryland's Best logo will remain available for use. All are available in color and black and white. Farmers who wish to use any of the logos will be asked to sign up with the free program at the Department. Click here to sign up.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "Spy"

Susan Cooper is an unassuming, deskbound CIA analyst, and the unsung hero behind the Agency's most dangerous missions. But when her partner falls off the grid and another top agent is compromised, she volunteers to go deep undercover to infiltrate the world of a deadly arms dealer, and prevent a global disaster.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

Now that summer is coming, my neighbors will be firing up their backyard fire pits again, and I'm wondering if the wood smoke drifting in my open windows is a health hazard for my family and if I have any standing to require them to refrain?

— Mitch Brasky, Reno, NV
Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Skyline Citizens Association is 45—still going strong

The Skyline Citizens Association (SCA) was born Feb. 27, 1970 when about 100 residents of the Skyline Subdivision, Andrews Estates and Robin Hood Homes met in the multi-purpose room at Skyline School and selected Dolores Steinhilber to be acting chairman of the Steering Committee.

Charlie Tretler was named By-laws Chairman and, along with Gene Dunlap, Cecil Matthews and Frank Robbins, tapped Arthur Zdobysz to draw up the bylaws. They were ratified on May 1, 1970. The first SCA meeting was held later in May at Skyline School.

Dolores Steinhilber was elected our first president, one of only two women to hold that position. A complete list of those early officers is unavailable, but some of them were: Navy Capt. Raymond Perkins, Larry Reilly, Sandra Pouncy, Maj. Patrick Hayes, Jack Power and Jill Power. I served for a year as corresponding secretary.

Mary McGrath was the editor of the Skyline Newsletter, but she soon moved away and I became editor, and still am—for almost 45 years now.

The association was first named the Parkway Citizens Association, but in February 1971 we voted to change it to Skyline Citizens Association. SCA is still going strong, with Stanley Holmes as a terrific president. We have 45. Will we make it to 50?

4th of July Parade needs marchers

I remember the glorious days of the VFW Parade down Suitland Road—the drum & bugle corps, the Morningside Sportsman's float, the school bands, the little cars, the Ladies Auxiliary marchers, the bandstand.

Now, the Morningside Recreation Council is carrying on the tradition. They do a good job, but there are simply not the marchers there used to be. Can you think of a group—or an individual—that would like to be in a parade? A vintage car or motorcycle? A clown? Someone

running for office or someone who already holds one?

I love the parade, and I'll be there, under the Baptist tree, waving my flag. But I wish the parade were longer and had more music. If you know anyone who might be interested, call Susan at 301-412-0135.

Pre-K slots and greenhouses

Skyline Elementary has full-day Pre-K slots open due to county funding, starting with the upcoming school year. For information contact Mrs. Magness in the Skyline office, 301-817-0535.

Also, the school has two unique courtyards. One courtyard has a greenhouse in need of repair. It will be repaired and in use for the next school session and beyond. If you would like to contribute plants or seeds, or purchase a \$10.00 bag of rubber mulch for the beautification, contact Mrs. Magness at the Skyline office, 301-817-0535.

Yard Sale coming up June 6

Clinton United Methodist Women's Yard Sale will be held Saturday, June 6, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. (set-up time, 6 to 8 a.m.). To reserve a table (\$15), call 301-868-1288. Clinton U.M. Church is located at 10700 Brandywine Road, in Clinton. All proceeds will go towards helping women and children in their community. By the way, rain date is June 27.

Neighbors

Happy 40th anniversary to Allentown Press, which has printed all sorts of things—and done a good job of it—since 1975. To get your printing and copying done, go by 6318 Old Branch Avenue or call 301-449-7660.

Despite nippy weather, the Skyline Citizen's Association's Flea Market on April 26 on the Morningside VFD parking lot went very well. Two highlights—Mickey D's music and Ashby Harmon's fried fish (which sold out). There're plans to do it again in September.

Amber Stokes was chosen May Queen for the annual Crowning of the Blessed Mother at St. Philip's Church on Mother's Day.

Prayers and get-well-soon wishes to Charles E. Moore and

to Phil Eppard.

Condolences to Alice Ward, of Skyline, on the death of her brother Gustarivus Whitaker, Greensboro, N.C., on April 13.

Condolences to Lina Maralit, of Camp Springs, on the death of her brother Monsignor Jose Antonio "Jojo" Galvez, of the Philippines, on March 13.

Academia

Kelvin Bennett, of Skyline, is a junior at Montgomery College, majoring in special ed.

Sam Mudd is graduating from St. Vincent Pallotti High School, in Laurel, and will attend Salisbury University. He is the son of my daughter Sheila and John Mudd of West Laurel.

Call me (301-735-3451) or email (muddmm@aol.com) with news of the graduate in your family.

Longtime Skyline resident, John Doss, dies

John Robert Doss, 72, who retired after 38 years with the U.S. Postal Service, died April 20. He was a longtime resident of Lucente Avenue and a member of the Skyline Citizens Association. He was born in Kentucky and grew up in Cross Plains, Tenn.; graduated from Bransford H.S. and West Kentucky Junior College. He served with the U.S. Army. John was a member of Evangel Cathedral in Upper Marlboro. Survivors include his wife Ann; daughter LeaTrice Doss, and grandchildren Josiah Amir and Malachi Robert.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Crystal Foster, Juanita Hood, David Sanford and Linda Holsonbake, May 22; Ricci Lee Jr., Betty Call, L. Dorothy Jones, Nancy Sawyer, Dory Babecki and Chester Lanehart IV, May 23; Edna Lucas and Harry Messer, May 24; Dennis Cook, Norma Edwards and my son John McHale who turns 60 on May 25; Christopher Nichols, May 26; Gary Lewis, Sr. and Steven Busky, May 27.

Happy anniversary to John and Nichole Barbour on May 25.

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Testifies in Support of Clean Water Protection

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) spoke today in the House Rules Committee in opposition to H.R. 1732, the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act, and asked that her amendment be considered on the House floor. H.R. 1732 would halt the current Clean Water Protection rulemaking process by requiring the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers to withdraw the proposed rule and restart the entire process. Congresswoman Edwards' amendment is intended to serve as a backstop by listing policy provisions that the Secretary and Administrator are prohibited from including in a final rule that are based on concerns expressed by opponents of the rulemaking.

Below are her remarks as prepared for delivery:

"Thank you Chairman Sessions, Ranking Member Slaughter, and members of the Rules Committee. As a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, I will detail Democratic opposition to the so-called Regulatory Integrity Protection Act and explain why I have offered an amendment.

"My colleagues, this rulemaking is about clean water. Thanks to the Clean Water Act (CWA), billions of pounds of pollution have been kept out of our rivers and the number of waters that meet clean water goals nationwide has doubled — with direct benefits for drinking water, public health, recreation, and wildlife. This is especially true for Maryland within the five-state Chesapeake Bay Watershed and several of its tributaries, including the Anacostia, Patuxent, Potomac, and Severn Rivers that flow through the Fourth Congressional District. This Chesapeake Bay Watershed is fed by 110,000 miles of creeks, rivers, and streams. 70% of Marylanders get their drinking water from sources that rely on headwater or seasonal streams. Nationwide, 117 million get their water from these waters.

"However, due to two Supreme Court decisions, there is widespread confusion as to what falls under the protection of the CWA. That is why this Administration is working to finalize their joint proposed rule clarifying the limits of federal jurisdiction under the Act. This is precisely what the Supreme Court instructed the federal government to do — 14 years ago with the 2001 SWANCC decision and subsequently in the 2006 Rapanos case.

"Along with those two Supreme Court decisions, the Bush administration followed the exact same process in issuing two guidance documents in 2003 and 2008 which, coincidentally, remain in force today. In fact, it is these two Bush-era guidance documents that have compounded the confusion, uncertainty, and increased compliance costs faced by our constituents — opponents and proponents — who just want clarity.

"But don't take my word on this. Let me quote from some of the comments made in opposition to the Bush-era guidance. According to the American Farm Bureau Federation:

"With no clear regulatory definitions to guide their de-



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

terminations, what has emerged is a hodgepodge of ad hoc and inconsistent jurisdictional theories."

H.R. 1732

"H.R. 1732 would halt the current Clean Water rulemaking, and require the agencies to withdraw the proposed rule and restart the rulemaking process. This is after one million public comments, a 208 day comment period, and over 400 public hearings. On April 6, 2015, the EPA and the Corps forwarded a revised rule based on concerns expressed to the Office of Management and Budget for review.

"The bill would only force the agencies to meet with the same group of stakeholders and talk about the same issues that they have already discussed several times over the last fourteen years since the first Court decision. This rulemaking has been more than a decade in the development. Moreover, this bill will further perpetuate the current regulatory confusion that leads to unnecessary costs and delays, which has been the subject of much criticism from all stakeholders, and will leave many of our nation's waters unprotected.

"This week we will also vote on the Energy and Water appropriations bill, which contains a policy rider explicitly prohibiting the Army Corps of Engineering (Corps) from spending any money to develop the very same new Clean Water rule that this bill tells the Corps to write. From my understanding the Interior appropriations bill is expected to contain a similar rider for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Republicans try to make it sound as if all they want is for EPA and the Corps to develop rules the right way, but it's clear that what they really want is to stop these agencies from doing their job at all — no Rules — no clean water.

"Congress must allow the Administration to finish its work and publish the final rule. If we don't like the result, we have ample authority to fix it. Congress has the ability to review "major" rules issued by federal agencies before the rules take effect. In fact, the Congressional Review Act allows Congress to actually disapprove new rules, resulting in the rules having no force or effect.

"If H.R. 1732 were to be enacted, it would only ensure that the confusion continues and that these sources of drinking water remain a serious risk to the public health. That is why I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

Edwards Amendment

"Mr. Chairman, to be fair, several of my own constituents have expressed concern with the substance of the proposed rule. I have listened to their concerns, and I have pressed the Agency witnesses who have appeared before our

subcommittee on several critical areas.

"The administration's answers have been that many of these claims are simply false and we have been assured most of those issues will be addressed in the final rule.

"My amendment simply addresses these concerns and claims, saying that, if any of them prove to be true, then the Secretary and the Administrator are prohibited from issuing any final rule that would bring about those occurrences.

"Instead of using a legislative scalpel, my Republican colleagues have decided to use a meat cleaver. In my amendment, I have tried to address those concerns that I have heard from my constituents and interested parties.

"Under my amendment, the administration cannot expand the scope beyond those water bodies covered prior to the decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court in those two cases, and it cannot be inconsistent with Justices Scalia's and Kennedy's judicial opinions in Rapanos.


"In addition to that, they can't increase the regulation of ditches. They can't eliminate any historical statutory or regulatory exemptions for agriculture, which do not exist under the 2003 & 2008 documents. There are questions about ditches under the 2003 & 2008 guidance, and they are interpreted differently in various parts of the country.

"To me, the federal government is using its authority to do the right thing by providing certainty to the regulated community and still protecting human health and our environment.

"However, as a fall back and assurance to the regulated community, I urge the Committee to make my amendment in order that will include clear legislative restrictions on the final rulemaking addressing the range of concerns that have been expressed by stakeholders; though the EPA has made clear in testimony before our Committee, other committees of the House, and earlier this year, in a joint hearing with the Senate. Nonetheless, I offer this amendment as a backstop in the unlikely event that anyone would think differently about regulating streams, ditches, and farmland."

Statement from Prince George's County Public Schools CEO Kevin M. Maxwell on FY16 Budget Proposal

UPPER MARLBORO, MD — Prince George's County Public Schools is extremely grateful to County Executive Rushern Baker, III for his bold commitment to invest in public education in Prince George's County. We are a district on the rise and this historic funding proposal puts us on a rapid path to becoming a top-10 school district in Maryland by the year 2020. It means we can dramatically move the needle in implementing our comprehensive strategic plan that provides a high-quality education at every school for every child. The benefits of this investment are significantly multiplied for taxpayers because it creates generations of future residents who contribute to our economy, our workforce and ultimately raise the wealth and value of Prince George's County.



MEMORIAL Day

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

CASINO ACTION

Come and join us again for Casino Time with St. Philip's Church to Harrington Raceway and Midway Casino Harrington, Delaware on Sunday, June 14, 2015. Fun package includes a \$10.00 rebate plus a full Buffet Meal, 50/50, and Ole School Music. Donation is \$40/00. There will be absolutely no refunds. You are welcome to bring your own spirits. Benefit: St. Philip's Church Bull Roast.

Bus will leave Park-N-Ride, Clinton, Maryland at 10:30 AM and St. Philip's Church at 11:00 AM. Bus returns at approximately 7:00 PM. For tickets contact Doretha Savoy (301) 233-3136, Ernest Douglas (301) 888-1937 or Shirley Cleaves (302) 690-4260.

YARD SALE

Clinton United Methodist Women's will have a Yard Sale on June 6, 2015 (Rain Date is June 27, 2015) from 8:00 AM to 2:00 PM. (Set up time is 6:00 AM to 8:00 AM) at 10700 Brandywine Road Clinton, Maryland.

Come and enjoy a community event, by either shopping or

selling your product. All tables are \$15.00. You must have a table, no spaces will be allowed without one. So come and enjoy food, folks and fun. All proceeds go towards helping women and children in the community. To reserve a table please call (301) 868-1288 Clinton United Methodist Church, Pastor Dorothea Belt Stroman.

CONGRATULATIONS

Dr. Patricia Turner Mitchell the daughter of Ruth Turner received the University of San Francisco Ignatian Service Award Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at the 39th Annual USF Service and Merit Awards ceremony. This award honors a faculty member whose service to students, the University and the community at large constitutes an exceptional contribution. This award is in recognition of creativity and commitment to the realization of the religious and moral legacy of St. Ignatius.

MOVIE NIGHT

New Hope Fellowship U. M. Parish, Rev. Constance Smith,

Pastor presents "The Karate Kid" starring Jaden Smith, Taraji P. Henson and Jackie Chan. The movie teaches us many life applications. The most important apparent application is to understand who we are.

Join family and friends for a night of wonderful fellowship. Let's Talk: 5:00 PM, Show Time: 6:00 PM on May 23, 2015 at The Family Life Center 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Hot dog, popcorn and drink with each donation of only \$8.00. Five years and under FREE. Contact Wanda Contee 301-404-6513, Valerie Pinkney 240-350-5105, Jina Jackson 301-787-4422 or Deborah Proctor 301-275-2544 to purchase tickets.

ARITHMETICKLES

Arithmetickles is a Math Game Show moving Math off the page and onto the stage. The game show provides Interactive Skits, Comedy and 100% audience participation. Visit www.artsonstage.org or call 410-252-8717 for more information.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Improving Millennials' Financial Literacy with Mobile Technology

The 2015 Financial Literacy Summit 2015, (<http://www.practical-moneyskills.com/summit2015/>) held April 15 in Chicago and co-hosted by Visa Inc. and the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, focused on how mobile technology might improve millennials' learning, savings and investing behavior in the future.

A recent FICO study said millennials, the demographic born between 1980 and 2000, not only represent the largest group of individuals using mobile banking applications, but also the biggest cohort partaking in Internet browsing, emailing, searching, social networking and news consumption on a smartphone or tablet, bypassing desktop machines entirely. By comparison, only 5 percent of 35-54 year-olds and 3 percent of those 55 years and older are using mobile devices exclusively.

The Summit audience heard particularly eye-opening insights from a panel on how early education and mobile technology applications can help build future generations' financial literacy. While online gaming (<http://practical-moneyskills.com/games/>) is showing particular success in training grade- and high-school age students in financial fundamentals, panelists suggested that the broader solution will depend on national educational policy and a broader understanding about young adults and their financial needs.

Amando M. Tetangco, Jr., governor of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the central bank of the Philippines, told the audience that young Filipino adults are "struggling more than their older counterpart groups with regard to budgeting" and retirement planning, but he said he is still optimistic: "I believe there are certain characteristics of millennials that provide opportunities to build [their financial capabilities]. They have a desire for change." Such change, he said, should be driven by data and policy should be made personal and tied to technology solutions embraced by younger citizens.

Panelist Jason Young, CEO and Co-Founder of Mind-Blown Labs, an Oakland, California-based software developer behind the Thrive 'n' Shine personal finance game app for teens and young adults, said mobile technology will bridge the gap between financial literacy and a lifetime of successful financial decision making. "Eighty to 90 percent of U.S. teens have smart devices. That's huge, but the important thing to understand is that these aren't just things they use. They're a way of life."

Developing a stronger connection between financial literacy education and mobile technology could be beneficial for global educators and policymakers trying to improve spending, saving and investing knowledge for future generations. In January, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) released a first-time global financial literacy study (<http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-vi.htm>) that revealed that U.S. students ranked between eighth and twelfth place among all 18 participating countries in overall literacy skills.

Bottom line: Focusing on the way under-35 consumers use smartphones and tablets might provide a way for educators, financial services companies and policymakers to narrow the financial literacy gap.

Schools from A1

withhold the funding will have consequences. "The failure to release \$68 million in Geographical Cost of Education Index (GCEI) funds, set aside by the General Assembly in the state budget to support Maryland's costliest school systems, will result in significant cuts in desperately needed programs for our school children and increased taxes on working families."

The joint letter to Governor Hogan also addresses the release of \$15 million in approved operating funds for the Dimensions Healthcare system as part of the implementation of the new Regional Medical Center, and the need for forward movement on the Purple Line.

"We look forward to your positive determination on



Jason Alderman

important budgetary and policy decisions relative to the County's priorities that will continue the prosperity and growth of Prince George's County and therefore the State."

Stressing that Prince George's County is well positioned as an economic engine in Maryland, the letter references the County's 2015 Legislative Agenda focusing primarily on safeguarding the County's budget priorities; specifically, securing previously committed State funding for the Regional Medical Center, protecting critical K-12 funding including the GCEI and school construction dollars, protecting transportation projects like the Purple Line that provide infrastructure investments and spur economic development by expanding the commercial tax base.

Proudly Serving Prince George's County Since 1932

A Look At What Passed The Maryland Legislature And What Didn't

By ANJALI SHASTRY
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS -- The Maryland General Assembly proposed 2,248 pieces of legislation during the 2015 legislative session. More than 650 bills made it to the governor's desk, of which Hogan signed 121 into law Tuesday morning.

WHAT PASSED:

Fracking moratorium: Hydraulic fracturing for natural gas, more commonly known as fracking, will be restricted under a two-year moratorium so state officials can continue to study the effects of fracking on Maryland's environment.

"Rain tax" repeal: The stormwater remediation fee, dubbed the "rain tax," charged homeowners to help fund mandated federal programs to address urban runoff. The bill repeals the counties' requirement to collect such a fee and instead allows them to find another method of gathering the money.

Charter schools: Low-income students and students with disabilities or limited English proficiency are to be given a greater chance to enroll in a charter school through a lottery process. The bill also provides for a sibling of a currently enrolled charter school student to join the school.

Travel tax: The state would be able to charge third-party travel

websites the state's 6 percent sales tax on the service charge collected when people book through their service. Proponents of the bill say it fills a "loophole" that excluded these websites, but opponents say it is a new tax.

Marijuana paraphernalia: Marijuana was decriminalized in 2014, but paraphernalia, like pipes, were not at the time. This bill follows up on the previous year's law by decriminalizing the paraphernalia.

Public Information Act: Two bills would allow citizens to file complaints with a compliance board if they feel state agencies are not being fair to their public information requests, and would require state agencies to post a list of public information officers on their websites.

State election public financing: People would be able to voluntarily check off on their income tax returns to give money to a public campaign financing fund for governor.

Second Chance Act: After a period of no criminal activity and having paid their dues to society, people with nonviolent criminal records can shield certain offenses from potential employers. The law would keep the offense on the record for law enforcement officers to view.

Ex-felon voting rights: After being released from prison, convicted felons would be allowed

to vote. The bill does not require them to have completed any probation or parole requirements before reinstating their right to vote.

Transgender birth certificates: Transgender residents of Maryland would be able to get new, unamended birth certificates to reflect the gender they identify with. The bill does not require them to have had sex-reassignment surgery.

Speed limits: The maximum state highway speed would be raised from 65 mph to 70 mph for certain highways.

"Yellow alerts": State police would be able to issue "yellow alerts" to find a hit-and-run driver who seriously injures someone.

Powdered alcohol: The legislature voted to ban powdered alcohol, which can be mixed with water to produce an alcoholic beverage, amid fears of people abusing it and overdosing.

Uber: Ridesharing companies like Uber and Lyft will be allowed to continue doing their own background checks and vehicle safety inspections with less government oversight than traditional taxi companies.

"Anayah's Law": The Department of Social Services would have the discretion to ask the courts to prevent a child from being returned to their parents if there is evidence the child is being abused at home.

Asset forfeiture: A widely criticized state police practice of confiscating property allegedly connected to a crime is now being regulated, so that it restricts the state's ability to keep the property and requires them to report what they seize.

Film tax credit: "House of Cards" would receive an enticement to stay in Maryland under a new bill that would allow shows and films to continue receiving a tax credit for filming in the state.

WHAT DIDN'T PASS:

Death with dignity: A bill for terminally ill patients with a prognosis of death within six months who wanted a doctor to help them end their lives did not pass the legislature.

Paid sick leave: Small businesses would be mandated to give their employees one hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked.

Tax relief to small businesses: The governor introduced a bill to create a tax exemption on the first \$10,000 of personal property for small business owners.

Police accountability: Dozens of bills addressing police accountability were introduced at the beginning of the session. Many of them received unfavorable reports from the legislature.

Economy from A1

moving to Prince George's County which will be located at Ritchie Station Marketplace in Capitol Heights, MD at 10:30 a.m. and will be visiting Eleanor Roosevelt High School at 12:00 p.m. for the 31st Annual Science Fair and Research Practicum Symposium for STEM students.

Text of County Executive State of the Economy

Investing in Education: The Time is Now April 16, 2015

"Good morning! It is another great day in Prince George's County. I want to say thank you to the EDC, and its Board of

Directors. And the Greater Prince George's Business Roundtable. I also want to say thank you for supporting so many of my administration's initiatives. I appreciate your commitment to making this County the best it can be.

President Barack Obama said, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change we seek." He is so right. And for the last 4 years, change has been this county's mantra and together, we have made great strides moving closer and closer to our destiny.

Today we can boast of having 2 of the 3 sites the GSA is con-

sidering for the new FBI headquarters. Last year we broke ground on the new Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Next month we will be cutting the ribbon to celebrate the opening of the first state government agency in Prince George's County. A project that is jumpstarting development in New Carrollton.

In 4 years we've reduced crime 36%, and we are down 21% from last year. We have shown that our ability to continue to reduce crime is no fluke. Through programs like our Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI), we are proving that by working with communities to solve problems

in a holistic manner we can make a difference. The TNI model has proven to be sustainable and effective.

We have reduced crime, which is helping to bolster our housing market. Housing sales and property values are improving and we expect them to get better. We are bringing in new development and we continue to chalk up wins like our first Whole Foods, Dave and Busters, Harris Teeter, as well as new hotels. Companies like Bozzuto and Thompson Creek Windows electing to stay in the County and expand their oper-

See **ECONOMY Page A5**

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Winners from A1

individual and group efforts from five different categories—research papers, exhibits, performances, websites, and documentaries. First and second place winners will represent Maryland at the Kenneth E. Behring National History Day competition June 14-18, 2015 at the University of Maryland, College Park. Students from Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Garrett, Harford, Howard, Frederick, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties and Baltimore City will represent Maryland at the national contest.

Prince George's County Results Projects Advancing to National History Day:

Students: Aaliyah Beckles, Maya McAfee
Topic: Helen Keller: A Fight for a World Without Sound and Sight
Category: Exhibit
School: Accokeek Academy
County: Prince George's County
Teacher: Nina Huff
Student: Lydia Waring
Topic: Mother Jones
Category: Documentary
School: Accokeek Academy
County: Prince George's County
Teacher: Nina Huff

Special Prize Winners:

SPECIAL PRIZE IN AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY, sponsored by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture:

Student: Kyra Greenfield, Catherine Mbuashu Ndip
Topic: Fannie Lou Hamer: A Passion for Voting
Category: Exhibit
School: Greenbelt Middle School
County: Prince George's County
Teacher: Christina Doepel

THE JUDGES JAMES AND CONSTANTINE KIT SFEKAS AWARD FOR LAW AND SOCIETY, sponsored by Honorable Stephen J. and Dr. Elizabeth Sfekas:

Student: Kaylee Guadron
Topic: The First Express
Category: Website
School: Northwestern High School
County: Prince George's County
Teacher: Jessy Feinberg

SPECIAL PRIZE IN MILITARY HISTORY, sponsored by the Historical Miniatures Gaming Society:

Students: Calder Baldwin-Bott, Elias Herrera, Chima Nwaogbe
Topic: General Patton: OI' Blood and Guts
Category: Documentary
School: Greenbelt Middle School
County: Prince George's County
Teacher: Victoria Patch

The region's teachers were also recognized for their excellence in education: Jessy Feinberg, of Northwestern High School in Prince George's County was presented with a District Teacher Award.

A complete list of advancers, special prize winners, and teacher awards is available at www.mdhc.org. Maryland History Day is made possible with generous support from the Maryland State Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and The Abell Foundation. Columbia Gas of Maryland, Whiting-Turner, and Ziger/Snead Architects sponsored specific award categories.

The Maryland Humanities Council is a statewide, educational, nonprofit organization. The Maryland Humanities Council creates and supports educational experiences in the humanities that inspire all Marylanders to embrace lifelong learning, exchange ideas openly, and enrich their communities. For more information, visit www.mdhc.org. The Maryland Humanities Council is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the State of Maryland, and The Robert W. Deutsch Foundation.

COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin

United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin, Mikulski, Delaney Lead Congressional Honors for Warren Weinstein and Urge Greater Support for Families of American Citizens Held Hostage Abroad

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Ben Cardin and Congressman John Delaney have introduced resolutions with Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (All D-Md.) to honor the memory of Dr. Warren Weinstein, a Marylander who died while being held hostage by al-Qaeda in Pakistan. His death, caused by an American strike on an al-Qaeda target, was a personal loss for Cardin, Mikulski and Delaney, who all worked tirelessly to bring their constituent back to his family in Rockville.

The Cardin-Mikulski resolution (S. Res. 169), which passed the Senate by unanimous consent, and Delaney resolution (H.Res. 236) in the House of Representatives both express the condolences of the Congress to the family of Dr. Warren Weinstein, and commemorate his life and work as a humanitarian, teacher, public servant and loving family man. The lawmakers salute Dr. Weinstein for his commitment to humanitarian development work in challenging and dangerous circumstances and “calls on the United States to make the return of all United States citizens held captive abroad, regardless of their different circumstances, a top priority and provide a coordinated and consistent approach to supporting hostages and their families.”

“Warren Weinstein has left a legacy of altruism, compassion and service that stands in great contrast to the terrorists who ripped him away from his family

and life’s work,” said Senator Ben Cardin, Ranking Member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. “As we grieve the loss of Dr. Weinstein, we come together to seek answers for his death and justice for his years in captivity. We also commit ourselves to ensuring better safeguards for the men and women who work on behalf of our nation to relieve suffering and empower local peoples around the world, and greater support for their families.”

“Dr. Warren Weinstein dedicated his life to improving the conditions of others all throughout the world and his legacy will remain with us,” Senator Mikulski said. “I am proud to join my colleagues in introducing this resolution commemorating the life and work of Dr. Weinstein. We must also remember, for the Weinstein family this ordeal is not over. They have been brave beyond measure and now they deserve our continued support.”

“Dr. Warren Weinstein was a scholar and a humanitarian who served his country and was committed to building a better world. Although Warren was tragically taken from us, he will never be forgotten,” said Congressman Delaney. “It is heartbreaking that this generous man who served others was held by terrorists for the final years of his life. I am proud to work with Senator Mikulski and Senator Cardin to bring forward this resolution expressing condolences to the Weinstein family.”

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Baltimore Rising: Women Leading at the Frontline of the Fight for Justice

“Wherever there has been struggle, black women have been identified with that struggle.”

— Ella Baker, “The Black Woman in the Civil Rights Struggle,” 1969

Marilyn Mosby was sworn into office as Maryland state’s attorney for Baltimore City in January of this year at the Baltimore War Memorial Plaza building. Before unseating the incumbent, Gregg Bernstein, for the job, the 35-year-old had never held an elected office.

Five months later, the city’s newly-minted, top prosecutor—the youngest chief prosecutor in any major American city—returned to the steps of the War Memorial Plaza last Friday to announce charges, including murder, manslaughter and assault, against six police officers in the unwarranted death of Freddie Gray—simultaneously emerging into the national spotlight as an advocate for those demanding police accountability and an adversary for those who would protect the status quo.

On the night of her swearing in, Mosby was joined by a host of dignitaries, including her husband, Baltimore City councilman Nick Mosby—who represents the West Baltimore area that has been the backdrop to the protests over Gray’s death—along with her two daughters. Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake also sat among the evening’s guests and, in a speech, advised Mosby that, “Public service is not just a job, it’s a calling and it is a privilege.”

Mosby’s calling to public service was born of tragedy and tradition. When Mosby was 14, her 17-year-old cousin was mistaken for a drug dealer and shot and killed near her home. She often credits her cousin’s murder as the reason why she decided to become a prosecutor.

She also comes from a five-generation long line of law enforcement officials. Both of her parents, an aunt, four uncles and her grandfather—who was a founding member of the first association of Black police officers in her hometown of Massachusetts—were police officers.

Growing up in a family of cops, Mosby knows the good, good police officers can do in our communities. She indicted six police officers on Friday, not an entire force. Her actions are not anti-cop; they are pro-police and law enforcement accountability. She assured the public—and the nation—that her administration is “committed to creating a fair and equitable justice system for all. No matter what your occupation, your age, your race, your color or your creed.”

Like any major American city, Baltimore has its assets and its challenges. Its mayor, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, has been at the frontline, grappling with the deeply entrenched challenges of the city left in her charge since replacing a former mayor, who resigned under charges of corruption, then being elected to her first full term as mayor in 2011. She has been touched by the almost inescapable violence that stems from these challenges when in 2002, she found her brother covered in blood and nearly decapitated by a sword that was used during a carjacking in front of her house.

In her 2014 State of Black America® essay, Mayor Rawlings-Blake painted a bleak picture, noting that in Baltimore city, more than 1 in 5 African-American adult residents live in poverty, and 1 in every 3 African-American children and teens are also living in poverty. She warned, “Poverty is a deep-rooted ill, permeated with inequity, and it will take a focused, concerted assault on all fronts to excise it. We must think outside the box, and be bold as we confront the challenges that lie in our path. I am committed to the fight.”

Mayor Rawlings-Blake—the daughter of the legendary Howard “Pete” Rawlings, the first African American to become chair of the Appropriations Committee in the Maryland House of Delegates—has made her name on the national stage. She is only one of two Black female mayors of the 100 largest cities in the country. She currently serves as secretary of the Democratic National Committee and is vice president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

But she is grabbing our attention today, not for her impressive resume, but for her unflagging commitment to “the fight” in Baltimore for equality and justice. As she promised in a recent press conference, “As mayor, I will be relentless in changing the culture of the police department to ensure that everyone in our city is treated equally under the law.”

Now that the six officers involved in the death of Freddie Gray have been charged, the prosecutor’s office will present its case to a city grand jury that will consider the charges and decide whether to indict. At the same time, the Department of Justice—now being led by another African-American woman, Loretta Lynch—is also conducting an investigation into the case and into the Baltimore Police Department.

I applaud these women, and all women—and men—who are fighting for justice for Freddie and, by extension, for us. I applaud these leaders as they claim their place in the pantheon of Black female fighters who have traditionally played a key role in our nation’s struggle for equality and justice—for all.

Port Discovery Children’s Museum



Open to the Public

PORT DISCOVERY CHILDREN’S MUSEUM

Located in Baltimore Maryland’s Inner Harbor on the site of Baltimore’s Historic Fishmarket Building, adjacent to Power Plant Live! at 35 Market Place, Baltimore, MD 21202. Port Discovery offers three floors of interactive, educational exhibits and ever-changing programs for children ages birth through 10. Toddle and crawl through Tot Trails. Get healthy and fit in Kick It Up!. Splish splash in Wonders of Water. Shop and pump gas at the Royal Farms Convenience Store and Fill’er Up Station. Cook and serve food in Tiny’s Diner or climb and slide through KidWorks, a 3-story urban treehouse. General Admission is \$14.50 for ages 2 and up, and members and children younger than two years are FREE. Please call for hours of operation, 410.727.8120.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



All in the Family

“My mother was doing drugs, specifically cocaine, crack cocaine “ I almost died. They said that I was either going to be deaf or retarded or I wasn’t going to survive past childhood or infancy because there were so many chemicals in my system.”

The odds were stacked against Britiny Lee before she was born. Her mother was addicted to drugs, like Britiny’s grandfather and many others in their poverty-stricken Cleveland neighborhood. Britiny’s mother used drugs throughout her pregnancy and went to prison for a year just after Britiny’s birth. As a poor, Black “crack baby” with an addicted, incarcerated mother and an absent father, Britiny started life in danger. Being born into an unstable poor family or to a single, teen, incarcerated, or absent parent are all known risk factors in America’s Cradle to Prison Pipeline® crisis. The disadvantages millions of poor children and children of color face from birth along the continuum to and through adulthood—which can include no or inadequate prenatal and health care; no or little quality early childhood education and enrichment; child abuse and neglect; failing schools; grade retention, suspension, and expulsion; questionable special education placements; dropping out of school; unaddressed mental health problems; violent drug infested neighborhoods; and disproportionate involvement in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems—cumulate and converge and funnel so many poor children of color into a pipeline and trajectory that too often leads to marginalized lives, imprisonment, and premature death. Entering the child welfare system would have been still another risk factor for baby Britiny but she was lucky.

That was where Britiny’s grandmother stepped in who already had custody of Britiny’s older brother and sister. She brought Britiny home too and Britiny says, “My grandmother stepped up to the plate to raise us because she didn’t want us to go into the foster care system.” Britiny’s grandmother didn’t have a lot of money, but she was a stable source of love and sup-

port throughout childhood and Britiny flourished in her care. Despite doctors’ concerns when she was born as a drug addicted child, Britiny was resilient and became a straight-A student who loved school from the beginning. Britiny’s grandmother was her rock even while struggling with the autoimmune disease lupus, which got worse as Britiny got older. When she was 8 years old her grandmother suffered a seizure when they were home alone together and Britiny had to call 911 and ride in the ambulance with her grandmother to the hospital.

From then on she was terrified of losing her grandmother. Britiny’s mother Felicia, who had come in and out of her life throughout her childhood, was struggling towards sobriety. Nine months after Felicia became sober, when Britiny was 10 years old, her grandmother died. Felicia remembers the moving moment: “[My mother] held my hand and she told me, ‘Licia, I want to go home.’ And I thought that she meant go home, like put her in the car and take her home. No. She was saying she was tired and she was ready to go home to Glory . . . She looked at me in my eyes, and she said, ‘And God told me

that you were ready, that you were ready to be a mom, that you’re going to be a good mom, that you’re not going to use drugs anymore, and that I could go.” Britiny’s mother was finally ready to step in, regain custody, and learn how to be the parent her daughter needed and deserved. Today Britiny is a high school senior about to graduate from Cleveland’s John Hay School of Science and Medicine and dreams of becoming a cardiac surgeon. She recently received a Beat the Odds® scholarship from Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio. She says of her beloved grandmother, “She’s looking down on me. I’m sure she’s proud, and right now I just want to make her even more proud. I want to show her that she didn’t fight for me for nothing.”

Britiny’s grandmother was one of the many caregivers raising children in “kinship care” or “GrandFamilies”—headed by grandparents or other relatives who step in when parents are unable to do so. Sometimes a child is removed from parents’ care by the state and placed with relatives in foster care; in other

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

End-of-Year Tests Don't Have To Be Stressful

Summer break is just around the corner, but most students still face one last hurdle -- the dreaded end-of-year tests. Whether final course exams or mandated standardized tests, for many students these represent a lot of anxiety and stress.

While big tests are never fun, there are ways to reduce the anxiety associated with testing, and to help students have their best chance for scoring well.

A starting point is simply to plan ahead. Final exams are never a surprise. Waiting until the last-minute to review and cram for the test seldom generates much of an improvement in grades. But last minute cramming will increase a student's stress levels and promote test anxiety, none of which improves grades. Instead, start studying early and spread it out over a number of days.

Another great tip is simply to anticipate what is going to be covered on the test. No test will cover everything about a subject or all the material taught over the year. Instead, the student should review class notes and the text book, focusing on areas that were emphasized. If a teacher passes out a study guide, or holds reviews sessions, those are great road maps to what's going to be tested.

It's also important to get in shape for testing. No, that doesn't mean lifting weights or running ten miles. It means getting plenty of rest. It's only common sense that being well rested makes you feel better and gives your brain a better shot at remembering things.

In the same way, eating right can help improve test scores. The brain needs good nutrition to work at its best. Skipping breakfast, for example, has clearly been shown to impair brain function. Similarly, a diet loaded with high-sugar junk foods or overloaded on caffeine can also negatively affect test scores. Crashing from a sugar high isn't the path to better test taking. And someone who has used coffee, caffeinated soda or energy drinks to feel more alert is just as likely to feel jittery and nervous which will only make concentrating more difficult.

Doing well on a test depends on planning, studying and relaxing. Eat right, be rested, and review the likely test material without rushing and cramming. At test time, take a few deep breaths, then calmly focus and the result will be less stress and better scores.

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

Prince George's County Council Adopts Resolution in Support of Exelon-Pepco Holdings Merger and Settlement

By Press Officer
Prince George's County Council

The Prince George's County Council unanimously adopted Council Resolution 13-2015, on Tuesday, April 7, 2015, legislation recommending the Maryland Public Service Commission approve the merger between Exelon Corporation and Pepco Holdings, Inc., and support the Commission's adoption of the terms of a March 16, 2015 settlement agreement between the companies and Prince George's County.

"We believe that our County and our constituents will benefit from this merger and settlement," said Council Chair Mel Franklin. "Exelon and Pepco have made commitments that will deliver a top performing utility, promote job creation in the county, help prepare our students for advanced careers in the energy sector, assist low and moderate income residents who are struggling with their energy bills, and position the County as a leader in the field of renewable and distributive energy. Today's support resolution also includes requests for safeguards for utility ratepayers and consideration for the undergrounding of existing utility facilities."

"Pepco has been a partner with Prince George's County for many years," added Council Vice-Chair Derrick L. Davis. "It was important for us to know that this merger will enable Pepco to maintain its charitable contributions and local community support for at least another 10 years. We are also pleased to see the commitments made to employees, and to hire more union workers after the merger closes."

The settlement, which is subject to the approval of the Maryland Public Service Commission, was filed by Exelon and Pepco Holdings and signed by Prince George's County, Montgomery County, the National Consumer Law Center, National Housing Trust, Maryland Affordable Housing Coalition, the Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers and a consortium of nine recreational trail advocacy organizations led by the Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE).

Maryland Department of Agriculture Aims to Connect Farmers with Markets

Revamped Maryland's Best strives to make the connection between farms, stores clear

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Lt. Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Secretary Joe Bartenfelder announced that his agency is revamping the state ag branding program, Maryland's Best. The program started in 2001 to connect consumers with local agricultural products.

MDA has created a family of Maryland's Best logos, including a new version that adds the words "Fresh" and "Local." The current Maryland's Best logo will remain available for use. All are available in color and black and white. Farmers who wish to use any of the logos will be asked to sign up with the free

program at the Department. Click here to sign up.

"It is our hope that farmers see the value in using these logos on their produce boxes and in farm stands, and that grocery store chains and other food distributors will ask to use the logos for their Maryland products," said Secretary Bartenfelder. "There are tremendous opportunities for our farmers to benefit from the growing consumer demand for local agricultural products. We need to do all we can at MDA to help our farmers capture those opportunities."

Preliminary results of an ongoing evaluation of the Maryland's Best program by MDA show that 86 percent of in-state consumers surveyed are more



IMAGE COURTESY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

likely to buy food labeled with the Maryland's Best logo.

"We are stepping up our work with this program to emphasize to consumers that agricultural products labeled with 'Maryland's Best' are local," said Secretary Bartenfelder. "Every dollar spent on local agricultural products contributes to the economic health of the community, keeps our land in farming, and helps to support a growing future for Maryland agriculture."

Previous research conducted by MDA has indicated that 78 percent of Marylanders are more likely to buy produce when it is clearly labeled as having been grown in the state.

MDA will complete its evaluation of Maryland's Best this summer and use that information to further improve its strategies to connect farmers with market. The evaluation, conducted by Chevy Chase based ag marketing consultant Mark Newman includes surveys of consumers, farmers and food distributors. It also includes interviews with farmers and buyers.

Farmers, grocery stores, restaurants and food distributors who would like to use the Maryland's Best logo and work with MDA to promote their Maryland products should contact MDA's Marketing office, (410) 841-5779.



IMAGE COURTESY THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Economy from A3

ations. Our major development projects are moving forward and we continue to tout \$6 billion dollars in development projects that are working their way through the pipeline, ranging from our \$650 million Regional Medical Center to the \$1.2 billion, MGM Destination Resort Casino.

But in order for us to continue this unprecedented growth, we must be BOLD, INNOVATIVE and WILLING to take aggressive measures that will ensure our economic future. This is why we made some hard decisions in the FY 2016 proposed budget. No longer could we dip into our reserves to resolve revenue shortfall. In order to maintain our AAA bond rating, it was imperative that we propose cost cutting measures that will have longer term impact on our expenses.

So this year's budget proposes employee furloughs and layoffs in order to balance the budget. In addition, we asked agencies to once again make needed cuts. However, there are two areas we did not cut: Education and Public Safety. These are two key areas that define any jurisdiction.

We have turned around crime and brought in major economic development, but the one area that continues to be our Achilles heel is the perceived quality of our public school system. While we have made some important changes that have led to improvements both in how our schools are run and how our children perform, I am not satisfied with where we are at this point. Without a strong school system, our property values will continue to lag which will handicap our ability to attract more business and commerce to the County.

It is why we must do what our neighbors have done-- the District, Arlington, Fairfax, and Montgomery counties --- to attract people and businesses. They demonstrated their commitment to education by investing in their schools and their students. These are our competitors! This is a very wealthy region. 7 of the nation's top 13 richest counties are all around us and we are competing with them for

residents, businesses and retail. We cannot lose sight of the fact that elevating our schools is paramount to our future success--it is an economic necessity.

Former Labor Secretary Robert Reich said, "Over the long term, the only way we're going to raise wages, grow the economy, and improve American competitiveness is by investing in our people - especially their education."

Improving the quality of our schools is the key to helping us accelerate our recovery from the recession. Without a strong school system, young families in D.C. or the surrounding area think twice about moving here. Without a strong school system, it will be far more difficult for us to be the economic engine for the State of Maryland.

Our children and our schools are important and we cannot continue to kick their futures... our future...down the road like an old can. I will not stand idly by and let us marginalize ourselves or our children. If we want to have one of the top schools systems in the state, we have to invest in them. We must believe that we can make it happen. We must believe within our hearts and souls that our schools can move into top ten by 2020.

Every day, real estate agents are trying to sell houses in the County and their clients are asking, "So how are the schools in this neighborhood?" I want the answer to be "The schools are excellent." When your businesses are looking for strong candidates to fill jobs, you should not have to look any further than Prince George's County, because they are college and career ready. When our Economic Development team recruits corporations that are looking to move their headquarters here or open an office; we must be able to proudly say, "Our schools are great!" A strong school system will create greater demand for office space and homes. Education is Everyone's Business, and today, we ALL must realize that we have to make our schools our top priority. And that means increasing our investment in our children.

There has been a perception that our schools are not well-run and that my budget proposal

to invest more in our schools is just throwing good money after bad. With the changes we made in the leadership of our schools, we are in a much better position to take on this very challenging task of catapulting our schools from the bottom to the top. You see, I understand that voters and business people like you are looking at several key factors before you support a project or initiative. I knew we had to show people that things have changed and our schools are worth investing in.

Two years ago, we revamped and strengthened our school board and added, new members who brought extensive experience and education in business, higher education, finance and teacher quality. We hired one of the nation's top superintendents, Dr. Maxwell, who is a son of Prince George's County and who has worked in 3 school districts in the state of Maryland. We changed the name of his position from superintendent to CEO. Why? Because our schools are a major enterprise with a huge budget and countless assets. I wanted a leader who not only understood how to educate children, but also understood the business of running a school system.

So for the past two years, Dr. Maxwell, his leadership team and the Board, have been assessing the state of our schools. They have implemented programs and initiatives that have helped us make progress. Elevating our teaching expertise and now Prince George's County has the third highest number of National Board certified teachers in Maryland. Implemented cost saving measures that have led to over \$70 million in savings. Enrollment is up and continues to rise. We had a historic improvement in graduation rates last year and 9th grade promotions are up significantly.

But to really move the needle and position us among the top ten school districts in the state, I knew it would require us to make a significant investment. In the first year, this plan will require an investment of \$133 million. An investment that will impact All schools across the County.

We are investing in programs such as:

- College & Career Readiness - \$3 million
- Digital Literacy - \$6 million
- Universal Pre-K - \$2 million
- Retention Pay of Education - \$20 million
- Family and Community Engagement - \$1 million

This is a significant increase, but it is an investment we must make to secure our future. It is the level of investment that our neighbors have been making for decades.

When comparing ourselves to our neighbors in Montgomery, Fairfax, Alexandria or Howard County, our local contribution to the total amount of money spent on education is the lowest percentage in the region. In fact, we contribute about 36% in County funds and the state contributes 57%. And Montgomery County contributes 66% locally and the state contributes 27%. The percentages are similar throughout the region.

The fact of the matter is... we have been limiting our improvement for far too long and this is our opportunity to change the course of things. It is time to make the investments that will take us out of the economic policies of the 1970s and 80s and do what we must do to position us for prosperity in the future. For 15 cents more... we can dramatically change our schools. For businesses, we are asking you to make a significant investment as well. You too will contribute to this investment through property, personal property and telecommunication taxes.

Look, I understand that no one wants to pay more in taxes. I don't either. But this is what we must do to change our trajectory. If we don't take ownership for investing in our children's success, who will? If we want to improve property values and bring more businesses here, this is what we must do. If we want to grow and expand our commercial tax base, this is what we must do. If we want to be the new

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review
"SPY"

SPY

Grade: B+

R for language throughout, violence, and some sexual content including brief graphic nudity
1 hr., 57 min

Despite having almost literally the most generic title it could possibly have, *Spy* is a dizzyingly funny espionage comedy, with a non-farcical, non-spoof plot that works on a straightforward level, too. With several very funny performances and some memorable dialogue, it's almost beside the point that, oh yeah, it happens to star a woman.

That woman is Melissa McCarthy, an unstoppable force of nature who, unlike most forces of nature, has great comic timing. Brassy, physical, and always committed to the joke, McCarthy has been misused in a few things (like *Identity Thief* and that "Fat People in Love" TV show she's on), but it's impressive how quickly Hollywood has figured out how to use her talents, and how quickly she's gained enough clout not to have to settle for fatty-fall-down comedies.

Spy reunites her with *Bridesmaids* and *The Heat* director Paul Feig, who wrote the screenplay this time, presumably with McCarthy in mind. She plays Susan Cooper, a C.I.A. analyst whose job is to stay at headquarters and feed spies information through their earpieces while they're on missions. She's paired with Bradley Fine (Jude Law), a suave agent on whom she has developed a crush, but to whose 007 she will always be nothing more than a Moneypenny.

When an arms dealer named Rayna Boyanov (Rose Byrne) kills Fine and exposes several other agents, it becomes necessary for the C.I.A. director (Allison Janney) to send a complete nobody into the field, just to keep tabs on Rayna before she can sell a nuke. That person will be Susan.

Now, here you are expecting that Susan will be totally incompetent, a klutz who will only save the day accidentally, and probably with pie on her face. Here you are wrong. Susan had all the C.I.A. training when she joined up, and



ROTTENTOMATOES

Susan Cooper (Melissa McCarthy) is an unassuming, deskbound CIA analyst, and the unsung hero behind the Agency's most dangerous missions. But when her partner (Jude Law) falls off the grid and another top agent (Jason Statham) is compromised, she volunteers to go deep undercover to infiltrate the world of a deadly arms dealer, and prevent a global disaster. (C) Fox

she's technically an agent, albeit an out-of-practice one with no field experience. She's rusty and unsure — she's not James Bond — but she's not an idiot. The voice in her ear back at HQ is her best friend and co-worker Nancy (Miranda Hart), whose delightful enthusiasm buoy's her through the mishaps.

A lot of jokes come from the Agency's shoddy, almost hostile treatment of her, as she gets the unglamorous versions of the resources that more important agents get, not to mention less flattering cover identities. When she follows Rayna to Rome, her local ally is a dashing pervy Italian buffoon played by a very funny Peter Serafinowicz. She also must contend with fellow agent Rick Ford (Jason Statham), a dim English hothead who went rogue in protest over Susan's assignment and is trying to accomplish the mission himself. Statham's performance is impressively daft, never more so than when he rattles off lists of past exploits that sound like funnier version of those Chuck Norris jokes people used to tell.

While keeping an eye on Rayna, Susan spots an attempt on her life and must intervene, lest Rayna perish before she can lead them to the nukes. Now Susan is deep undercover, befriending

Rayna the high-society arms dealer as the dumpy American who saved her life. Rose Byrne is fiercely funny as the haughty, cruel Rayna, continuing a streak of sharp comedy performances from her. She and McCarthy are great foils for each other, and the script mixes odd-couple humor with weirder things like Susan getting glamorous makeovers (McCarthy looks great) that Rayna finds hideous.

This movie has no fat jokes. Not one. We've been conditioned to expect that when a Person of Size stars in a comedy, there will be jokes about his or her weight. And *Spy* has so much funny stuff going on that it doesn't have to bother with it. At one point, Susan even asks Rayna what's so hard to believe about a man being seduced by her — a perfect setup, especially for the mean Rayna — and instead of a fat joke, the movie goes with a joke about Susan's frumpy style and personality. The humor is based on character, which Feig and McCarthy created, not on McCarthy's physical attributes, which came with the package. In other words, they tried harder, and it worked.

It's also notable how many roles in the movie are female, including some (like the hero's boss and the lead villain) that would

usually be male, without the story ever being overtly female-oriented. Apart from a quick exchange between Susan and her C.I.A. boss acknowledging how female agents have been overshadowed in the past, none of *Spy* is "about" girl power or feminism or equality. It just IS those things. When Susan goes undercover and needs weapons disguised as things she might carry in her purse, she doesn't get exploding tampons or poison lipstick or whatever. Because the quartermaster (Michael McDonald) is weirdly bitter toward her, she gets embarrassing stuff like hemorrhoid pads and toenail fungus cream — again, jokes based on character rather than on the simple fact that she's a woman. Most of the things in the film that are funny, or even supposed to be, would work with the genders reversed, too.

The best part, of course, is that it's funny — brash, potty-mouthed, and, as Susan becomes increasingly confident, cheerfully violent in a badass fashion. Not every joke lands, of course; I don't want to oversell it. But the success rate is high enough that when the film ended with the door open for more adventures with these characters, it sounded like an idea with promise.

Fire Training from A1

While some firefighters certainly take advantage of technol-

ogy like thermal cameras, Wargo emphasized that the drills also help responders heighten their senses, which is what they pri-

marily rely on when working through such conditions.

"All they're using is their feel, their hearing and their

communication with each other," said Wargo, who is also the project manager for the Market Place training exercises.

Berman Enterprises, a Rockville real estate agency, purchased the Market Place mall property in 2013. It is scheduled to be demolished and turned into a residential shopping complex at a to-be-determined time. In the meantime, the fire department has been using the property for training for the past few months, according to Prince George's County Fire Chief Marc Bashoor.

Bashoor addressed the small crowd of fire personnel and press to express the department's appreciation to be able to use the building as a training site.

"It's been a long time since we've had this opportunity and we appreciate Berman Enterprises for working with us to make this facility available to use," said Bashoor.

The department's time at Market Place is set to expire Thursday, however there is a possibility for further use depending on how the demolition schedule is determined, according to the department spokesman Mark Brady.

Training will then move to local departments' facilities and at the county's fire academy in Cheltenham.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

A Police Story Unravels: How Did the NYPD Break an NBA Player's Leg?



At the risk of stating the utterly obvious, most black men and women who suffer physical violence at the hands of the police aren't millionaires. They don't have lawyers on speed dial and lack the resources of a well-funded union leaping to their defense. But most black men and women aren't NBA players. In other words, they aren't Thabo Sefolosha. The Atlanta Hawks guard will now miss the playoffs after an encounter with the NYPD left him with a fractured leg and an arrest record. In his first comments following the late-night scuffle outside a Chelsea club, Sefolosha made clear that while his attorneys asked him to be silent for now, "I will simply say that I am in great pain, have experienced a significant injury and that the injury was caused by the police."

Already, the gap between the initial police accounts—reprinted as objective narration by some media outlets—and the version that's coming to light, should be giving NYPD Commissioner William Bratton night sweats. The official story was that Thabo and teammate Pero Antic were arrested after being asked "six times" to leave a crime scene where NBA player Chris Copeland was stabbed. Then, as the original police report proclaimed, "the defendant Thabo Sefolosha [ran] in an aggressive manner towards the direction of Police Officer Daniel Dongvort" and "Officer Dongvort's back was facing the defendant at the time."

Yet facts are stubborn things, and the most stubborn fact that makes this story feel like fantasy is that the arrest took place well over 40 yards away from the stabbing. I went down to the block where the stabbing and subsequent arrest took place. The distance is considerable in the light of day. So imagine how far apart the two places would have seemed with dozens of people crowding a narrow Tenth Avenue sidewalk between the stabbing and the retreat toward the team's hotel. The idea that police were yelling on six separate occasions over the heads of throngs of people—amidst ambulances and all matter of chaos—for two men to walk away seems absurd.

An alternative version of what may have happened was told to SI's Greg Hanlon by an anonymous source who had spoken to several people on the scene.

In this version, as people were dispersing following the Copeland stabbing, "one officer focused on Sefolosha, and then he continues to track him down the block like a D-back tracking a receiver." Then according to Hanlon's source, "Sefolosha turns to him and asked in substance what the officer's problem was with him." Sefolosha was subsequently knocked to the ground, where according to video, an officer is clearly unsheathing and raising some kind of baton.

What sounds more realistic? That Thabo Sefolosha, whose off-court reputation is pristine, decided to bum-rush a police officer whose back was turned, or that a pissed-off cop, adrenalized over a melee involving a stabbed NBA player, chose to get aggressive with the other black NBA player on the premises?

These kinds of confrontations do not happen every day, but they do happen. Police engage in racial profiling and NBA players, who could not be in the league without healthy egos, don't like being treated like shit by cops. It's simply a recipe for conflict. Remember the pepper-spraying of Chris Webber, when he wouldn't get off his phone quickly enough for an officer who pulled him over in his car, or the tasing of Dale Davis, after the Indiana Pacers power forward dared police officers to shoot him. Those are only two examples, and I could list several more. What I cannot find is an instance with an NBA player seeing a police officer and just going on the attack. Perhaps that is why Internal Affairs is now investigating the arresting officers.

What happened to Thabo Sefolosha has happened before. But this case is also different. It is the first one to take place amidst the presence of the Black Lives Matter movement against police violence; the first "cops vs. jocks" story to happen in simultaneous fashion with stories such as the execution shooting of Walter Scott by Officer Michael Slager and the recording of a police officer responding to the dying Eric Harris' plea that he could not breathe because of a police bullet in his back with "Fuck your breath." It is the first one to happen after a fall of NBA players taking the court to say that they stand with the thousands who believe that the police have a responsibility to not kill the unarmed.

Now the ball is in Thabo Sefolosha's hands. He is clearly preparing a lawsuit against the NYPD and if successful, good for him. As the head of an NAACP branch who asked his name to be withheld said to me, "The police are like any business. You sue. You take their money. You get the bureaucrats nervous and hopefully that means you change their behavior."

See POLICE STORY Page A7

CITY OF DISTRICT HEIGHTS NOTICE OF A PROPOSED REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The Mayor and Commissioners of the City of District Heights proposes to increase real property taxes.

1. For the tax year beginning July 1, 2015, the estimated real property assessable base will increase by 8.7% from \$291,438,850 to \$316,661,160
2. If the City of District Heights maintains the current tax rate of \$1.02 per \$100 of assessment, real property tax revenues will increase by 8.7% resulting in \$257,268 of new real property tax revenues.
3. In order to fully offset the effect of increasing assessments, the real property tax rate should be reduced to \$0.9388, the constant yield tax rate.
4. The City is considering not reducing its real property tax rate enough to fully offset increasing assessments. The City proposes to adopt a real property tax rate of \$0.9488 per \$100 of assessment. This tax rate is 1.1% higher than the constant yield tax rate and will generate \$31,666 in additional property tax revenues.

A public hearing on the proposed real property tax rate increase will be held at 7:00 p.m. on June 4, 2015 at the E. Michael Roll Municipal Building, 2000 Marbury Drive, District Heights, Maryland 20747.

The hearing is open to the public, and public testimony is encouraged. Persons with questions regarding this hearing may call (301) 336-1402 for further information.

Calendar of Events

May 21 — May 27, 2015

Yoga in the Parks at Watkins Regional Park

Date & Time: Tuesdays, May 26-September 1, 2015 9-10 am
Description: Did you know yoga can be modified to suit all levels of fitness and has the ability to lower blood pressure, increase strength and flexibility, energize your body? Join us for FREE outdoor yoga classes in the parks! Learn basic yoga techniques and how to free your mind, body, and spirit in this popular fitness activity for all ages.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Watkins Regional Park
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
Contact: 301-446-6800; TTY 301-446-6802

Blood Pressure Screenings for Seniors

Date and Time: Wednesday, March 18, April 15 & May 20, 2015 11:45 am-12:30 pm
Description: Seniors will receive free blood pressure screenings from licensed professionals.
Ages: 60 & Better
Location: Langley Park Senior Activity Center
1500 Merrimac Dr, Hyattsville 20783
Contact: 301-408-4343; TTY: 301-446-3402

Toddler Time

Date and Time: Thursdays, May 7, 14, 21 & 28, 11 am-12 pm
Description: Parents and their toddlers can enjoy time at the nature center with hands-on treasures, crafts, stories, soft play, and much more.
Cost: FREE
Ages: 2 & up
Location: Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation Center
4701 31st Place, Mount Rainier, MD 20712
Contact: 301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544

The Battle of Bladensburg

Date and Time: Saturday, May 23, 2015 1-2 pm
Description: The history of the Battle of Bladensburg: A recounting of events leading up to the battle, its participants, and its outcome.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Bladensburg Waterfront Park
4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544

Shop N' Sell

Date and Time: Saturday, May 23, 2015 8 am-12 noon
Description: Find hidden treasures from your neighbors' basements and attics. This annual event attracts many people from the Greater Fort Washington area. Space is limited to the first 45 vendors who sign up. Vendors can set-up at 7 am.
Cost: Residents: \$20; Non-Residents: \$24
Ages: 21 & up
Location: Harmony Hall Regional Center
10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-203-6040; TTY 301-203-6030

All Thoroughbred Horse Show

Date and Time: Saturday-Sunday, May 23-24, 2015 8 am
Description: The Prince George's Equestrian Center will host the All Thoroughbred Horse Show.
Cost: Free for spectators
Location: The Show Place Arena
14900 Pennsylvania Avenue
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Contact: 301-952-7900; TTY 301-952-7998

Seasonal Selections: Remembering the Fallen

Date and Time: Sunday, May 24, 2015, noon-3:15 pm
Description: Using produce from the kitchen gardens, the Riversdale Kitchen Guild demonstrates 19th century open hearth cooking featuring army fare and ration recipes. On this Sunday, our feast will remember the fallen soldiers.
Cost: Free; regular fee applies for house tours
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Riversdale House Museum
4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737
Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

Seniors: Toby's Dinner Theatre "1776" the Musical

Date & Time: Wednesday, May 27, 2015 9:30 am-3 pm
Description: The signing of the Declaration of Independence, a groundbreaking event in American history, blazes to vivid life in this most unconventional of Broadway hits. 1776 puts a human face on the pages of history as we see the men behind the national figures determined to do the right thing for a fledgling nation. 1776 is a funny, insightful, and compelling drama with a wonderful musical score. Lunch is included. Trip will leave the Langley Park Senior Activity Center with a Commission bus.
Cost: Resident: \$68; Non-Resident: \$72
Ages: 60 & Better
Location: Langley Park Senior Activity Center
1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville 20783
Contact: 301-408-4343; TTY 301-446-3402

Travel to Delaware Bay with Watkins Nature Center

Date & Time: Thursday, May 28, 2015 7:00 am-8:30 pm
Description: Put down your remote, stop watching Animal Planet and take a trip with us to Delaware Bay to experience sea animals in their natural habitat. Our trip to Delaware Bay falls during the height of the horseshoe crab mating and egg-laying season, allowing us to get a glimpse of how these living fossils procreate. The shore also allows for prime shorebird watching. The trip includes stops at the DuPont Nature Center and Prime Hook National Wildlife Refuge. Please bring a lunch, snacks and drinks, binoculars, a camera, and dress according to the weather.
Cost: \$25.00 for residents and \$30.00 for non-residents
Register online or at one of our community centers
Ages: 18 and older
Location: Watkins Regional Park
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-446-3313

EARTH TALK ... Is Backyard Firepit a Health Hazard

Dear EarthTalk:

Now that summer is coming, my neighbors will be firing up their backyard fire pits again, and I'm wondering if the wood smoke drifting in my open windows is a health hazard for my family and if I have any standing to require them to refrain?

— Mitch Brasky,
Reno, NV

With summer approaching, many of us are eagerly anticipating the first night we can gather with loved ones under the stars around our backyard fire pits. But neighbors might have not-so-warm feelings about wood smoke entering their yards and homes. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), wood smoke is a complex mixture of gases and microscopic particles, and when these microscopic particles get into your eyes and respiratory system, they can cause health problems such as burning eyes, runny nose, and bronchitis.

As part of its "Burn Wise" program, EPA warns that people who have heart or lung disease, such as congestive heart failure, angina, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema or asthma, should especially limit their exposures to wood smoke. If you're concerned about smoke emitting from a neighbor's fire pit, speak to your neighbor about the matter. If the smoke remains

an issue, contact your local health or fire department to determine further action.

If you're in the market to buy a fire pit and would like to avoid having smoke drift into your neighbor's yard or home, some models are specially designed to reduce smoke output. The American-made Backyard Firefly fire pit, for example, utilizes a vertical design that causes the smoke to be combusted in the fire and the remainder to rise vertically, reducing air pollution by over 50 percent from conventional campfires. There are also a multitude of beautifully designed natural gas fire pits currently available. Natural gas fire pits won't produce smoke, will instantly light and won't have to be cleaned like wood-burning fire pits that accumulate ash and soot residue.

If you already own a wood-burning backyard fire pit, you can replace conventional wood with certain varieties of Duraflame Logs. Duraflame Stax logs are shaped like split wood and burn with the same charred appearance and crackling sounds of a wood fire, but with half the hazardous air pollutants of an equivalent wood fire. Duraflame Campfire Roasting Logs create hot coals safe for roasting marshmallows, hot dogs or cooking other campfire foods and produce 60 percent less particulate emissions than an equivalent wood fire. No trees are cut down to produce these logs and



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Exposure to wood smoke can cause health problems such as burning eyes, runny nose, and bronchitis — and can aggravate pre-existing heart and respiratory conditions.

they are made of 100 percent renewable resources.

For those who own a wood-burning fire pit and would like to continue using conventional chopped wood, the EPA Burn Wise program advises to use only properly dried wood, because wet wood can create excessive smoke. To allow wood to properly dry, stack wood away from buildings on rails in a single row with the split side down. Cracked ends on the

wood typically means its dry enough to burn, or you can purchase a moisture meter to test the moisture level in the wood. "Moisture meters that allow you to test the moisture level in wood are available in all sizes and can cost as little as \$20," the EPA states. "Properly dried wood should have a reading of 20 percent or less. Dry wood creates a hotter fire. Hotter fires save wood — ultimately saving you time and money."

CONTACTS: EPA Burn Wise, epa.gov/burnwise/; Backyard Firefly, www.backyardfirefly.com; Duraflame Roasting Logs, www.duraflame.com/products/roasting-logs.

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Economy from A5

economic engine of the State, this is what we must do. And if we want the best for our children and the families of Prince George's County, this is what we must do.

Every year at my budget hearings the most common request is for more money to: expand academic programs, reduce classroom size, improve facilities; and provide all day pre-k. We can't keep talking

about having better schools...but run and hide when the bill is due. Do you know what the most asked question that I have heard in my 20 years of public service to this County? "What are we going to do about our schools?" My friends, it's time for us to put up... or forever hold our peace. We either want the best schools or we don't. It is just that simple!

This is our moment ... Now is the time. Will it be easy? Ab-

solutely NOT! But I am confident we can through sacrifice, we will be successful. And with an unprecedented level of development projects on tap. A decreasing crime rate. An improving healthcare system with the new Regional Medical Center. And one of the top superintendents in the nation leading our school system. Our County is moving in the right direction. But we must embrace this challenge and lay the foundation for your chil-

dren and this County for generations to come.

Remember, "Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change we seek." This investment is about change. Dramatic Change! It is about us believing in schools and our children. I refuse to give up on us. But more importantly, I refuse to give up on the children of Prince George's County."



ECO-FRIENDLY PET OWNERSHIP

If you're living a green lifestyle and own a pet, make sure your favorite furry friends are as well.

- ▶ Adopt from a local animal shelter. There are thousands of deserving, adoptable pets at the Prince George's County Animal Shelter. Stop in to visit today or check them out online at www.princegeorgespetshouse.com.
- ▶ Buy healthy, organic pet food that don't contain animal byproducts, antibiotics and added hormones.
- ▶ Animal overpopulation has a negative effect on our environment, from disrupting the food chain to being a major cause of bacteria, ammonia and other pollutants in our waters. Please have all pets spayed and neutered.
- ▶ Never put pet waste in a storm drain or hose it towards the sidewalk, gutter or street. Always scoop it up and either flush it, put it in a sealed bag and toss it in a trash can or bury it away from gardens and water sources.
- ▶ Use natural grooming and pet-care products to lather up your furry friends.

Patuxent from A1

lage, which was built by student volunteers; developing new programs; organizing river cleanups and by offering citizen science opportunities. At Clearwater Nature Center, staff uses its school-based programs to teach that nature can be found in all settings. They show visitors how to support green initiatives by teaching how to garden with native plants, by providing shelter for wildlife and by discouraging invasive species.

Police Story from A6

This is a valid point. But we have also seen big-city police departments pay out millions with little to show for it in changed behavior. New York City alone has belched up half a billion dollars since 2009, to settle police brutality civil suits out of court. This payout did not save Eric Garner anymore than it spared Thabo Se-folsha. But if Thabo chooses to mount a public campaign and if

Clearwater's top accomplishments are: educating on plastic pollution and food waste issues; improving the campfire circle so it can be used as an outdoor classroom; removing exotic invasive plants while expanding the native plant gardens; developing a series of natural craft programs and using the Green Center application to rethink and improve the center's curriculum-based program offerings for schools.

There are currently 41 Maryland Green Centers and more

than 481 Maryland Green Schools. The Maryland Green Schools program is nationally recognized as having significant impact with students and schools. The program encourages educational opportunities for preK-12 schools that increase awareness and understanding of environmental interrelationships that impact public health and our society, and that promote responsible environmental stewardship practices. The program is aligned with Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Agreement 2014 goals and supports Maryland State Department of Education graduation requirements and standards.

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.

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