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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY NATE RABNER

Jonathan Libber stands next to his analog electricity meter at his home in Baltimore in April 2015.

## Utility Companies Spread "Smart Meters" Across Maryland, but Some Homeowners Hold Out

By NATE RABNER  
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE — In August 2010, Baltimore Gas and Electric received permission from the Maryland Public Service Commission to overhaul its network of electric and gas meters that perch on the walls of homes and businesses in 10 counties and the city of Baltimore. In-

spired by programs in California and Florida and bolstered by a \$200 million federal grant, the utility set a plan in motion to replace customers' electric and gas meters with a grid of digital "smart meters," which continually send energy consumption data wirelessly to the utility.

"There were a number of reasons to do it," said Baltimore Gas and Electric smart grid di-

rector Michael Butts. "One is we knew that (smart meters) could improve customer service, and there were programs that we could give to our customers that could help save money."

Other benefits of a "smart grid" include more accurate monthly bills, quicker response to power outages and less energy use across BGE's service area, Butts said.

For the most part, the rollout, which is nearing completion, has gone smoothly. BGE alone has changed out more than a million old-style analog or digital meters, replacing spinning dials with digital displays and online charts. Customers can log in to a website to view their

See METERS Page A5

## WSSC FY '16 Budget Approved by PG and Montgomery Counties

Budget Includes 6% Revenue Increase and \$1.7 Million for Implementation of a Customer Assistance Program

By Press Officer  
PG County Government

Laurel — Montgomery and Prince George's County councils met yesterday and voted to approve WSSC's Fiscal 2016 (FY16) operating and capital budget of \$1.4 billion. The FY16 budget will focus on the continued rehabilitation of water and sewer pipeline in WSSC's system. The new budget also includes a 6 percent revenue increase, which will add approximately \$4.20 per month to the average customer bill.

The FY16 Operating Budget increased by \$7.9 million to a total of \$715.1 million representing a 1.1 percent increase. Water and sewer debt service and the expansion of the Large Valve Program were the primary drivers for the increase.

The FY16 Capital Budget was increased by \$55.5 million, representing an 8.9 percent increase to a total of \$680.9 million. Construction of extensive roads, by-pass pumping and stream stabilization to complete

See 2016 BUDGET Page A3

## Three Communicator Awards Go To Public Affairs and Marketing Division

By Press Officer  
PG County Parks & Recreation

GREENBELT, MD — The Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation's Public Affairs and Marketing Division (PAMD) had a successful showing at the 21st-annual Communicator Awards, garnering three awards on four submissions.

An international awards program honoring creative excellence for communication professionals, the 2015 Communicator Awards' judges selected the Department's work from the following categories: Integra-

ted Campaign — Promotion Branding; Brochure — Overall Design; and Public Relations/Communications — Community Outreach Program.

"We were pleased to learn that three of our entries won at the Communicator Awards," said Anita Pesses, Division Chief for PAMD. "Getting those honors in three very different categories shows how well rounded our team is — that no matter what we are producing, it is going to be of the highest quality."

See AWARDS Page A5

## New Laurel library to Offer 'Bright Spacious Interior, High-Tech Learning Tools'

By PRESS OFFICER  
BHC

LAUREL, Md. — Prince George's County Memorial Library System held a groundbreaking ceremony May 27 for its new 31,000-square-foot Laurel library building, almost twice the size of the original structure. The new building, which will replace the current building at 507 Seventh St. in Laurel, will offer a dinosaur-themed children's room, 50 computers and environmentally friendly features.

Among the elected officials who attended the ground-breaking were Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker III, Prince George's County Council Member Mary Lehman and Laurel Mayor Craig Moe.

"With its bright spacious interior, high-tech learning tools and child-friendly dinosaur displays, the new building will offer a wide range of resources for the Laurel community," said Kathleen Teaze, CEO of Prince

George's County Memorial Library System. "We're excited to break ground."

The new building will open through a glass entryway leading to a large hall with a high slanted ceiling. Watch a video rendering of the building: <https://youtu.be/zxefF-7j0sM>

Lighted dinosaur footprints in the new building will lead to the Discovery Island children's room with a glass floor exposing a full-size velociraptor skeleton replica. The room will hold two children's seating areas, one within a large dinosaur rib cage and the other decorated with volcano lava and light effects. In addition, an early literacy center with a digital learning table will help children develop pre-reading skills.

The new building will also include environmentally friendly features such as solar panels on the roof to generate electricity, two electric-car

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## National Park Service Awards Contract to Restore Carter G. Woodson Home

By ALICIA MCELHANEY  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON — The National Park Service announced today that Perini Management Services was awarded a \$5.6 million contract to begin restoring the Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site. This contract is for the first phase of a three-phase project. Phase one will restore the interior and exterior of Dr. Woodson's home and stabilize the adjacent buildings.

"This is a major step in opening Dr. Woodson's home for people to visit," Superintendent Gopaul Noojibail said. "The National Park Service is committed to sharing our nation's history, and restoring, preserving and opening his home will help people learn about and honor Dr. Woodson's work and legacy."

Phase one of construction will begin in early June 2015 and is expected to last 12-18 months. Once this phase is complete, the public will be able to visit the Woodson Home on a limited basis through pre-arranged tours.

**About Carter G. Woodson Home National Historic Site:** Carter G. Woodson Home Na-



PHOTO COURTESY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR/NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The National Park Service recently shared great news about the project to restore the Carter G. Woodson Home.

tional Historic Site at 1538 9th Street, N.W., was Dr. Woodson's home from 1915 to 1950. Dr. Woodson founded The Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, now the Association for the Study of African American

Life and History (ASALH). Dr. Woodson, called the "Father of Black History," founded the association to ensure the continuation of the study of African American history. The Carter G. Woodson Home NHS served as

the national headquarters of the Association until the early 1970s. The home was designated a National Historic Landmark on May 11, 1976, and on February 27, 2006, it became part of the national park system.

### INSIDE

#### New Data Finds Nearly Half of Students Ready For Kindergarten

Teachers can use student KRA data to adjust instruction and improve learning. Early childhood programs and school leaders can use the information to address achievement gaps and respond to the learning needs of certain groups of students.

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#### Nebraska Executes its Death Penalty

For hundreds of years, outspoken opposition to the death penalty, by a diverse collection of individuals and organizations, has put a spotlight on a method of punishment many feel neither align with their personal values, nor the values of this country.

Commentary, Page A4

#### Maryland Horse Chase Contestants Traveled Thousands of Miles in Quests

It also showcased and brought awareness to Maryland's large and diverse horse industry. Competitors trotted all across Maryland, completing challenges at each location to earn points that were entered and geo-tracked on their cell phones.

Business, Page A5

#### Movie Review: "Tomorrowland"

The journey is mid-grade fun, occasionally thrilling (there are bad guys chasing them), yet strangely unentertaining, promising a "gee whiz, look at that!" sense of amazement but mostly delivering on-the-nose speeches about mankind's duty to build a better future.

Out on the Town, Page A6

#### Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the Great Green Wall of China?

— Jacob Williston  
Tempe, AZ

Features, Page A7



# Towns and NEIGHBORS

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

### Construction, closures coming up at Andrews Main Gate

Construction is already underway on a \$5.5 million project involving Allentown and Suitland roads, Westover Drive (on Andrews) and Beltway exit 9 off-ramp. All the work at this busy intersection involves traffic to and from Andrews.

Weather permitting work should be completed by late summer 2017. The work includes:

- Widening and repaving of Allentown Road, Suitland Road, Westover Drive and the Beltway off-ramp,
- Bicycle lane on Allentown Road,
- New sidewalks in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act,
- New lanes on the off-ramp, Suitland Road and Allentown,
- Traffic-light reconstruction, including the one at the Andrews Manor Shopping Center.

There'll be temporary lane closures weekdays, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and overnight, Sunday through Thursday, 8 p.m. to 5 a.m.

The Maryland State High Administration held a meeting at Skyline School on June 9, replete with excellent maps and staff there to answer questions. For more information, call State Highway reps at 301-513-7336, 240-338-8431, or 301-513-7405.

### Applause

Keith J. Somerville Sr. will be ordained in the Permanent Diaconate at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on June 27. His first Sunday Mass assisting as a deacon will be June 29, 11 a.m., at St. Margaret of Scotland Church in Seat Pleasant.

Will Steinhilber has graduated from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., with a BS in engineering. Will is the grandson of Dolores and Gus Steinhilber, formerly of Skyline.

Betty Cottrell, of Skyline, graduated two grandchildren this spring: Andrew Dandin, from Stevenson University with a degree in business administration, and Rachel Dandin, from Northern High School.

She will be attending Towson University. Their mother is Kathy Cottrell Dandin.

### Vacation Bible School coming up

Everyone is welcome to Vacation Bible School at Suitland Road Baptist Church, July 6-10, each night from 7 to 9 p.m. Pre-Registration will be Saturday, July 4, beginning at 10 a.m. in the Community Outreach Prayer Tent. There'll also be free food, clothing and more.

### Chicken, crabcakes & country ham in Bushwood

The Annual Dinner at Sacred Heart Hall in Bushwood, is coming up Sunday June 28, from 12 noon until... On the menu: fried chicken, crabcakes, country ham, the fixings, and the cake table. Also, a raffle and the Country Store. Adults, \$25; children 12 & under, \$6; drive-thru carry-out, \$25.

And where's Bushwood? I checked the map on the flyer. It looks like you take Rt. 5 out of Waldorf and continue down 236, past Helen and Chaptico to Bushwood. (I love the names of towns in Southern Maryland!)

### Changing landscape

The building that housed Murry's Steaks, in the Penn-Belt industrial area next to Andrews, is being partially demolished. Eventually, it will become the new home for Thompson Creek Windows.

Do you remember the days when you dialed WE6-1212 to get the weather report? Some time ago that fell out of use. But there is renewed interest in telephone weather, which also gives you the correct time. Just dial 202-589-1212.

### Morningside Memories

"There's a new dawning in Morningside, Md., a little island of a town just 20 minutes away from the Capitol. The 1955 session of the Maryland General Assembly chased away the dark clouds that had frowned on the community since its creation in 1949. By authorizing the extension of the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission to Morningside, the lawmakers point to a solution of the town's No. 1 need—metropolitan water and sewage services."

This poetic reporting was by George Flynn for the Sunday Star, April 10, 1955, 60 years ago. It ran a full page which included photos of unpaved Suitland Road, Fire Chief Gerald Glaubitz with Lt. Lee Dittmars, Mayor Matthew P. Rosch and Mrs. Perry L. McElroy, president of the Women's Civic Group of Morningside, Rev. Joseph Carr, pastor of Morningside Baptist, and Jack Leatherman and Nancy Jimerfield and other Morningside teens dancing to music from the juke box.

### Louise Bohannon

Louise Mary Bohannon, 85, who taught at St. Philip the Apostle School from 1964 to 1977, died June 6 in Leonardtown. She formerly lived in Camp Springs. Her first marriage was to Andrew Mihalchik. In 1980 she married Harvey Bohannon who died in 1999. Louise will be fondly remembered for her cooking, especially chicken 'n dumplin's.

She is survived by her children, Andrew and Randolph Mihalchik, Debra Peterson and Lisa Quintana; sisters, Marie Sabecky and Bernadine Litwak; and two grandchildren. A grandson, Christopher Mihalchik, died in 1995. (He was also my grandson.) Mass of Christian Burial was at St. Francis Xavier Church in Leonardtown.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Stephanie Phipps, June 19; Gwynn Mudd, Barbara Marsh, Brian Pratt, Christian Nichols and Michael Taylor, June 20; my grandson Conor McHale, Aletheia Fadness, Beverly Baker, Raymond Porchea, Mark Witherow Sr. and Antonio Jackson, June 21; Gary Fadness, June 22; Kendra Neal and Edson Cook, June 23; Rodney Tyree and Gloria R. Johnson, June 24; Michael Taylor and Larry Frostbutter, June 25.

Happy anniversary to Calvin and Debbie Brown, their 22nd on June 20; Brewer and Pauline Clark, June 21; Ben and Betty Nagro, their 58th on June 22; Robert and Sandra Miley, June 22; Tim and Becki Cordero, their 14th on June 23; and Mary and Mike Dawes, their 42nd on June 23.

## Neighborhood Events

### Black Mothers' Voices Needed in National Conversation About Race

The first time, he was barely in middle school and just starting to venture out on his own after school.

"Jared, if a police officer stops you, always make sure they can see your hands, don't reach for anything, and please do not mouth off — you can do that when you get home safely." Like most black mothers I know, I have had "the conversation" with my son, not once but many times over many years. Whether our sons are 15 or 25, we worry. I've always told my son that most police officers are good people who protect our communities and risk their lives for our safety. And yet, as black mothers, we know our sons' vulnerability is measured by the exceptions that feel like the rule. This must change. Today, far too many black people believe the police stand against them, and far too many police officers look the other way or deny the existence of any problem at all. It's time for good police officers to stand with good citizens to change the culture.

As we sadly watched events unfold in Baltimore, I couldn't help but imagine how many times Gloria Darden, the mother of Freddie Gray, had "the conversation." We saw her, so strong and consumed by her grief, declare that she wants justice for her son — but not "like this." Throughout Baltimore and other cities, black mothers have been voices of calm. They've asked for justice, for accountability, for reflection and for peace. Black mothers are pleading for a sustained conversation to solve the problems of our communities so that no other mother has to bury her son. But, sadly, their voices are being drowned out.

The situation in Baltimore is a poignant reminder of the truths too many black mothers face every day. Our nation cannot move forward without a true national conversation that involves race, jobs, economic inequality and a respect for human dignity, especially in policing. Unfortunately, our attention is drawn to unacceptable police practices only when they're captured on video or an incident is too sickening to ignore. Meanwhile, on our streets, young black men and women bear the psychological, emotional and economic scars created when the most ordinary activity is suspect. The voices of African American women belong at the decision-making table to fix the long-standing problems in our schools and communities that contribute to despair and hopelessness among our children. Our voices make the conversation real and our communities stronger.

I've been moved by the peaceful protests in Baltimore and other cities, and I've also been disgusted by the looting we've seen in places such as Ferguson, Mo., and Baltimore. I've prayed for Gray's family and for the officers injured in this week's senseless violence. I understand the frustration of the black community, I believe police brutality is unacceptable, and I know that good police officers have a role to play in solving this problem so the



Congresswoman  
Donna F. Edwards

healing can finally begin. I've witnessed this in the pride and love the residents of Baltimore have shown for their city.

I'm not alone in feeling this way about what's happening in our neighborhoods. Millions of black women (and their families) have been saying these things for years. We need to start listening.

### Securis Data Destruction, Electronic Waste Disposal Franchise Opening in Prince George County, MD

For years, IT asset disposal has been considered a logistical and operational challenge. However, due to the explosion of data breaches associated with lost, stolen or compromised enterprise data storage devices, IT asset disposal is now a full-fledged element of the global cyber security and data security challenge.

Securis, a franchise industry leader in electronic recycling and data destruction services, has just announced an (date) Grand Opening at 11:30AM with a ribbon cutting ceremony at Noon. The new Securis location, based in Laurel, Maryland, will serve business and government clients in central and southern Maryland.

Securis has always understood the critical role of IT asset disposal in the data security equation. The company has consistently led the market by designing its services around a rigorous set of criteria to ensure reputable, secure, dependable and convenient IT asset recycling services. Securis provides a full range of e-waste disposal services embraced by private and public sector companies, government entities, healthcare, financial services, law firms, pharmaceutical, engineering & consulting agencies, among many others.

New Central Maryland Franchise owners Jorge Neyra and Paul Burke bring a broad and impressive range of business development knowledge.

Neyra entered the workforce as a contractor for Computer Sciences Corporation after graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government and International Politics from George Mason University. He quickly made a name for himself by becoming the On-Site Service Center Supervisor for a large program at the Department of Labor. Wanting to continue his career growth, he used his background in Information Technology specialized within Contact Center Management and Quality Assurance in order to join Booz Allen Hamilton. As a Senior Consultant, Neyra helped to establish the organization's Feedback Management process. In 2014, he made his entrepreneurial goal a reality by joining Securis as a franchise owner.

### Edwards Statement in Support of Clean Water Protection

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) today issued the following statement regarding her opposition to H.R. 1732, the Regulatory Integrity Protection Act, and in support of her amendment to the bill.

"Republicans try to make it sound as if all they want is for the 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 new rules — no clean water, what a shame. So what we are doing here today is a colossal waste of time and taxpayer money.

"Unfortunately, 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 other Marylanders. Under my amendment, the administration cannot increase the regulation of ditches. They can't eliminate any historical statutory or regulatory exemptions for agriculture, which do not exist under the 2003 and 2008 documents. My amendment will ensure that the rule does not go further than the Supreme Court decisions and does not exceed historical scope, while reaffirming long-standing and existing exclusions."

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 Clean Water Protection rule and restart the entire rulemaking process. H.R. 1732 passed the House by a vote of 261-155.

Congresswoman Edwards' amendment was 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 some constituents, other Marylanders, and opponents of the rulemaking. Edwards' amendment failed to pass the House by a vote of 167-248.

### The Office of Central Services presents its NEW Agency Newsletter: The Central Connection

Largo, MD - The Office of Central Services (OCS) is proud to present its Agency newsletter. This informative newsletter is designed to bring awareness to OCS' crucial role in the operations of County government as well as to highlight some of the Agency's significant accomplishments.

Presented in an easy to read format, the OCS newsletter is filled with pertinent information on best practices on partnering with OCS to complete important tasks as well as insight helping our audience to gain a better understanding of exactly what responsibilities fall under the OCS umbrella.

It is with great pride that OCS presents this first issue. The OCS quarterly newsletter will be a great tool in the telling of the OCS story with relevant and up to date information.

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to William King, Stephanie Samuel, Dae Panda-Massey, Jasmine Taylor, Jody Marsh, Sandra Miley, Ruth Wilson, Rita Pinkney, June Fauber, Sally Fauber, Louise Gordon, Calvin Stephen Lewis, Madison Falby, Susan Matthews, Atara Serene Bourne, Tawana Lindsey, Carol Bell, Eddie Wilson, Barbara Marsh, Brian Pratt, Beverly Baker, Raymond Porchea, Kendra Neal, Rodney Tyree, Shiloh Bell and Barbara Harris who are Clinton United Members celebrating their Birthdays in June.

### WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Happy Wedding Anniversary to Joachim and Esther Neckere, Nathaniel and Sheila Holmes, Tony (Sr.) and Beatrice Chapman, Henry and Idena Thomas, Danderson (Dr.) and Rosamond Panda, Brewer and Pauline Clark, Robert and Sandra Miley, Vincent and Carolyn Glee who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries during the month of June.

### FARMERS MARKET

Farmers Market at St. Thomas Church hours of operation will be Saturday 8:00 AM to noon June 20-September 28. The church is located at 14300 St. Thomas Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone number is 301-627-8469.

At the Market you will be able to buy vegetables, fruits, wine, specialty products, meat/fowl, herbs, grains & forage, flowers. The Market will also have all types of vendors. So please stop by one afternoon.

### DICKEY'S BARBECUE PIT

Dickey's Barbecue Pit is another new restaurant located in the Brandywine Crossing Shopping Center at 15904 Crain Highway Brandywine, Maryland 20613. The Pit offers meat plates, sandwiches, bakers & salads, Kid's Meals, drinks, desserts, home style sides, smokehouse salad, rack of ribs, half rack of ribs, slow smoked meats. The meats are slow smoked on-site daily. Kids eat free on Sundays.

The Pit offers catering. Call 1-866-Barbecue to speak with a catering expert about box lunches (10 person minimum) Delivery

Buffet (10 person minimum) recommended for 10-99 people and full service (100 person minimum). Free catering delivery within 10 mile radius.

### JAZZ CAFÉ CONCERT

Come out and join members, families and friends Saturday, July 18, 2015 from 7:00 PM to 11:00 PM. Chuck Brown, Van Dorn and New Phase Band will entertain you with a night of Jazz at Nottingham Myers Church's Family Life Center.

Nottingham Myer's Church Family Life Center is located at 15601 Brooks Church Road. Please call 301-888-2171 for directions. Donation is \$30.00 (You are welcome to pay at the door).

### ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER DANCE

Bowie State University National Alumni Association, Inc. Prince George's County Chapter Annual Benefit Dinner Dance will be Sunday, June 28, 2015 from 4:00 PM-8:00 PM. The cost is \$45.00. Come and join us at La Fontaine Bleu located at 7906 Annapolis Road, Lanham, Maryland. Contact Audrey Johnson at 301-888-2153 for more information.



# COMMUNITY

## Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

### Looking for Work? Plan a Money-Smart Job Search

A successful job search goes well beyond snagging the title and the paycheck. From the day you start looking until the day you're hired, there are strategic and financial issues to consider that may be more valuable to you in the long run.

To start, job seekers should always begin with a plan to promote themselves both in person and online, and some aspects of that process may be tax deductible. Keep in mind that if you are already employed, you may want to consider certain timing and legal issues that will define how and when you search. And finally, taking the job requires a close look at benefits.

It makes sense to discuss any potential job search with a qualified financial advisor who can evaluate your current financial circumstances as well as offer tips on how to strengthen your preparations for retirement and other goals.

Start with market research and improving your public profile. A recent Jobvite study notes that Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn profiles are the ranking social media options reaching employers and for industry hiring and pay projections, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' (BLS) Occupational Outlook Handbook (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>) is a wide-ranging and constantly updated online resource for that data.

Check your credit reports. Remember that many employers screen applicants' creditworthiness as part of their candidate review. Go to AnnualCreditReport.com (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>) for free access to reports from the three major credit agencies — Experian, TransUnion and Equifax — to check for potential errors or credit negatives you need to repair.

Evaluating search expenses and potential tax savings come next. Here are a few of the current rules listed by the IRS (<http://www.irs.gov/uac/Newsroom/Job-Hunting-Expenses>). Make note that your current job status will affect how the rules apply to you:

- Expenses may qualify as deductions only for a job search in your current line of work. You won't be able to deduct expenses for a job search in a new occupation.
- You can't deduct job search expenses if you're looking for a job for the first time or if there's been what the IRS calls a "long break" between your last job and beginning your search for a new one.
- If you travel to look for a job in a qualified job search, you may be able to deduct the costs of all or part of the trip.

A job search is always a good time to revisit current budgeting and savings goals. For example, you might want to do more specialized budgeting (<http://www.practical-moneyskills.com/calculators/budgetgoals>) as you aim for a particular salary offer.

You'll also want to consider the timing of your search to exhaust benefits you've earned at your current employer. You will see many employees schedule a job search after annual bonuses are paid or after they're able to spend out in tax-advantaged Health or Flexible Spending accounts (HSAs or FSAs) for qualified health care, dependent care or other approved benefits. Also, before you start applying, it might be worthwhile to review confidentiality or non-compete agreements you signed at the time your current employer hired you in case those agreements might restrict any element of your search.

Sometimes job offers distract workers from taking a thorough look at the value of potential benefits (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/employerbenefits>). You may not get all the details until your actual starting date, but see whether your future employer's human resources department can share details of the health, retirement or tax-advantaged benefits programs they offer. Above all, find out how soon you'll be eligible to sign up for your new employer's 401(k) retirement plan.

Finally, touch base again with your financial advisor before you accept to make sure you've got all the information you need. You will need to do parallel retirement planning if you are to retire successfully, and qualified advisors can also assist with transferring previous-employer retirement assets and suggestions on ways to use other work-related benefits efficiently.

Bottom line: When searching for a new job, go beyond the paycheck issues to research tax and benefit issues that can make a good job a great one.



## New Data Finds Nearly Half of Students Ready For Kindergarten

*More Rigorous Standards Reveal Achievement Gaps*

By PRESS OFFICER  
MSDE

BALTIMORE — Maryland's new Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) finds that nearly half of Maryland's incoming students in the fall of 2014 were fully ready for learning. The data, released today in a report presented to the Maryland State Board of Education, offers a new baseline for assessing kindergarten readiness to help elevate readiness for all Maryland school children.

The report, Readiness Matters!, found that 47 percent of incoming kindergartners were fully ready to begin learning. Another 36 percent were "approaching" readiness, while 17 percent were "emerging." The results uncovered gaps in readiness between certain student groups. The report provides insights into readiness and children's experience with various forms of pre-K experience.

"Preparing our youngest learners to be successful means getting them on track—and keeping them on track—as we gauge their progress in an age-appropriate way," said State Superintendent of Schools Lillian M. Lowery. "As we do so, we must continue to address readiness gaps across the board, so that all students have the chance to succeed in school."

MSDE worked with local educators to develop the KRA, and has since engaged educators, including kindergarten teachers, to strengthen the assessment process. For example, next year's version of the KRA will be 20 percent shorter, with some of the more time-intensive items removed. An enhanced reporting feature will be in place in 2015-16 when teachers can get on-time reports of their students' skill levels.

MSDE has worked with school systems to improve access to technology and Wi-Fi for teachers working with the KRA, and MSDE will provide additional professional development for teachers.

More than half of White and Asian-American children are entering kindergarten ready to learn -- 57 and 53 percent, respectively. But only 43 percent of African-American students are fully prepared for kindergarten and just 27 percent of Hispanic students are kindergarten-ready. The data also revealed that students from low-income households, those for whom English is a second language, and students with disabled students have special challenges.

The KRA measures the skills and behaviors that children should learn prior to entering kindergarten. It combines age-appropriate, standardized performance tasks that measure students'

specific skills, along with focused observations of children's work and play, to best understand what each entering kindergartner knows and is able to do in four key areas: social foundations; physical well-being and motor development; language and literacy; and mathematics.

This assessment replaces the Maryland Model for School Readiness (MMSR) assessment, in use since 2001. The new assessment is needed to put young students on a path toward meeting Maryland's more rigorous Pre-K through 12th grade college and career ready standards. The KRA sets a new baseline for tracking student progress in future years, aligned to the higher standards. The results are not directly comparable to the MMSR, which found in 2013 that 83 percent of kindergartners entering school in 2013 were "fully ready" to learn.

#### Readiness Gaps

The KRA reveals gaps in kindergarten readiness, including gaps among low-, middle- and upper-income households, including:

- 36 percent of children who are eligible for free or reduced meals--the federal proxy for low-income--enter kindergarten fully prepared.
- 57 percent of children from middle- and upper income families are ready for kindergarten.

The data also provide information on kindergarten readiness based on pre-K experience, including:

- Nonpublic nursery schools and childcare centers both top 50 percent in readiness.
- Nearly 46 percent of public pre-K programs demonstrated readiness.
- 41 percent of children from family child care demonstrated readiness.
- 35 percent of children from Head Start demonstrated readiness.
- 33 percent of children who stay at home or are in informal care were found to be fully ready.

#### How the Data Will be Used

Teachers can use student KRA data to adjust instruction and improve learning. Early childhood programs and school leaders can use the information to address achievement gaps and respond to the learning needs of certain groups of students. The data also can be used to inform professional development, curricular changes, and future investments in learning.

Families can use the data to help support student learning at home.

The new KRA data can be found here: [http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/newsroom/publications/school\\_readiness.htm](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/newsroom/publications/school_readiness.htm)

### Library from A1

charging stations and permeable pavers in the parking lot to filter storm water. Likewise, a green plant wall will stand in a quiet room in the building.

Among the new library's other specialized rooms will be a computer training lab, a conference room, five study rooms and two meeting rooms that will hold about 100 people each. The library will also offer a café-bookstore with vending machines, a drive-up window, fireplace and two outdoor sculptures. Part of the building will run on a generator in case of emergencies.

During construction, scheduled to finish by the fall of 2016, the library is temporarily located at 8101 Sandy Spring Road in Laurel. All programs and services are continuing at the temporary location, including story times, computer access and Wi-Fi. Branch hours also remain the same.

Prince George's County Memorial Library System provides materials and information for study and personal enrichment, offering strategies for lifelong learning through access to varied media and professional guidance. The library system consists of branches in 19 communities including Ac-



PHOTO COURTESY BONNIE HENESON COMMUNICATIONS

Artist rendering of the future Laurel Library

cokeek, Baden, Beltsville, Bladensburg, Bowie, Fairmount Heights, Glenarden, Greenbelt, Hillcrest Heights, Hyattsville, Largo-Kettering, Laurel, Mount Rainier, New Carrollton, Oxon Hill, South Bowie, Spaldings, Surratts-Canton and Upper Marlboro. ([www.pgmls.info](http://www.pgmls.info))

## Maryland Casinos Generate \$96.3 Million in Revenue During May

By PRESS OFFICER  
MGR&I

(Baltimore) — The Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency today announced May 2015 revenue numbers for the state's five casinos — Hollywood Casino Perryville in Cecil County, Horseshoe Casino Baltimore in Baltimore City, Casino at Ocean Downs in Worcester County, Maryland Live Casino in Anne Arundel County, and Rocky Gap Casino Resort in Allegany County. May 2015's combined statewide revenue totaled \$96,326,294.

Hollywood Casino Perryville generated \$7,120,611 from both slot machines and table games in May. Gross

gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$230.33 for slot machines, \$2,523.38 for banking table games and \$363.75 for non-banking table games. Hollywood Casino's May 2015 revenue decreased by \$704,040, or 9%, from May 2014. Hollywood Casino Perryville operates 850 slot machines and 22 (12 banking and 10 non-banking) table games.

Horseshoe Casino Baltimore generated \$21,923,621 from both slot machines and table games in May. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$176.84 for slot machines, \$1,931.22 for banking table games and \$809.29 for non-banking table games. Horseshoe Casino Baltimore operates 2,203 slot machines and 179 (154

banking and 25 non-banking) table games. The casino opened to the public in August 2014.

Maryland Live Casino generated \$58,042,088 from both slot machines and table games in May. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$293.58 for slot machines, \$4,067.18 for banking table games and \$1,352.29 for non-banking table games. Maryland Live's May 2015 revenue decreased by \$1,474,688, or 2.5%, from May 2014. Maryland Live Casino operates 4,060 slot machines and 202 (150 banking and 52 non-banking) table games.

Casino at Ocean Downs generated \$4,991,577 from slot machines in May, and its gross gaming revenue per unit per day was \$201.27. Casino at

Ocean Downs' May 2015 revenue increased by \$272,511, or 5.8%, from May 2014. The Casino at Ocean Downs operates 800 slot machines, and does not have table games.

Rocky Gap Casino Resort generated \$4,248,398 from both slot machines and table games in May. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$197.98 for slot machines, \$1,480 for banking table games, and \$305.58 for non-banking table games. Rocky Gap Casino Resort's May 2015 revenue increased by \$477,792, or 12.7%, from May 2014. Rocky Gap Casino Resort operates 577 slot machines and 17 table games (15 banking and 2 non-banking).

### 2016 Budget from A1

the federally mandated Consent Decree construction and upgrading sewer pipelines played a major role in the budget increase.

The budget includes an increase to the Ready to Serve fee comprised of the Account Maintenance Fee (AMF), which has not increased in 25 years, and a new fixed, infrastructure renewal component. In addition, customers will see a 1 percent increase in their water usage rate.

Customers will see these changes reflected on their bills beginning July 1.

"We are diligently working to upgrade the infrastructure required to deliver quality water to our customers, as well as protect public health," said Jerry N. Johnson, GM/CEO for WSSC. "Our goal is to replace and repair 55 miles of small water mains each year and to continue the critical Consent Decree work to responsibly rehabilitate the sewer pipelines throughout our system.

The fee increase allows WSSC to have more predictability and cash to pay for infrastructure costs. It will also give more predictability to customers and we expect usage fees to be less volatile."

The increase in fees reflects the cost to bring water to every home and business; including meters, meter readers, and billing as well as funding focused exclusively on repairing and replacing WSSC's aging infrastructure. The fee does not bring in additional revenue, but rather

shifts certain costs from water usage rates to the fixed Ready to Serve Charge.

Recognizing that rates have risen steadily over the last decade, WSSC is also implementing a Customer Assistance Program (CAP). The FY16 budget includes \$1.7 million in revenue offset that will allow WSSC to create and begin administering this program. Customers who are eligible for the Maryland Energy Assistance Program will also

qualify for assistance with their WSSC bill.

The new budget and rates will take effect July 1, 2015.

Following the meeting, both Councils issued a proclamation honoring the retiring WSSC General Manager/CEO Jerry Johnson for his long and distinguished career in public service, particularly for his contributions to the National Capital Region as head of WSSC and prior to that as General Manager of DC Water (formerly WASA).

"I am surprised and humbled to receive this proclamation and to have served this region," said Johnson. "I am proud to be of service to WSSC and proud to be part of this organization."

The Commission has launched a nationwide search for Johnson's successor.

The Council today also recognized retiring Commissioner Gene Coughlin from Montgomery County for his service. County Executive Isiah Leggett will name a successor.



# COMMENTARY

**Cong. Steny H. Hoyer**  
House Democratic Minority Whip



## Hoyer and Interior Secretary: Funding to Preserve More Sites like Douglas Point is in Danger

Overlooking the majestic Potomac River is Douglas Point, a site rich with heritage that provides Charles County residents and visitors alike the opportunity to enjoy the natural splendor of Southern Maryland and learn about its history. The site features the remains of the 19th century Chiles Homesite and more than 800 forested acres filled with unique native wildlife.

Though one of the last pristine stretches of Potomac shoreline in the state, the site was at risk of development in the late 1990s until legislation enabled the federal government, working with the state and nonprofit partners, to purchase and permanently protect the property for all to enjoy.

Now the law that is helping to protect Douglas Point, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act, is itself in jeopardy. For more than 50 years, the act has enabled states and the federal government to use a small portion of revenue from oil and gas development in waters that belong to all Americans to purchase sites like Douglas Point. This funding helps offset development to support critical conservation efforts, preserve historic sites that tell America's story and create outdoor recreation opportunities.

From ballfields in Baltimore to battlefields in Antietam, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has contributed to projects across the state. Places like the Patuxent National Wildlife Refuge, Piscataway Park, Greenbelt Park, Assateague Island, Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge, Catoctin Mountain Park, C&O Canal

National Historic Park and Monocacy National Battlefield all have benefited from this critical conservation tool — as have over 40,000 projects across the country.

These conservation and recreation projects are a big boon to local economies, bolstering tourism and supporting local jobs. This is a great deal for Marylanders and all Americans, especially considering it does not require a single dime from taxpayers.

The law is due to expire later this year unless Congress takes action to reauthorize it.

President Obama is encouraging Congress not only to reauthorize the act, but also to fund it fully and permanently at the \$900 million level established by the original law. Only once in the fund's history has Congress provided full funding. Each budget cycle, anglers, hunters, ballplayers, outdoor enthusiasts and city dwellers alike have all been shorted, as funds are siphoned off for other purposes.

Two weeks ago, we held an event at Douglas Point to highlight the importance of the Land and Water Conservation Fund ["Officials gather to support cooperation on preservation," Maryland Independent, May 29]. Our message is simple: A half-century ago, Congress made the historic commitment to the American people to offset the impact of development on our lands and waters with smart investments in their conservation and restoration. It is time for Congress to reaffirm this commitment and ensure that our natural and historic resources are protected for generations to come.

**Marc Morial, President and CEO**  
National Urban League



## Nebraska Executes its Death Penalty

"The reality is that capital punishment in America is a lottery. It is a punishment that is shaped by the constraints of poverty, race, geography and local politics."

— Bryan Stevenson, *Equal Justice Initiative*, Founder and Executive Director

The last time the state of Nebraska carried out an execution was December 2, 1997. The inmate, Robert E. Williams, was put to death by electric chair.

In a stunning vote last week—a vote that may signal a growing, national discontent with capital punishment as a feature of our nation's criminal justice system—Nebraska became the first Republican-led state in more than four decades to abolish its death penalty.

A bipartisan group of state lawmakers—the majority of them Republicans—voted to strike down Republican Gov. Pete Ricketts' veto of a bill to repeal Nebraska's death penalty—a bill that has been introduced in the legislature every session since 1981. For those lawmakers, and for all those in favor of re-examining capital punishment or repealing it all together, the landmark vote was not only a stinging indictment of the practice, but an admission that the system that determines who will or will not be put to state-sponsored death in our nation is fundamentally broken.

While a large majority of Americans continue to support the death penalty, that support has steadily declined to almost historic lows. A recent Gallup poll reported that 56 percent of Americans now support the death penalty, this from a high of almost 80 percent in the mid-90s. Meanwhile, opposition to the death penalty has increased from a low of 18 percent of Americans in favor of abolishing the death penalty to 38 percent.

For hundreds of years, outspoken opposition to the death penalty, by a diverse collection of individuals and organizations, has put a spotlight on a method of punishment many feel neither align with their personal values, nor the values of this

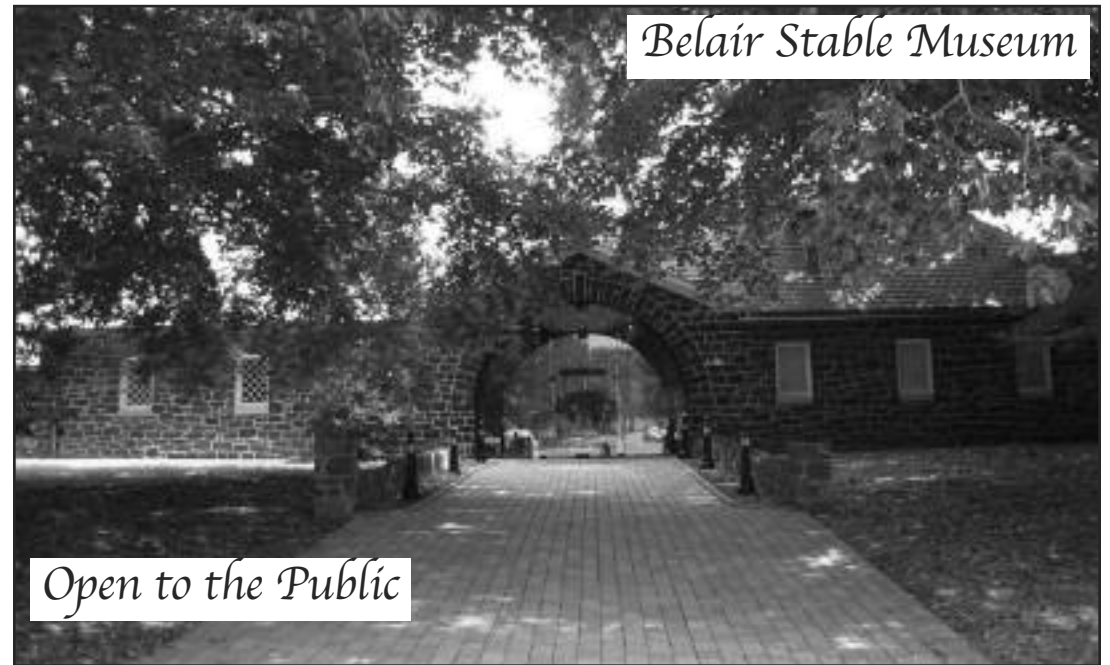
country. There are many experts who contribute much of today's sea change in attitudes towards capital punishment to the growing number of conservatives coming to the frontlines of the opposition movement to the death penalty, questioning its efficacy and fiscal soundness.

After Nebraska's vote, Marc Hyden of Conservatives Concerned About the Death Penalty released a statement saying he was not surprised that conservatives led the death penalty repeal effort in Nebraska and predicted conservative opposition would become more commonplace in the future. He also noted that, for conservatives, the death penalty violated "the core conservative principles of fiscal responsibility, limited government, and valuing life."

But even more has changed since 80 percent of Americans supported the death penalty and the politics of capital punishment began to shift. As of this writing, 153 men and women have been exonerated from America's death rows. In April of this year, Willie Manning became the 153rd person added to the Death Penalty Information Center's Innocence List—the charges against him were dismissed after spending 19 years incarcerated for crimes he did not commit.

When cases are revisited, or defendants are finally given proper representation in court, a different story can sometimes emerge, one that questions our criminal justice system and its ability to judge all Americans in a fair and equitable manner. For far too long, we have been challenged with proof of racial discrimination in arrests and sentencing, and we have also seen DNA evidence prove the innocence of those once deemed guilty. These problems and disparities should give every American reason for pause. No matter where you may stand on the death penalty debate, where is the value in maintaining a system that could likely execute an innocent man or woman?

As long as questions of equity, fairness and fallibility persist, we must stop executions and give death row inmates every chance to prove their innocence.



Belair Stable Museum

Open to the Public

**BELAIR STABLE MUSEUM**  
The Stable, built in 1907 by William Woodward, was part of the 20th century's famous "Belair Stud Stable," one of the country's premier stables from the 1920's through the 1950's. Belair was home to Gallant Fox (1930) and Omaha (1935) — the only father/son horses to capture Thoroughbred racing's famous Triple Crown Series. In 1955, Belair's Nashua, an incomparable champion, was Horse of the Year. Other champions, including Johnstown, Fighting Fox, and Vagrancy also called Belair home. Open Tuesday through Sunday 12 noon to 5 p.m. Tours for groups of 10 or more are available by appointment. Admission is free; donations are welcomed. For more information call 301-809-3089.

**Child Watch**  
by Marion Wright Edelman



## Charity Is Not a Substitute for Justice

"I sit on a man's back, choking him and making him carry me, and yet assure myself and others that I am very sorry for him and wish to ease his lot by all possible means—except by getting off his back."

— Leo Tolstoy, from *What Then Must We Do?*

"Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice."

— Nelson Mandela

"A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. On the one hand we are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring."

— Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

When Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke these words on April 4, 1967 at New York City's Riverside Church—a year to the day before his assassination in Memphis—he was describing something my friend Dr. David Hilfiker shared in a thoughtful Sunday sermon at The Church of the Saviour called "Justice and the Limits of Charity."

In his speech the night before his murder Dr King repeated the Biblical parable of the Good Samaritan who stopped and helped the desperate traveler who had been beaten, robbed, and left half dead as he journeyed along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The Good Samaritan is traditionally considered a model of charity for his willingness to treat a stranger as a neighbor and friend. Dr. King agreed that we are all called to follow his example and serve those around us who need help. But he reminded us that true compassion—true justice—requires also attacking the forces that leave others in need in the first place.

If travelers are being assaulted on the Jericho Road, we should help bind their

wounds, but also work to make the road a safe passageway. If our communities have poor, homeless, and hungry children and families and we volunteer at homeless shelters or donate to food pantries and think we've done our part, we are only half right. We have done an important part. But we are not finished if we are not also fighting to prevent and eliminate the violence of joblessness, poor education, poverty, and hunger and the inequalities and injustices that feed and accompany them and unjust systems that create them.

Our great prophet Dr. King understood this. Many of the cracks in America's edifice he identified over a half century ago are deeper today. CEO compensation and corporate greed and welfare have skyrocketed to morally obscene levels while middle class and minimum wage workers and people seeking work have been left behind. In 2012-2013, 4.9 million American households, including 1.3 million with children, had no cash income, relying only on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) to stave off the wolves of hunger—a program Republican majorities in both houses of Congress seek to shred while

increasing government welfare to the wealthiest individuals and corporations. Countless Black, Latino, and Native American youths see no hope for the future because there are no jobs for them and our schools are not preparing the majority of them for the jobs of the future. Racially unjust profiling and sentencing policies feed Black and other non-White youths and men into a mass incarceration system too often driven by profit. Government safety net programs have lifted many millions but not all children out of poverty. Investments in nine federal programs that help make work pay, increase employment, and meet children's basic needs could lift 60 percent of our 14.7 million poor children out of poverty now; instead these programs are under systematic attack today and we must reject proposals that treat our children so unfairly while others lavish tens of billions on the powerful and rich. Even those who are lucky enough to get a job now might not be lucky enough to be paid a fair or living wage. And we have the unbelievable spectacle of 21 states denying their citizens tens of billions of dollars

See WATCH, Page A7

## The Prince George's Post

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# BUSINESS

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Making Change Less Stressful For Your Children

Many parents see schools' summer vacations as a time when their children can relax, have fun and escape the demands of the school year. But summer can also be a time of stress and anxiety for many children.

As the schedules and known activities of the school year end, children face a summer that may be full of uncertainty. It's also a time of year when major changes are most likely to occur.

Some changes are fairly minor: spending a week with relatives, playing on a new soccer or baseball team, going to camp. But other changes can be major: moving to a new home or starting a new school at summer's end.

An important life skill is learning to handle change, but a great many children are "change-sensitive." Confronted with something new or different, they may become overly nervous and anxious. That's when parents can do things to reduce stress levels and help prepare children to better handle future changes and transitions.

Start by discussing coming changes with the child. Most kids, even very young ones, quickly pick up clues of something different and then their imaginations can run wild. It's important to discuss what will really be happening and when. Answering questions will help make the transition more understandable and less stressful.

For younger children, it especially helps to provide the child with visual information. For a new house, going there for a visit, or sharing pictures of a new bedroom, can help the child actually see what the change is bringing. For a new school, sports team or camp, again showing as much as possible will lessen anxiety. Maybe it's a walk around the school grounds or the new soccer field. Maybe set up a short visit with a camp counselor or the new school's counselor.

A main objective is to give your child time to prepare for change. Surprising a child with a major change adds to everyone's stress and can produce long-lasting problems.

You also want to be reassuring, letting your child know that you understand how hard change can be, but that you're going to be there with support and love. Remind the child of how well he or she handled past changes.

It's natural to feel anxious about new things. But provide your child with a little preparation, understanding and support, and his or her stress and anxiety will be much lower.

*"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*

### Awards from A1

The Department's "Happy" video took the award for Integrated Campaign – Promotion Branding. The video, which used Pharrell Williams's song, "Happy," shows how glad the Department's customers and staff are while they enjoy many of the different activities the Department has to offer. The video currently has more than 14,000 views on YouTube.

For Brochure – Overall Design, the Arts at Harmony Hall Regional Center 2014-15 brochure was selected as the top entry. The brochure is used as the main marketing tool for the venue, listing all of the center's visual and performing arts shows, teas and live performances. It is also available online as a flip book.

In the Public Relation/ Communications – Community Outreach Program category, PAMD received honors for its Community Outreach rack cards. The 17 unique cards provide an overview of the Department's opportunities and offerings, in English on one side and Spanish on the other. Formatting the cards

individually with clean, coordinated designs allow our Outreach Team to provide specific information as needed, or a collected view of all the offerings.

With over 6,000 entries received from across the US and around the world, the Communicator Awards is the largest and most competitive awards program honoring the creative excellence for communications professionals.

The Communicator Awards are judged and overseen by the Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts (AIVA), a 600+ member organization of leading professionals from various disciplines of the visual arts dedicated to embracing progress and the evolving nature of traditional and interactive media.

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit [www.pgpr.com](http://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.

## Maryland Horse Chase Contestants Traveled Thousands of Miles in Quest to Meet & Enjoy Maryland Horses

*Anne Arundel Couple and Frederick County 9-Year-Old Take Top Prizes*

By PRESS OFFICER  
MDA

ANNAPOLIS, MD – Two married couples and one 9-year-old, accompanied by her parents, were among the 137 contestants who battled it out to the wire to win the Maryland Horse Chase, the first-of-its-kind, statewide, equine scavenger hunt sponsored by the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB), a program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

The Chase, which ran April 6 - 26, helped launch MHIB's new network of 35 Horse Discovery Centers in 15 Maryland counties. It also showcased and brought awareness to Maryland's large and diverse horse industry. Competitors trotted all across Maryland, completing challenges at each location to earn points that were entered and geo-tracked on their cell phones. At stake, more than \$10,000 worth of horse-related prizes and unforgettable experiences visiting some of Maryland's most beautiful stables and getting to know their owners, trainers and handlers.

The top prize winners were Alexandra and Russ Robinson

of Shady Side (Anne Arundel County) who traveled 1,463 miles and visited 33 of the 35 stables and equine businesses to amass 4,980 and 4,840 points, out of a possible 5,000. (Alexandra completed more bonus points to edge out her husband.)

"This is something we will talk about for some time," said Alexandra. "This was our first time doing anything like this." Her husband, Russ, purchased a new cell phone just for the competition.

Alexandra and Russ traversed the state together, out finishing 9-year-old Ella Jensen and her parents, Jeffrey and Stephanie Jensen of New Market (Frederick County). Ella, who her parents describe as "horse crazy," visited 25 farms and accumulated 4,430 points. Her dad estimated that they drove 1,300 miles.

"I was very impressed with how friendly and welcoming all the farms were," said Stephanie Jensen, Ella's mother. "Although we already know a bit about horses, we still learned new things. We loved seeing different parts of Maryland."

Regina and James Keadle, newcomers to the state who reside in Avenue (St. Mary's County) finished fourth and fifth,

respectively, with 4,240 and 4,120 points.

"This adventure was fantastic and offered my wife and I a chance to tour Maryland since we just moved here in March," said Keadle. "My wife is the one who loves horses and I am just learning to remain calm around them." Keadle added that they met "a very special group of highly intelligent individuals who have a huge heart for animals."

Among the favorite challenges were finding the type of horse that appeared in the movie Frozen (a Norwegian Fjord horse named Skogen at Worthmore Equestrian Center in Kent County), body painting a pony named Corey (at Dun Pikin Farm in Anne Arundel County), and seeing the Thoroughbred and Standardbred foals at Shamrock (Carroll County) and Winbak Farms (Cecil County).

For their prizes, the Robinsons selected a carriage driving lesson with Dr. Mike Odian, President of the Maryland Draft Horse and Mule Association, and an overnight stay at the Rolling Hills Ranch Bed and Breakfast in Port Deposit.

Ella chose a week's free tuition to attend summer riding

camp at Full Moon Farm in Finksburg. The Keadles chose an overnight stay at the Light-house Club Hotel in Ocean City, owned by horseman John Fager; and a package of four tickets to Medieval Times at Arundel Mills Mall.

MHIB is continuing to contact all the contestants, learn about their experiences and have them choose from the array of prizes.

"We will list all the prize winners, their comments about the Chase and their prize selections on our website when it is complete," said MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord. "It will take some time to do this, but we want to savor this experience and make sure everyone who competed ends up with a prize that they enjoy."

MHIB Chair Jim Steele added his thanks to all the contestants, sponsors, farms and businesses that participated. He also gave special thanks to Chase Coordinator Tara Guevara and MHIB Advisory Board Member Hope Birch, who conceived the idea for the contest.

For more information, contact Ross Peddicord at [ross.peddicord@maryland.gov](mailto:ross.peddicord@maryland.gov) or 410-841-5798.

### Meters from A1

mine how radio-frequency radiation affects humans.

"If this were a new drug, or, you know, a new X-ray machine, it'd have to go through all sorts of testing before it would be used on the population," he said. "Smart meters kind of fall in the regulatory cracks -- it's not a food it's not a chemical that's covered by (the Occupational Safety and Health Administration) or (the Environmental Protection Agency) -- it's not a consumer product, so they've got a free ride."

BGE's sizable online guide to smart meter concerns cites Federal Communications Commission standards for radio-frequency waves, which occupy the section of the electromagnetic spectrum between 3 kilohertz and 300 gigahertz, below the visual spectrum of light in terms of energy.

"At relatively low levels of exposure to RF radiation, i.e., levels lower than those that would produce significant heating; the evidence for production of harmful biological effects is ambiguous and unproven," according to the Federal Communications Commission's Radio Frequency Safety guide.

The guide mentions "a number of reports" from scientists who found biological effects from low-level radio-frequency radiation, but adds that "in most cases, further experimental research has been unable to reproduce these effects."

The government agency and anti-smart meter activists agree that more research is needed. But the two sides disagree on whether that's a cause for caution.

Smart meters communicate with the grid for less than two minutes per day, emitting a comparable amount of radiation to a 10-second cellphone call, according to BGE.

Ronald Powell, a physicist who worked at the National Institute of Standards and Technology and who is now affiliated with Maryland Smart Meter Awareness, said that when it comes to radio-frequency technology, "our society has gotten ahead of the research community" with plentiful wireless devices.

"Human beings are very complicated biological systems, and

it's going to take a while to ferret out everything." But in the meantime, Powell said, "the last thing we want to do is to mandate this on the public" through wireless smart meters.

The smart-meter opponents point to stories of people who developed new or aggravated symptoms after being exposed to smart meters. Some of these people have been diagnosed with electromagnetic hypersensitivity, which is not widely recognized by the medical community, Libber said.

Libber said he avoids excess radio-frequency radiation by keeping his wireless Internet router in an air duct behind a metal vent, putting his cordless phone transmitter in the basement and holding his cellphone away from his ear when he makes a call.

"We're not Luddites, OK? Most of our people have cellphones and Wi-Fi and all that kind of stuff," Libber said. "But we have to develop a hygiene in this country on how you deal with all this RF coming in."

### History of BGE's meters

While Maryland Smart Meter Awareness paints the smart grid as a burgeoning public health nightmare, Butts and BGE portray it as an exciting opportunity years in the making.

"We actually started looking at smart meters as early as 2007," Butts said. "We weren't a leader, but I'd say we were a fast follower in the industry."

After conducting a pilot program of about 5,300 electric and gas meters in Westminster and Baltimore in summer 2008, the utility obtained permission from the state's Public Service Commission in August 2010 to upgrade its entire grid with smart metering technology.

There were about 1.9 million meters to change, Butts said, as well as new information technology infrastructure to support the smart meters. BGE divided its service territory into 16 sections and in 2012 began upgrading one after the other with the help of contractor Grid One Solutions Inc.

"We wanted to start in outdoor, primarily outdoor areas in

order to test our processes before we got to what we figured would be ... the more difficult areas that had more indoor accounts" -- namely, Baltimore and its immediate surroundings, Butts said.

A \$200 million American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant -- one of six awarded nationwide for smart grids, Butts said -- helped offset the project cost of about \$452 million. And BGE's 2012 merger with Chicago-based Exelon gave the company more information to use in its smart grid implementation.

"Through the merger, we were able to collaborate with the other utility companies that are now part of Exelon," Butts said. "So we now have ComEd (in Illinois) and PECO (in Philadelphia) that are part of our Exelon Corporation, and we were able to collaborate with them 'cause they're also doing the same meter rollouts."

BGE has brought about 90 percent of its electric customers and about 75 percent of its gas customers into the smart grid so far, installing more than 1.1 million smart meters.

Meanwhile, Pepco and Delmarva Power have finished their smart grid rollouts. A Pepco spokesman wrote in an email that about 793,000 smart grid customers in Maryland, Washington, D.C., and New Jersey have saved more than 5.5 million kilowatt-hours and received more than \$7.5 million in credits on their energy bills since Pepco began upgrading its meters in 2010.

### Opting out

BGE's is by far the largest smart grid in the state; by way of comparison, Pepco and Delmarva have installed about 730,000 smart meters combined in Maryland. But BGE has also encountered the highest rate of customers in the state who have opted out of the smart grid -- about 1.5 percent, or 23,000. That's compared to about 0.2 percent for Pepco and 0.5 percent for Delmarva.

In May 2012, the Public Service Commission issued a de-

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# OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S  
IN THE DARK

## Movie Review

### “Tomorrowland”

*Tomorrowland*  
Grade: B-  
Rated PG, mild sci-fi action  
and peril  
2 hrs., 10 min

In the future, science will be able to produce a Steven Spielberg movie without any awe. The future is now! “Tomorrowland,” from animation whiz turned live-action director Brad Bird (“The Incredibles,” “Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol”), is a square-jawed, op-

timistic, all-American sci-fi adventure with a kid protagonist and George Clooney, for heaven’s sake. With more heart and less pontificating, it could have been one for the ages.

In Florida, Casey Newton (Britt Robertson), a teenage science buff with a surplus of curiosity, finds a World’s Fair souvenir that gives her a glimpse of Tomorrowland, a gleaming alternate dimension of jet packs and futuristic marvels. Together with Frank Walker (Clooney),

who’s also been to Tomorrowland, and Athena (Raffey Cassidy), a young girl who recruits scientists and dreamers to work there, Casey must learn Tomorrowland’s secrets, save the world, et cetera.

The journey is mid-grade fun, occasionally thrilling (there are bad guys chasing them), yet strangely unsentimental, promising a “gee whiz, look at that!” sense of amazement but mostly delivering on-the-nose speeches about

mankind’s duty to build a better future. And the way it’s structured (Bird co-wrote the screenplay with “Lost” creator Damon Lindelof), we don’t know what the main characters’ objective is till the film is nearly over – which makes it hard to keep caring. The central performances are likable, but though the film has some wonderful things in it, it’s not full of wonder like it ought to be. You may find that you like its ideas more than you like it.



From Disney comes two-time Oscar (R) winner Brad Bird's riveting, mystery adventure “Tomorrowland,” starring Academy Award (R) winner George Clooney. Bound by a shared destiny, former boy-genius Frank (Clooney), jaded by disillusionment, and Casey (Britt Robertson), a bright, optimistic teen bursting with scientific curiosity, embark on a danger-filled mission to unearth the secrets of an enigmatic place somewhere in time and space known only as “Tomorrowland.” What they must do there changes the world—and them—forever. Featuring a screenplay by “Lost” writer and co-creator Damon Lindelof and Brad Bird, from a story by Lindelof & Bird & Jeff Jensen, “Tomorrowland” promises to take audiences on a thrill ride of nonstop adventures through new dimensions that have only been dreamed of. (C) Walt Disney

### Meters from A5

cision temporarily allowing state residents to write in to their utilities to refuse installation of a smart meter. About 40,000 people did so, Libber said.

But in 2014, the commission allowed BGE, Pepco, Delmarva and Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, which is currently conducting a smart meter pilot program, to charge opt-out fees for customers who refuse smart meters. Now, an opt-out customer must pay \$75 up front, plus a monthly charge -- \$11 for BGE, \$12 for Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, \$14 for Pepco and \$17 for Delmarva. With that change, the opt-out population has dropped by about half, Libber said.

“The opt-out fees are really grossly unfair,” he said. “It’s really utility protection money.”

The four utilities had requested permission to charge even more. BGE sought an opt-out fee of \$100 up front and \$15 monthly from its customers, while SMECO asked for \$105.32 and \$34.94. Pepco and Delmarva requested \$100 up front and \$58 per month.

“Utilities included costs that were clearly inappropriate, totally excluded savings that would accrue to them through people who kept their old meter,” Libber said.

Butts said the fees were calculated based on the cost of maintaining a legacy metering grid alongside the new smart grid.

“When a customer opts out of the smart meter, we now have to maintain two meter reading systems -- the old system that reads the old meter and the new system that reads the new smart meter,” Butts said. “And the old meter isn’t as efficient as the new meter, and there’s costs that are associated with maintaining that system.”

The opt-out policy was the subject of two bills in the Maryland General Assembly this year. Senator Nathaniel McFadden, D-Baltimore, and Delegate Glen Glass, R-Harford, worked with Maryland Smart Meter Awareness on legislation that would have brought back the free opt-out policy.

McFadden, a former Baltimore principal who still works with the school system, said that while he personally uses smart meters, his constituents should be able to refuse them if they wish without facing a financial burden. “I thought that (the fee) was rather excessive, especially when in my district I represent so many people with low income, fixed income,” he said. “If you’re on Social Security or you’re low-income like many of my residents are, \$11 is a considerable amount of money.”

Glass, an Army veteran and professional truck driver, said he opposes smart meters because they pose health risks, have inexplicably caused people’s bills to double or triple, and represent “a Big Brother invasion of privacy” because they allow utilities to invade customers’ privacy by monitoring their power use on a daily basis. He said BGE installed a smart meter on his home last year and his bill doubled for the 23 days before he opted out.

“The smart meters only benefit the utility companies,” he said. “It’s all about money. It’s not about human beings.”

Glass has sponsored an opt-out bill each year since 2012, but each one has failed. This year, his and McFadden’s bills both died in committee.

“The Republicans and the Democrats killed my bill,” Glass said. “Bipartisan. You got an urban Democrat on one side, you got a conservative Republican on the other. And his people killed his bill and my people killed my bill.”

### Boon or burden?

Smart-meter customers across the state enjoy several indisputable benefits from being on the new grids.

“If you go back before smart meters, you know, you knew about how much your bill was when you got your bill in the mail,” Butts said. “Well, right now, if you have a smart meter, you can go online and you can see how much your bill is going to be as you go through the month. ... And customers are also getting what we call home energy reports. These are reports that give them information about their energy usage and compare them to like customers, and that’s actually helped customers be more focused on energy use.”

BGE’s meters also allow it to pinpoint power outages more quickly and with fewer employees searching on the road, he said.

“If you go back about a year ago, we had a pretty good ice storm” in Harford, Baltimore and Carroll counties, Butts said. “We had about 38 percent of the meters installed up in that area, and in that one storm we were able to avoid almost 900 truck pulls. Nine hundred times we didn’t have to send crews out to a location to make sure the customer was back in service because we could tell that already with the smart meters.”

He added that BGE still encourages its customers to report outages by phone, however, as some meters might not communicate with the grid during a major outage.

On the company side, Butts said, BGE has avoided more than 70,000 truck pulls thanks to the smart grid, in part because the company can turn a smart meter on and off remotely to turn a customer’s power on and off -- for example, if the customer moves. He



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY NATE RABNER  
A PEPCO smart meter on a home in Kensington, Maryland, April 30, 2015.

also said the company has not fired any of its meter readers, instead retraining them for other positions.

Anti-smart meter advocates fear the kill-switch technology makes homeowners vulnerable to online hackers.

Furthermore, the monitoring capability critics call an invasion of privacy can be used to catch people who tamper with power lines or meters to steal electricity from the system, Butts said.

Butts said BGE hopes to reduce its customers’ energy use by at least 1 percent by providing them with more detailed information about their electricity and also by offering rebates for customers who use less power on designated Energy Savings Days.

But McFadden and Glass objected to what they called utilities’ plan to dictate customers’ behavior.

“I mean, that’s your responsibility,” McFadden said. “That’s just like government trying to manage everything -- now you have a utility in the same role, supported by the government, telling the public how to manage their families, and ... it’s kind of overbearing.”

The advocates also worry that ratepayers will eventually be stuck with the bill for the smart grid projects across the state, though utilities must first prove

## The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

### James Dolan’s Epic WNBA Fail



Given the myriad ways that the teams we love don’t always love us back, it’s a wonder more sports fans don’t abandon the squads of their youth. A sports organization can have a criminal owner or an economic agenda that involves syphoning millions of dollars in public money, or employ players that are genuinely awful human beings, and we will still irrationally love them. Yet everyone has a line that if crossed, will cause them to say goodbye to the team of their prepubescent heart. I have friends in DC who “bled burgundy and gold” their entire lives, but then quit rooting for the Washington football team when owner Dan Snyder’s boorish, bigoted belligerence became too much to endure. I have friends who were fans of the Pittsburgh Steelers until it seemed that the team cared more about sheltering accused rapist Ben Roethlisberger than the reputation of of its storied uniform. For me, the team I had to tearfully divorce was the New York Knicks.

I loved that team. I was raised with that Knickerbocker blue and orange as a second skin. A Bernard King number-30 jersey was nailed to my wall. I had a poster of The Bomb Squad (Johnny Newman!) I even once head-butted an opposing player as a tribute to John Starks. But in 2007, after over two decades, I turned in my Knicks fan card. For me, my own line was crossed when a jury awarded \$11.6 million to Knicks Vice President Anucha Browne Sanders in a sexual harassment lawsuit. The highest-ranking woman executive in men’s sports, Sanders—who was once the greatest basketball player in Northwestern University history—had convinced a jury that team president and NBA legend Isiah Thomas and Knicks owner James Dolan had created a workplace so toxic, that she simply couldn’t do her job. Dolan was then judged to have fired Sanders for the crime of complaining about Thomas’s abusive words and inappropriate touching.

Thomas in his trial testimony, famously said, “A white male calling a black female a bitch is highly offensive. That would have violated my code of conduct.” But a black man calling a black woman a “bitch,” would bother him “not as much. I’m sorry to say, I do make a distinction.” Dolan matched Isiah’s awfulness. In videotaped testimony, after hemming and hawing, he was pushed to finally admit that it was wrong to call a woman a “black bitch.” Then he said with a shrug, “It is also not appropriate to murder anyone. I don’t know that that happened, either.”

My disgust with James Dolan was total. The awful decision-making and terrible on-court escapades certainly didn’t help, but it was about how he could run a franchise where sexual harassment was not only ignored but accepted. I was done.

Today all of this history was dredged to the surface when James Dolan announced that he was bringing his friend Isiah Thomas back into the fold as president and part owner of the WNBA’s New York Liberty. Most people’s jaws hit the floor. How the hell could Dolan do this? Why would Isiah say yes? Did they really think the 2007 trial wouldn’t gurgle to the surface and used as yet another sign of Dolan’s irredeemable awfulness?

On my Facebook page, Liberty season-ticket holder Tara Polen summed up the feelings I have seen today on various message boards when she wrote, “Considering the WNBA is feminism in action to me, I find the allowance of Thomas to head a team to be incredibly offensive. If he wants to invest in a team and be a partial partner, that’s one thing. That is, in some ways, putting your money where your ‘restitution’ mouth is. But to run the show? At a charter franchise? GTFOH.”

Polen is right. But believe it or not, when I heard the news I was hopeful. I had been able to interview Isiah in recent years and saw someone with a strong social conscience, as well as someone who had been through a hellish period in his life and was coming back. It had been eight years since the Sanders case, and I assumed that surely there was no way that James Dolan and Isiah would venture into the WNBA without having some serious groundwork laid down beforehand. I assumed there had been private meetings. I assumed there had been apologies for past errors. I assumed that this had to be a story rooted in some kind of redemptive narrative about people reckoning with past misogyny and now trying to build the institution of women’s sports. I assumed way too much.

Embarrassingly, I did not account for the enduring, entitled aristocratic idiocy of James Dolan. There had been, according to my reporting, no groundwork put down, no prepping of concerned parties and no sit-downs. There was just James

See WNBA FAIL Page A7

See METERS Page A7



# Calendar of Events

June 18 — June 24, 2015

## Hardway Connection

Date & Time: Friday, June 19, 2015 8-10 pm  
Description: Celebrate Juneteenth at the Playhouse when Hardway Connection brings their blues magic to the stage. Their style of bluesy soul with a touch of R&B is the hallmark of this popular band that performs covers and original work.  
Cost: \$20/person  
Ages: 18 & up  
Location: Publick Playhouse  
5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784  
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

## Xtreme Teens: Friday Funnies On The Lawn

Date and Time: Friday, June 19, 2015 7-10 pm  
Description: Tonight teens will watch a comedic movie under the stars, while enjoying some delicious treats.  
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID  
Ages: 10-17  
Location: Beltsville Community Center  
3900 Sellman Road, Beltsville 20705  
Contact: 301-937-6613; TTY 301-445-4512

## PVDA Dressage Ride for Life

Date and Time: Friday-Sunday, June 19-21, 2015 8 am  
Description: The Prince George's Equestrian Center will host the PVDA Dressage Ride for Life Indoor Horse Show.  
Cost: Free for spectators  
Location: The Show Place Arena  
14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD  
Contact: 301-952-7900; TTY 301-952-7998

## Reenactor Yard Sale

Date and Time: Saturday, June 20, 2015 9 am-1 pm  
Description: Darnall's Chance is hosting their 4th Annual Reenactor Yard Sale. The event is for people wishing to sell gently used period items and for those who wish to purchase period items to enhance their first-person interpretations. If you are interested in selling items, please call the museum for details.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum  
14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro  
Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

## Engineering Challenge Series: Egg Drop

Date and Time: Saturday, June 20, 2015 12noon  
Description: This year, our ever popular Egg Drop Contest is the first event in our Engineering Challenge Series. Design your own contraption to protect a large egg and bring it to the museum to see how it performs. Contraptions will be judged on egg survival, durability and creativity. Prizes will be awarded. Call the museum for more information and for a complete set of rules.  
Cost: FREE for contestants  
Ages: 8-18  
Location: College Park Aviation Museum  
1985 Cpl. Frank Scott Drive, College Park, 20740  
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

## A Soldier's Life: The War of 1812

Date and Time: Saturday, June 20, 2015 1-2 pm  
Description: A recounting of the life of a soldier during the War of 1812: the roles, responsibilities, uniforms, and weapons.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Bladensburg Waterfront Park  
4601 Annapolis Rd, Bladensburg, MD 20710  
Contact: 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544

## Teen Fest - Safe Summer Kickoff

Date and Time: Saturday, June 20, 2015 5-9 pm  
Event Description: Teens will enjoy swimming, a main stage with live entertainment, DJing, free food (while it lasts), sports, and amusement entertainment  
Ages: 12-17  
Fee: FREE  
Location: Allentown Splash, Tennis, and Fitness Park  
7210 Allentown Rd. Fort Washington  
301-446-3400; TTY 301-446-3402

## Father's Day Tours

Date and Time: Sunday, June 21, 2015 12:15-3:15 pm  
Description: Bring your father, father-in-law, grandfather, or other special gentleman for a FREE guided tour of the house. Note: Limited to one free tour per paid admission.  
Cost: \$3/adult; \$2/senior; \$1/student; FREE/children 4 & under  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Riversdale House Museum  
4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737  
Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

## Jazz on the Lawn: Gina de Simone & the Moaners

Date and Time: Wednesday, June 24, 2015, 7 pm  
Description: Bring a blanket or lawn chair, and enjoy Jazz on the Lawn--Riversdale's summer jazz series. In case of rain, the concert moves inside. This evening will feature music by Gina de Simone & the Moaners.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All ages we; cp,e  
Location: Riversdale House Museum  
4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737  
Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

## Seniors: Arts on a Roll Improvisational Theatre Series

Date and Time: Wednesday, June 24, 2015 10:30-11:30 am  
Description: In this performing arts series, participants will learn the basic "rules" of improvisation. Afterward, they'll create humorous or dramatic improvised scenes through a series of engaging theater games.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: 60 and Better  
Location: Langley Park Senior Activity Center  
1500 Merrimac Dr, Hyattsville, MD 20783  
Contact: 301-408-4343; TTY 301-446-3402

# EARTH TALK ... What is the Great Green Wall of China

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the Great Green Wall of China?

—Jacob Williston  
Tempe, AZ

Unlike the Great Wall of China, a 5,000-mile fortification dating back to the 7th century BC that separates northern China from the Mongolian steppe, the Great Green Wall of China—otherwise known as the Three-North Shelter Forest Program—is the biggest tree planting project on the planet. Its goal is to create a 2,800-mile long green belt to hold back the quickly expanding Gobi Desert and sequester millions of tons of carbon dioxide in the process. If all goes according to plan, the completion of the Green Wall by 2050 will increase forest cover across China from five to 15 percent overall.

The Chinese government first conceived of the Green Wall project in the late 1970s to combat desertification along the country's vast northwest rim. Soon thereafter, China's top legislative body passed a resolution requiring every citizen over the age of 11 to plant at least three Poplar, Eucalyptus, Larch and other saplings every year to reinforce official reforestation efforts.

But despite progress—according to the United Nations' most recent Global Forest Resources Assessment, China increased its overall forest cover

by 11,500 square miles (an area the size of Massachusetts) between 2000 and 2010, with ordinary citizens alone planting upwards of 60 billion trees—the situation is only getting worse. Analysts think China loses just as many square miles of grasslands and farms to desertification every year, so reforestation has proven to be an uphill battle. The encroaching Gobi has swallowed up entire villages and small cities and continues to cause air pollution problems in Beijing and elsewhere while racking up some \$50 billion a year in economic losses. And tens of millions of environmental refugees are looking for new homes in other parts of China and beyond in what makes America's Dust Bowl of the 1930s look trivial in comparison.

"The desertification of north and western China is arguably the most under-reported environmental crisis facing China today and is little understood outside the circles of NGOs [non-governmental organizations] and groups of scientists who are desperately fighting against it," reports Sean Gallagher, an activist with Greenpeace. While climate change is certainly a big factor, Gallagher adds that overgrazing, water mismanagement, outdated agricultural methods and the swelling of human populations are also contributing to this wholesale conversion of the region's once arable and habitable landscapes into sand

and the U.S. government; on the other, people invoking Big Brother from George Orwell's "1984" and disputed medical diagnoses.

But for supporters and opponents, smart meters are much more important than their obtrusive appearance suggests.

"People don't think of a meter as could harm you -- you know, a meter is a meter, what's the big deal?" Libber said. "But it really is a big deal."

## Meters from A6

to the Public Service Commission that the switch was worth it.

In such a distrustful environment, the two sides don't agree on much around smart meters -- the science behind them, the benefits and costs they bring, even the conditions under which utility customers can refuse to adopt them.

It's a lopsided fight, too: on one side, huge companies

## WNBA Fail from A6

Dolan impulsively making an awful decision with little care for the consequences. There was just James Dolan—again—being James Dolan. Born into unimaginable wealth, Dolan is not merely someone who, to use a cliché, "was born on third base and thinks he hit a triple." This is someone who as a baby surely flung his own poop and had people tell him that he was Sandy Koufax. WNBA president Laurel Richie, in a statement that arrived with more ice than the Planet of Hoth, told the press, "The Madison Square Garden organization announced that Isiah Thomas has been named president of the New York Liberty and that he

## Watch from A4

in desperately needed health care and jobs under the Affordable Care Act.

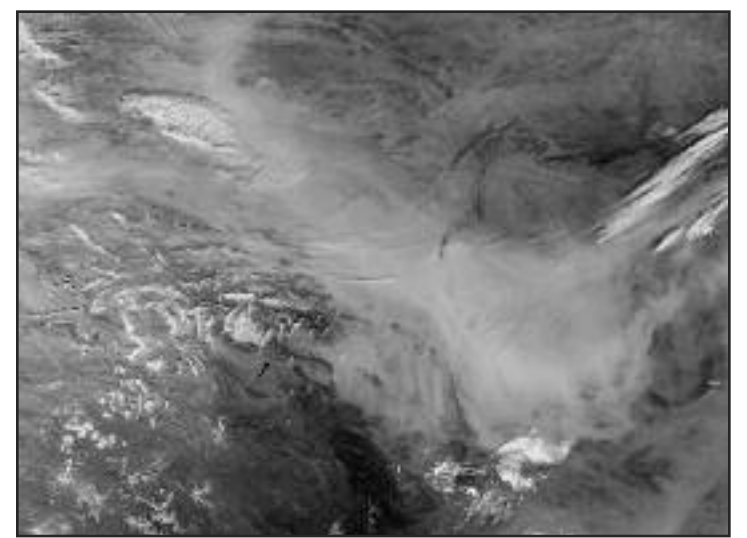
With true structural change there would be far less need for charity; without it the very best charitable efforts will never be enough. How many private foundations could make up for the denial of Medicaid or for the looming cuts in food stamps and other safety net programs? Yet like so many other prophets Dr. King's voice was often at odds with leaders or conveniently left unheard by citizens in his own land.

During Dr. King's lifetime, President Lyndon Johnson's great War on Poverty attempted to address some of the inequalities in the United States that needed redressing and restructuring. But Richard Nixon sent a very different message as he accepted the Republican presidential nomination in August 1968 already criticizing President Johnson's

will take an ownership interest in the team, pending WNBA approval. New owners are approved by our WNBA Board of Governors, and this process has not yet begun."

When asked about whether, given the sexual-harassment case, this move was wise, the comments from Dolan's office were chosen not only to be antagonistic but positively pugna-cious. "We did not believe the allegations then, and we don't believe them now. We feel strongly that the jury improperly and unfairly held Isiah Thomas responsible for sordid allegations that were completely unrelated to him, and for which MSG bore responsibility." (For the record, this makes no sense.)

new anti-poverty efforts, saying: "For the past five years we have been deluged by government programs for the unemployed, programs for the poor... America is a great nation today not because of what government did for people, but because of what people did for themselves." Candidate Nixon had a different vision for government's role: "Let government use its tax and credit policies to enlist in this battle the greatest engine of progress ever developed in the history of man—American private enterprise. Let us enlist in this great cause the millions of Americans in volunteer organizations who will bring a dedication to this task that no amount of money can ever buy." Instead of worrying about restructuring the edifice that had produced America's beggars, he thought giving the edifice more power would help; instead of worrying about transforming the Jericho Road, he recommended rely-



Dust storms in the Gobi Desert (as seen from space) highlight the need for China's Great Green Wall.

dunes. "In China, approximately 20 percent of land is now classified as desert or arid, and desertification is adversely affecting the lives of over 400 million people in China alone."

More recently, the Green Wall project has taken on additional importance for its potential as a "carbon sink" to store greenhouse gases that would otherwise find their way into the atmosphere and exacerbate global warming. But critics point out that it's hard to quantify just how much carbon the Green Wall can store, and that plantations of fast-growing non-native trees going in as part of the project don't store as much carbon as more diverse, naturally occurring native forests.

Regardless, the Chinese government is already talking up the Great Green Wall as key weapon

in its arsenal to fight global warming and as proof to the rest of the world that China is taking strong steps to mitigate carbon emissions. With completion of the Great Green Wall still 35 years out, only time will tell how effective it will be as a solution for some of China's (and the world's) most vexing environmental problems.

CONTACT: UN Global Forest Resources Assessment, [www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1757e/i1757e.pdf](http://www.fao.org/docrep/013/i1757e/i1757e.pdf).

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([www.emagazine.com](http://www.emagazine.com)). Send questions to: [earthtalk@emagazine.com](mailto:earthtalk@emagazine.com).



Jonathan Libber's analog electricity meter sports a no-replace notice for BGE employees.

I am stunned that Isiah Thomas would again tie his destiny to James Dolan, which is the equivalent of thinking that nothing adds to the fun of air travel like sitting in a back-row middle seat and flying into a mountain. I am also stunned that I even considered that James Dolan might have planned this move with a modicum of forethought and grace. And I suppose I am stunned that James Dolan can dress himself in the morning, although I am without firm confirmation that this is something he can in fact accomplish.

When I heard the announcement, I heard from the biggest Knicks fan I know, journalist Robert Silverman (read his own take on this

over here). He said to me, "Honestly, I'm ready to walk away from the team after decades of fandom. I've survived all of Dolan's blinkered, arrogant, narcissistic bungling and accepted that like clockwork he will eventually do something so unimaginably stupid, so preposterously wrong-headed that it boggles the imagination. What I can't stomach is this: James Dolan doesn't give a fuck about women. If I stick around, I'm complicit." Join the club, Bob. We all have our line as sports fans. When it comes to the Knicks, James Dolan looks at that line and, with apologies to Marge Simpson, throws up on it. Our only power is to walk away.

ing on millions more Good Samaritans.

When Ronald Reagan ran for president in 1980, he gave a similar message about letting people take care of themselves—all the more charged because he chose to deliver it at an appearance at the Neshoba County Fair in Philadelphia, Mississippi, the county where three young civil rights workers--James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner--were murdered in June 1964 while seeking to ensure the right to vote for Black citizens in Mississippi's closed society. It was a shameful signal to the White Jim Crow, states' rights South. Shockingly he did not say a word about the racist violence that took these three young lives but rather told his Southern audience he believed in states' rights and "in people doing as much as they can for themselves at the community level and at the private level." Like Nixon, Reagan said he thought we needed to recognize

"that the people of this country can solve the problems, that we don't have anything to be afraid of as long as we have the people of America." In fact, Reagan said as governor of California he had learned many people were poor because the government "bureaucracy" there to help them "has them so economically trapped that there is no way they can get away." His first budget as president sought to eradicate virtually the entire federal safety net and replace it with block grants and billions of budget cuts.

The same familiar accusations and policies are back from some leaders today who believe government's safety net is responsible for putting poor people in a "poverty trap," and they will only be able to escape it if we shred the safety net to pieces. In many corners we hear the same old exhortation that the way to fix poverty and anything else that ails Ameri-

See WATCH, Page A12