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Left to right: PGCEDC President and CEO Jim Coleman; Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller; Prince George's County Chief Administrative Officer Nicholas Majett; Prince George's County Council Vice Chair Dannielle Glaros; Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford - far right.

Networking Event Puts Local Businesses Face-To-Face With State Decision Makers

County Legislative Priorities Meet Approval of the More than 200 Reception Attendees

By LORI VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—On February 3, 2016, business owners from across Prince George's County converged on Annapolis, Maryland for an opportunity to connect personally with some of the most powerful leaders in State and County government as the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) joined top level executives from Prince George's County at County Executive Rushern L. Baker's III '2016 Prince George's County Capitol Access VIP Reception.' More than 200 business owners, serious about growing their revenue packed into Harry Browne's restaurant on State Circle as the County unveiled its legislative priorities for the 2016 legislative session. Business owners also had the opportunity to share their feedback directly with Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, Maryland Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Prince George's House Delegation Chair Jay Walker, Maryland Commerce Secretary Mike Gill and Prince George's County Council Vice Chairman Dannielle Glaros.

"The possibilities are endless as to what this group of State and County elected officials can collectively do for the residents and businesses in Prince George's County and Maryland," said Prince George's County Chief Administrative Officer Nicholas Majett on behalf of County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "The County's Legislative

owners also had the opportunity to share their feedback directly with Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford, Maryland Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Prince George's House Delegation Chair Jay Walker, Maryland Commerce Secretary Mike Gill and Prince George's County Council Vice Chairman Dannielle Glaros.

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State and County elected officials can collectively do for the residents and businesses in Prince George's County and Maryland," said Prince George's County Chief Administrative Officer Nicholas Majett on behalf of County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "The County's Legislative

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PG County Celebrates New Headquarters for 2U Inc. at New Carrollton Metro

900 New Jobs to be Created Over the Next Five Years.

By DEIDRE MCPHILLIPS
Capital News Service

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, and 2U Inc. (NASDAQ: TWOU), a leader in technology-enabled education headquartered in Prince George's County, announced that the company will be moving its headquarters to New Carrollton, Maryland to accommodate its growing workforce, as it is targeting the creation of more than 900 jobs in the county in the next five years. The company is leasing space at 7900 Harkins Road, which is owned by Cohen Equities and located within the New Carrollton Transit Oriented Development site. To assist with the new headquarters, Prince George's County is providing a \$1.5 million conditional loan through its Economic Development Incentive (EDI) Fund. Additionally, the Maryland Department of Commerce is providing a \$2 million conditional loan through the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority and Fund (MEDAAF) program.

"2U's decision to relocate to the once vacant Harkins Road building is a major victory for Prince George's County," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "Not only have we successfully retained an award-winning tech-

nology business that is recognized as one of the fastest growing companies in the Washington region; it also supports our TOD (Transit Oriented Development) strategy to expand this type of development at key locations around the County. The Harkins Road building is located just north of one of those key locations, the New Carrollton Metro Station, where I am confident that 2U will help to bring new energy to this multi-modal location. 2U's decision to grow in Prince George's County demonstrates that we are continuing to retain and attract companies to the County. It also is evidence that we are making great progress and dramatically improving the business climate here, so that businesses come and stay."

In 2015, 2U experienced unprecedented growth through the addition of New York University and Yale University to its partner portfolio and the announcement of eight new 2U-powered programs to launch in 2016 and beyond. From 2010 to 2015, 2U grew its workforce from 98 to 1,007 employees, including more than 600 employees currently working in Prince George's County. The company's priority in developing a rewarding and high-energy work environment earned them a place on the 2015 lists of *The Washington Post's*

See 2U Page A3

Next Phases Underway in FBI Headquarters Relocation

By AUBURN MANN
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Federal officials have begun the next phases in the possible relocation of the FBI's headquarters to Maryland.

Last week, the Obama Administration approved a \$1.4 billion budget request as the next segment of funding for the new headquarters.

On Jan. 22, the General Services Administration (GSA) announced its next steps in selecting potential sites for the new

facility. Two communities in Prince George's County, as well as Springfield, Va., are the three finalists for the headquarters.

President Barack Obama intends to propose a budget that supplements the \$390 million, passed by Congress in December as part of a larger spending bill. The money ultimately will enable the FBI's relocation from the J. Edgar Hoover Federal Building, the agency's longtime home on Pennsylvania

See FBI Page A5

Maryland Honors Six Schools for Gifted and Talented Programs

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

BALTIMORE, MD—Maryland this month is honoring six schools with Excellence in Gifted and Talented Education (EGATE) School Awards, which recognize top elementary, middle, and high school programs.

Now in their sixth year, the EGATE awards spotlight gifted

and talented programs aligned with Maryland Standards and regulations for Gifted and Talented Education. Each EGATE nominee submits a comprehensive application, which provides documentation of 21 criteria of excellence under four program objectives: student identification, curriculum and

See GIFTED Page A5

Maryland Mortgage Program Sales Increase by 120 Percent in 2015

By PRESS OFFICER
MDHCD

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Homeownership loans through the Maryland Mortgage Program more than doubled in 2015 with the overall value of loans totaling more than \$638 million, the Hogan administration announced today.

The dramatic increase in sales marked one of the program's most productive years in nearly a decade and is seen as a sign of the state's steadily strengthening housing market. Sales also were boosted by several successful initiatives that opened new homeownership opportunities to hardworking families throughout Maryland.

"We are committed to increasing jobs, improving the state's fiscal outlook and putting more dollars back in taxpayers' pockets," Governor Hogan said. "A healthy housing market is the key to a healthy economy.

Through the Maryland Mortgage Program, more families are able to put down roots in our state and create long-lasting financial stability."

The Maryland Mortgage Program has been the state's premier homeownership program for more than 30 years, relying primarily on private capital to provide affordable loans for hard-working families looking to purchase a home. Program loans are administered by a network of more than



PHOTO COURTESY MDHCD

70 private lending institutions across the state and promoted through Maryland's growing relationship with the state's real estate community.

The program provided 3,283 mortgage loans in calendar year 2015 compared to 1,599 loans in 2014, a 105 percent increase. The value of the loans increased 120 percent, from \$289 million in 2014 to \$638 million in 2015.

"The incredible growth in the Maryland Mortgage Program illustrates that Marylanders have confidence in Governor

Hogan's leadership and his ability to turn our economy around. More people are choosing to buy a home in Maryland and raise their families here," Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt said. "These tremendous results are changing Maryland for the better."

Visit the Maryland Mortgage Program website to learn more about the wide array of Maryland Mortgage Program loan products, down payment assistance and home buyer education programs.

INSIDE

Mikulski Tours Fort Meade Commissary Following Her Fight to Fully Fund Military Commissaries in FY 16

More than 53,000 live and work on base. Her tour follows the Senator's successful fight to include \$1.43 billion in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 to fully fund military commissaries across the country. Community, Page A3

Statement by the President on the Signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership

TPP will change that. It eliminates more than 18,000 taxes that various countries put on Made in America products. It promotes a free and open Internet and prevents unfair laws that restrict the free flow of data and information. Commentary, Page A4

Comptroller Franchot Outlines Taxpayer Protection Act to Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Over the past nine years, the Comptroller's Office has made unprecedented investments in dedicated personnel and advanced technology and has employed sophisticated fraud detection techniques through the agency's state-of-the-art data warehouse. Business, Page A5

Movie Review: *The Hateful Eight*

Well, the war may be over, but the issues between North and South have not yet been sorted. Gen. Smithers and Sheriff Mannix have plenty to talk about, and neither wants anything to do with Maj. Warren—not just because of his race, but because of certain anti-Confederate deeds he committed during the war. Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

Why do many green groups oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) governing trade in the Pacific?

—Jane Donahue,
Larchmont, NY

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Darnall's Chance offers Jubilee Voices for Black History Month

The Washington Revels, Jubilee Voices ensemble, will perform songs and stories of struggle, perseverance, trials and triumphs of African Americans as expressed through a cappella music and poetry, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 14515 Church Street in Upper Marlboro, on Saturday, Feb. 20, 2:00 to 3 p.m.

The concert is free, but reservations are required as there is limited capacity. Call Darnall's Chance House Museum at 301-952-8010.

He ran varsity track at Appalachian State

Keith Martin Sewell, a graduate of McNamara High School and a longtime Skyline resident, died Jan. 22 after a long illness. He was 49.

He was born at Malcolm Grow Hospital, Andrews AFB, July 29, 1966, the youngest child of James and Norma Sewell. He attended Skyline and Foulou's Junior High, and after graduation at McNamara, went on to Appalachian State University in Boone, N.C., on an athletic scholarship. He was a member of the varsity track team.

He later lived in Charlotte N.C., where he worked for American Express. Over the years, he also resided in Greensboro, N.C.; Mesa, Ariz.; and Atlanta. One of his favorite destinations was the Dominican Republic.

He was a talented baker, noted for his banana bread recipes.

Keith is survived by his son Kenon Rose Mitchell-Sewell; mother, Norma Sewell; brother Stevan and sister Lori Sewell. Mass of Christian Burial was at Mount Calvary Church with burial at Resurrection Cemetery.

Fighting school closings

The Forestville High School girls' basketball team, the Knights, is currently ranked No. 8 in the country by MaxPreps and No. 11 nationally by ESPN and are the pride of the school. Too bad, then, that Forestville is scheduled to close. Efforts are being made to keep it open.

And here in Skyline, we're concerned that Skyline School is also on the hit list. The Skyline

Citizens Association, with President Stan Holmes, is fighting the closure.

Neighbors

A special tribute to Selaine Ealey, wife of James Ealey, former Morningside Vice Mayor, was held at the Town Hall on Jan. 10.

Karen Rooker is our local independent Mary Kay Beauty Consultant. To schedule some "you" time, call 301-967-8377 or email kdooker@MaryKay.com.

Morningside had a very successful Breakfast with Santa and extends special thanks to Taylor Foster, Austin Fowler, Jasmine Wade and Nichol Wade.

The Morningside monthly Town Meeting is coming up on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.

Skyline Citizens Association holds its winter meeting at Skyline School on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 7 p.m.

Changing landscape

Red, Hot & Blue restaurant in Waldorf has closed. A sign on the roof tells the story: "Closed. Lost our lease. Thank you for your patronage."

Selected clinics are moving to the new Malcolm Grow Medical Clinics & Surgery Center at Joint Base Andrews on February 19. They include: Physical Medicine, Internal Medicine, Ophthalmology/Warfighter Eye Center, Optometry, Dermatology, and Neurology.

Coming up

Feb. 13: The VFW Ladies Auxiliary to VFW Post 9619 is sponsoring its Annual Ticky-Tacky Tea Party Fundraiser to benefit Cancer Research and other VFW Auxiliary Programs from 1:00 to 3 p.m. The VFW is at 6527 Suitland Road in Morningside.

Feb. 15: The George Washington Birthday Parade marches in Old Town Alexandria, 1:00 to 3 p.m. Call 703-784-4963 for information.

Feb. 20-21: The 12th Annual Washington D.C. Travel & Adventure Show will be at the Washington Convention Center (Hall C), 801 Mount Vernon Place NW. Call 202-249-3000 for information.

Feb. 27: Darnall's Chance is hosting a Highland Tea in cele-

bration of the museum's Scottish heritage at 2 p.m. You are invited to partake in this cozy and delicious winter afternoon tea. Reservations (301-952-8010) and payment are required in advance. Darnall's Chance is at 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive in Upper Marlboro.

Ferrante Scholarship honors Joe, helps students

The Ferrante and Conlon families and the GB/PK Civic Association honor the memory of Joe Ferrante by awarding scholarships to students who have already found ways to give back through their schools, communities, churches, or charities, as Joe did.

The scholarship is available to seniors planning to attend a certified college or technical school and to current college students as well. It's open to residents of Southern Maryland and stresses their service to community rather than grades. To learn more, go to josephferrantefoundation.org. Applications must be postmarked no later than March 31.

Morningside Memories: 1961

Jean Glaubitz was elected president of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary during the annual installation banquet at the firehouse. Other officers were: Audrey Holmes, vice president; Martha Hadoba, treasurer; Lois McMickle, recording secretary; Jean Davis, corresponding secretary; and Josette Prince, membership chairman.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Angie Miller, Katelyn Dudding and Pat Miller, Feb. 13; Joan Rose, Scott Jenkins and Mary Reilly, Feb. 14; Father Ted Hegnauer, David Chambers, Mary Young and Ruby Holloway, Feb. 15; Sarah Anderson and Dean Woods, Feb. 16; Charlene Holmes and Danny Fowler, Feb. 18; and Clifford Lantz, Feb. 19.

Happy anniversary to Frank & Soo Wilson, Feb. 15; and to Wilda and Joe Cheseldine who'll celebrate their 58th on Feb. 16.

A Happy Valentine's Day to all my Readers!

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Votes to Support the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) issued the following statement supporting H.R. 3700, the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2015. Rep. Edwards supported the bill after an amendment by Rep. Maxine Waters (CA-43) was adopted that removed a harmful provision that would have limited the amount tenants could deduct from their income for childcare expenses. The bill passed the House 427-0.

"One of the most important, but often overlooked, activities of the federal government is to provide assistance to some of our most vulnerable populations so they have safe and decent homes regardless of their age, race or ethnicity, disability status, or other factors. The Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act of 2015, H.R. 3700, is a step forward in doing just that, modernizing the government's ability to provide critical housing assistance with the intent of extending affordable housing options to more low-income families. The legislation would improve and streamline several areas, including rental assistance and public housing, rural housing, FHA mortgage insurance for condominiums, and homeless and veteran housing. These changes will help simplify the process to find housing for financially struggling families, veterans, the homeless, and persons with disabilities in Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties, Baltimore, and throughout Maryland."

Melwood Receives Largest Individual Commitment to Operation: Tohidu

Melwood Board Chair Donates \$20,000 to Program UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Melwood's Chairman of the Board of Directors, George Watkins, recently made the largest individual financial commitment to Melwood's new program, Operation: Tohidu. The \$20,000 pledge comes as the organization celebrated the one-year anniversary of the launch of Operation: Tohidu.

"In November, Melwood celebrated a successful year of providing our new program to warfighters living with post-traumatic stress and other deployment related trauma," said Melwood's President and CEO, Cari DeSantis, "We owe a debt of gratitude to the small group of key stakeholders who played a role in Melwood creating this program. George Watkins is certainly one of those people."

George Watkins' commitment to the program extends well beyond his financial investment. Mr. Watkins played a major role in the development of Operation: Tohidu; first as concept engineer, then serving on the planning committee that refined and implemented the program. Joined by his daughter, Clara, Watkins participated in a check presentation ceremony during the opening banquet of the January retreat. During the ceremony George renewed his commitment to the future success of Operation: Tohidu.



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

"Together we've created a program that is helping our nation's heroes discover new ways to cope with their unresolved trauma," said Board Chair, George Watkins. "To date, we've helped nearly 170 veterans and active duty military members begin their journey to recovery. I am honored to lend my support."

Since 2010, George has contributed his time and expertise in accounting and corporate finance to the Melwood Board of Directors. He assumed his new role as Board Chair in 2015. Prior to that he served as the Board Vice Chair and previously as the Treasurer.

WSSC Repaired 1,918 Water Main Breaks in 2015 Crews Are Ready for 2016 as Temperatures Drop

LAUREL, MD—January 6, 2016—The first cold snap of 2016 is here and it could mean an increase in water main breaks and leaks in the coming days.

The calendar year 2015 ended with a warmer than normal December, but overall WSSC's Utility Services Team repaired 1,918 water main breaks and leaks throughout the year.

Looking at the past five calendar years, 2015 was the second busiest after 2014, where the Commission recorded 1,943 water main breaks and leaks. The year 2010 continues to hold the record for breaks and leaks with 2,125.

2011—1,489 water main breaks
2012—1,601 water main breaks
2013—1,693 water main breaks
2014—1,943 water main breaks
2015—1,918 water main breaks

Remember, the sooner WSSC knows about a water main break, the sooner we can fix it. There are several ways to report a break.

- Call WSSC's 24/7 Emergency Call Center: 301-206-4002
- Email WSSC's 24/7 Emergency Call Center: emergencycallcenter@wsscwater.com

Edwards Applauds President Obama's \$1.1 Billion Funding Proposal to Combat Opioid and Heroin Abuse

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) issued the following statement regarding today's announcement that President Obama is including \$1.1 billion in new funding in his fiscal year 2017 (FY17) budget to address prescription opioid abuse and heroin use.

"I applaud President Obama's proposal to include \$1.1 billion in new funding to combat prescription opioid abuse and heroin use. With

more people now dying from drug overdose than car crashes every year, this crisis is an epidemic that is devastating families and communities in Maryland and across the country.

"Last summer I hosted a roundtable discussion where stakeholders in law enforcement, higher education institutions, nonprofit organizations, and federal, state, and local government highlighted the importance of a coordinated effort that includes treatment, prevention, and increasing the availability of the overdose reversal drug naloxone. Thankfully, the proposal announced today provides additional funding in each of these areas.

"Over six years ago, I first introduced the Stop Overdose Stat (S.O.S.) Act that would provide federal support for expanding the awareness and use of naloxone, improving epidemiological surveillance of overdose occurrences, and establishing a coordinated federal plan of action. It would do so in part by establishing a grant program that funds efforts to educate and train the public, first responders, and caregivers of those at risk of overdose on how to administer naloxone. We know that it works, as Baltimore police officers now carrying naloxone have already saved at least thirteen lives. I am grateful that a portion of approximately \$500 million in funding would be used to increase the availability of naloxone and help save even more lives."

Hoyer Attends Maryland Democratic Party Annual Legislative Luncheon

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) attended the Maryland Democratic Party Annual Legislative Luncheon in Annapolis.

"It was an honor to join fellow Democrats from the Maryland State Senate and the House of Delegates today for their annual luncheon before the 436th Session of the Maryland General Assembly begins tomorrow," said Congressman Hoyer. "I'm proud of our Democratic state lawmakers' efforts to ensure that every Marylander can get ahead and build a solid and stable foundation in our middle class. While we have made progress, there's more work to do to strengthen our state's economy, create jobs, and increase access to high-quality education in Maryland. We must all work together to ensure there are more opportunities for Marylanders to make the American Dream a reality. I will continue to support the efforts of our state lawmakers through my work in Congress. I thank Senate President Mike Miller, Speaker Michael Busch, and Members of the General Assembly for their hard work, and I look forward to working with them this year to improve the quality of life for Fifth District families and all Marylanders."

In 1966, Congressman Hoyer was elected to the Maryland Senate. He was elected President of the Senate in 1975, the youngest ever in state history, and served in the Senate until 1978.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

"CONNECTIONS TO SUCCESS"

Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation in partnership with the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce presents: Connections to Success: "Enhancing Relationships with Customers for Long Term Growth" Monday March 14, 2016. This will be an opportunity to connect and strengthen relationships. This event will be from 9:00 AM-12:00 PM. (Breakfast provided). Location is Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 140, Largo, Maryland 20774.

You will have the opportunity to meet the experts who will teach you how to maximize relationships with customers to make your small business BIG BUSINESS: Maryland Department of Commerce, SCORE, Prince George's County Workforce Services Division and many more. RSVP today to Crystal Ballard at cballard@pgcedc.com or (301) 583-4650.

2016 BWC SCHOLARSHIP

The Baltimore-Washington Conference is offering college

scholarships for the fall 2016 semester. Students can apply January 4—March 1, 2016 through an online application system. Please contact Cheryl Cook at ccook@bwcumc.org or 410-309-344 with questions.

REGIONAL FINANCIAL AID WORKSHOPS

UMEOC and Prince George's Community College are hosting a regional financial aid workshop at Frederick Douglass High School Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 6:30 PM and other PGCCS Public Schools for parents and those planning to invest in a College Education. The address is 8000 Croom Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. These workshops are open to all regardless of school membership or affiliation. Admission is free. Admission to PGCC not required. For more information, e-mail enroll@pgcc.edu or call 301-546-0864.

NAMI/MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT GROUP

Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital Center will be offering free NAMI/Mental Health Support Group for family members and caregivers in the hospital li-

brary (ground floor). The time is the first Tuesday of every month from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM. Address is 7503 Surratts Road, Clinton, Maryland 20735.

WIDOW'S MINISTRY LUNCHEON

Join us Saturday, February 13th at 1:00 PM at a luncheon with the objective/purpose to encourage, motivate, and strengthen new/season widows as they journey through this new phase in their lives. Cost is free. Please call 301-372-6036 to reserve your seat. The location is Union Bethel Church at 6810 Floral Park Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613.

YOUTH SERVICES

M-NCPPC Community Centers provide total access with a free youth ID card for ages 6-17 for Prince George's County residents. Teens (ages 13-17) also have free access to community center fitness/weight rooms with their ID cards.

Developmental programs are offered. Youth build skills through classes, special events, drop in activities, relaxing and excursions. These opportunities give youth positive experiences and a chance to be more successful in life.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

Keeping Your New Year's Financial Resolutions

Whether you're talking about diet, exercise or money, keeping New Year's resolutions is challenging. A University of Scranton researcher noted that "weight loss" is the current reigning resolution, followed by "improve finances" at No. 2.

And while the study (<https://www.sharecare.com/health/healthy-new-years-resolutions/article/the-resolution-solution>) showed that roughly 40–46 percent were successful in their specific goal at the six-month mark, more than half gave up.

Your personal finances need more dedication than that.

If you want to add some fairly easy money resolutions that can help your finances overall, consider the following:

Make your first budget or do a better job of reviewing the one you have. A 2013 Gallup survey reported that only one-third of Americans actually prepare a detailed household budget. Make your first resolution to create or review your household budget (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/budgeting>) so you know where your finances stand at all times.

Budgeting involves day-to-day tracking of finances, but having a quick way to determine your net worth (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/worth>)—your assets minus your liabilities—offers the biggest picture of how you're doing and what next steps you might take to improve your circumstances. Make this calculation an annual kickoff to the New Year.

Having an emergency fund means you're always ready for the unexpected. The average emergency fund generally covers three-to-six months of daily expenses—yours could be more or less. Keep in mind that the primary purpose of an emergency fund is to keep you away from savings when unexpected expenses happen.

Depending on your comfort level with all things digital, virtually every aspect of your financial life can be managed online or with computer-based software. From setting up a basic paper or online calendar to track pay dates, bill due dates and deposit dates for savings and investments, a daily series of reminders and action items will keep your money issues on time and on track.

Recommit to retirement. If you're employed or self-employed, here's how to make a retirement savings resolution stick. First, make sure you're signed up for a 401(k), 403(b) or 457 plan at work or a corresponding SEP-IRA, self-directed 401(k) or other self-employment retirement plan that fits your tax and financial situation. Then check what your 2016 maximum contribution (www.irs.gov) is for your respective plan. Finally, through budgeting or a plan to bring in more income, determine how you can come as close to your maximum contribution as possible for the coming year. And of course, don't forget about Traditional or Roth IRAs (<https://www.irs.gov/Retirement-Plans/Traditional-and-Roth-IRAs>) that you can contribute to independently of work-based plans. All of these options can improve your retirement prospects while saving you considerable money on taxes.

Review your non-retirement benefits and insurance. For most employed and self-employed people, open enrollment for health and other company benefits wrapped up before year-end. But that doesn't mean you can't make notes at any point in the year for possible changes and improvements to your health insurance and related tax-advantaged accounts. The same goes for reviewing your personal home, auto, life and disability coverage for potential savings and/or better coverage. Qualified advisors can help you review these choices.

Find more money to save. Whether it's adjusting what you spend, paying off expenses or finding ways to bring in more income, saving more is one of the best financial objectives there is. The first step is to track and set spending limits—those limits will help you reset or eliminate expenses that are standing in the way of your goals.

Bottom line: Making New Year's resolutions always sounds like a good idea at the time, but keeping them requires determination, study and focus. This year, build the kind of money habits that position you for success.



Mikulski Tours Fort Meade Commissary Following Her Fight to Fully Fund Military Commissaries in FY 16 Spending Bill

As Vice Chairwoman of Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski Increased Military Commissary Funding by \$281 Million Above Administration's Budget Request

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of Barbara Mikulski

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, on Monday toured the Fort Meade Commissary to see firsthand this important earned benefit for the more than 100,000 military men and women, veterans and their families in the surrounding Fort Meade area. More than 53,000 live and work on base. Her tour follows the Senator's successful fight to include \$1.43 billion in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 to fully fund military commissaries across the country. This funding is helping to keep commissaries open, ensuring that store hours don't have to be cut, and helping to retain as many as 100,000 jobs that are supported by commis-

saries. Senator Mikulski is a member of the Senate Military Family Caucus.

"I fought to protect Fort Meade's commissary and those across the country because service members and their families deserve the benefits they've earned," Senator Mikulski said. "Commissaries feed our troops. They help military families stretch their budgets, and they provide jobs to military spouses, teens old enough to work, and military retirees. And commissaries are the military's most popular earned benefit. The men and women who live and work at Fort Meade and veterans in surrounding communities need a government on their side when it comes to access to low-cost, healthy food for their families."

"Senator Mikulski's dedication and effort to help preserve this benefit that supports our



PHOTO COURTESY THE OFFICE OF BARBARA MIKULSKI
On Monday, February 1, 2016, U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) meets with Fort Meade Garrison Commander Colonel Brian Foley along with base leaders to discuss her continued commitment to the men and women and families who live and work at Fort Meade.

service members, military retirees and their families cannot be overstated. The senator has always recognized the valuable contribution to our Nation made by the men and women of Fort Meade, and by all military service-members, retirees, civilians, and their families. We truly appreciate her past, present, and future advocacy," said Fort Meade Garrison Commander Colonel Brian Foley.

In the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016, Senator Mikulski fought to include \$281 million more than the Administration's budget request for commissaries. Senator Mikulski successfully worked to include report language reaffirming the importance of commissaries, and that while the Committee supports finding efficiencies to lower the operational cost of commis-

saries, stating this must not be done at the detriment of military service members and their families. Commissaries must be kept open, affordable and accessible.

Senator Mikulski has continuously fought to preserve the commissary benefit. She fought to restore funding for commissaries by ensuring that the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 included \$1.3 billion, \$190 million more than the Administration's initial budget request for commissaries.

In addition to Fort Meade, Maryland is home to six other military commissaries at the following installations: Aberdeen Proving Ground, Joint Base Andrews, Forest Glen, Fort Detrick, Patuxent River Naval Air Station and Naval Support Activity Annapolis.



PHOTO COURTESY THE OFFICE OF BARBARA MIKULSKI
On Monday, February 1, 2016, U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) tours the commissary at Fort Meade together with Store Director John Blythe, Defense Commissary Agency East Zone 25 Manager Mary Williams and Defense Commissary Agency East Area Director Hector Granado.

2U from A1

'Top Workplace' and DC Inno's '10 Coolest Companies.'

"We're investing in our future and the 2U team with a new state-of-the-art facility that will match our unique corporate culture," said 2U CEO and co-founder Chip Paucek. "With the assistance of the Maryland Department of Commerce and Prince George's County, our new headquarters will support our growth as we continue to acquire new university partners, launch new programs and empower the world's greatest universities as they build great digital versions of themselves."

"Working with our partners in Prince George's County, we are

proud to support 2U's new headquarters and the creation of hundreds of jobs," said Governor Larry Hogan. "Thanks to visionary companies like 2U, we are continuing to see the creation of exciting job opportunities throughout Maryland, which helps to strengthen our private sector and provide a healthy, thriving economy for all citizens."

"2U has made tremendous progress in online education since it was formed in 2008 and is now among the fastest growing companies in Maryland," said Commerce Secretary Mike Gill. "We are excited to see this pioneering company continue to grow in Maryland and commend them on their innovative ap-

proach to empower universities and colleges to educate the leaders of tomorrow."

"Again we celebrate a great business model finding the very best location to thrive in Prince George's County!" said Prince George's County Council Chair Derrick L. Davis (D)—District 6. "This a great story for 2U, a model transit-oriented development project, and a boom for our local economy. This is a consensus win across the board and I am delighted that 2U chose to not only stay in Prince George's County but to expand its operations. The important job opportunities being retained and created for our residents is critical to the success of the

County's economic development initiatives and a must for improving the quality of life for our residents."

"I am thrilled about the great opportunities for transit-oriented development that attracts businesses like 2U to Prince George's County, and to the District 3 community!" said Prince George's County Council Vice-Chair Danielle Glaros—District 3. "In addition to the many jobs the firm brings, 2U will occupy a large and vacant commercial building in a TOD area near the New Carrollton Metro Station, anchoring the County's growing Metro station development, including the Purple Line, a County transportation priority."

ImagineBowie Community Event Challenges Residents to Discover, Dream and Design City's Future—#ImagineBowie

City of Bowie to Engage Residents in Gathering Ideas for a More Sustainable City

By PRESS OFFICER
MNCPPC

BOWIE, MD—In the year of its 100th anniversary, the City of Bowie, along with its partner The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), is hosting a free, dynamic community event called ImagineBowie on February 13th to engage its residents on ways to ensure the City is headed in the right direction for the next 100 years. The community event will be held at the Bowie Kenhill Center located at 2614 Kenhill Drive from 9:30am to 4pm. The event is free and open to the public.

This community event is the beginning of an extensive outreach effort to engage Bowie residents in creating a more sustainable community from an environmental, economic, and social standpoint. These engagement efforts will support Bowie in the development of its first City-wide sustainability plan. Participants will take a journey to discover, dream, design and identify Bowie's best and most sustainable destiny. The event will include working in small groups as well as being a part of larger community discussions. The event will help the City prioritize ideas for the sustainability plan.

This will be the first in a series of engagement events the City and M-NCPPC will hold throughout the spring. Residents can register online at www.imaginebowie2016.eventbrite.com. Adult residents and High School students are welcome to attend. A small investment of time and your best creativity will help make this event a success! Residents are also invited to continue the conversation on building a sustainable future for Bowie after the event by using its new online portal www.greenbowie.myside-walk.com.

For more information on ImagineBowie, go to the

Green Bowie website at www.cityofbowie.org/GreenBowie or find posts or tweets on the City of Bowie's social media accounts with #ImagineBowie. You can also contact Kristin Larson at 301-809-3044.

Green Bowie is a part of the City's Department of Planning and coordinates initiatives related to community sustainability. There is a Green Team made up of citizen volunteers who coordinate many programs in the city with a focus on environmental education and outreach. The Environmental Advisory Committee advises the City Council on environmental policy.

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in

The Prince George's Post

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COMMENTARY

President Barack Obama *President of the United States*



Statement by the President on the Signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership

For more than five years, a group of 12 countries have negotiated a forward-looking trade deal that sets new, high standards for trade and investment in one of the world's fastest growing and most important regions. Today, these countries signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership—a new type of trade deal that puts American workers first.

Right now, the rules of global trade too often undermine our values and put our workers and businesses at a disadvantage. TPP will change that. It eliminates more than 18,000 taxes that various countries put on Made in America products. It promotes a free and open Internet and prevents unfair laws that restrict the free flow of data and information. It includes the strongest labor standards and environmental commitments in history—and, unlike in past agreements, these

standards are fully enforceable. TPP allows America—and not countries like China—to write the rules of the road in the 21st century, which is especially important in a region as dynamic as the Asia-Pacific.

Put simply, TPP will bolster our leadership abroad and support good jobs here at home. That's why I released the full text of the agreement three months ago for all to see, and it's why I'll continue working with Democrats and Republicans in Congress to enact it into law as soon as possible so our economy can immediately start benefiting from the tens of billions of dollars in new export opportunities. We should get TPP done this year and give more American workers the shot at success they deserve and help more American businesses compete and win around the world.



The National Archives and Records Administration

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIPEDIA; COURTESY NARA

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) invites individuals, families, and tours and community groups to discover our nation's archival heritage in the Washington, D.C. area and at our nationwide facilities. Established in 1934, NARA serves as the official repository for all federal records judged to be of enduring value. Its holdings date from the 18th century to the present and include the famous Charters of Freedom—the original Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. National Archives is located in College Park, Maryland, 8601 Adelphi Rd, College Park, MD.

Marc Morial, President and CEO *National Urban League*



Tackling the Academy's Diversity Deficit With the NFL's Playbook

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences."

—Audre Lorde,
Our Dead Behind Us: Poems, 1986

A lot has happened since the on and offline uproar that exploded after the Motion Picture Academy failed to nominate people of color across most major award categories for the second year in a row. Chief among the reactions has been the academy's decision to re-examine and course-correct its internal push for diversity among its well-publicized, overwhelmingly older, white male ranks. Meanwhile, there have been numerous calls to register our collective disappointment with the academy by tuning out the broadcast or boycotting the Oscars ceremony all together, while another cultural touchstone has begun to take its time-honored place in our national imagination: Super Bowl XLIX. On its face, Sunday's big game will be an epic showdown between the Carolina Panthers and the Denver Broncos, but beyond the gridiron lies history and the hard-earned results of the NFL's resolve to promote inclusion among its ranks—a commitment that might serve as a lesson to the Motion Picture Academy.

If the Panthers beat the Broncos, Panthers quarterback Cam Newton would become the third African-American to start and win the Super Bowl. Carolina head coach Ron Rivera, one of the league's six minority coaches and the only Latino head coach, will attempt to become the second Latino coach to win the Super Bowl. In a sport that can boast nearly 70 percent representation of people of color on the field, the anemic representation of minorities off the playing field and in the boardrooms is a problem, but it is a challenge that was met with a definitive strategy to diversify coaching staff in particular. In 2003, facing the threat of law-

suits, the NFL established the Rooney Rule, named after the chairman of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Dan Rooney, who was the chairman of the league's diversity committee. The rule requires every team with a coach or general manager vacancy to interview at least one minority candidate.

The results have been mixed. While there has been a visible change in the racial composition of coaching staffs—especially among assistant coaches—new research from professors at Georgetown, George Washington, Emory and Iowa State University suggests that from the already limited pool of Black candidates, Black coaches are still less likely to be promoted for the top jobs than their white counterparts. Clearly, there is still work to be done. No one ever ruled the Rooney Rule a touchdown, but it demonstrated a clear and definitive effort to engage and include people of color at every level of one of America's favorite pastimes.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences must demonstrate that same drive and commitment to create real and substantial strategies toward inclusion. The Academy's promise to diversify—for the second year in a row—rings hollow. Furthermore, the reforms announced, even if they are enacted, will have far too little effect on the nomination process.

The diversity problem in entertainment neither begins nor ends with awards nominations. But award nominations translate into box-office success, which affects the greenlighting of future projects. If the Academy cannot break this vicious circle, it risks its own irrelevance.

We've asked to meet with the Academy's leaders so we can develop a clear and specific blueprint for moving forward, and outline a plan to hold the Academy accountable. We've heard no response.

I hope that one day we will be able to retire the #OscarsSoWhite hashtag for good.

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



Hungry Children in Rich America

Sarah is three years old. She and her six-year-old brother, Bryce, are inseparable except when it's time for him to visit the summer food program that provides meals at a school near his Ohio home for children who otherwise would go hungry. Sarah's too young to make the trip. One morning after Bryce had his fill of food for the day he made a detour before heading home. He walked to the trash cans and began rummaging through food others threw away. Winnie Brewer, the Food Services Supervisor in Marion City Schools, noticed the little boy and tapped him on the shoulder to ask why he was sifting through the garbage. "My little sister," he explained. "She's hungry." Bringing her leftover food was the only way he knew to help.

"We run into a lot of situations where kids will come and say they have younger siblings at home," Brewer says. "They always want to know if they can take something back." After Brewer spoke with Bryce, staff members followed him home with a care package for little Sarah. This was a temporary solution to a huge problem Brewer worries about every day. "Until we see that child digging food out of a trash can, it doesn't hit home," Brewer says. "Once it does, you know you have to do something."

Nearly 220,000 Ohio children under six are poor and young children of color are more likely to be poor. More than half (55.5 percent) of Black children, 40.3 percent of Hispanic, and 19.1 percent of White children under six in Ohio are poor; 21 percent of them live in families where at least one parent works full-time year-round; 47 percent have at least one parent working part of the year or part-time; and 32 percent have no employed parent. Nearly one in four Ohio children lacks consistent access to adequate food—that's 653,410 Ohio children of all ages in every corner of the state. Nationally, 15.3 million children were food insecure in 2014. The majority live in families with one or more working adults—but are still unable to consistently afford enough food

to keep the wolves of hunger from their door.

There is no excuse for any child in America to go hungry and malnourished in the richest nation on Earth. Yet child hunger is a widespread, urgent and shameful problem that cannot wait. We all have to do something—now. Bryce and Sarah (names were changed to protect their identities) are far from alone as shown in a new Children's Defense Fund-Ohio searing report calling to end the childhood hunger many thousands of Ohio's youngest children suffer every day. Babies, toddlers, and preschoolers suffering hunger and malnutrition face increased odds of negative health outcomes during their years of greatest brain development. Food insecure children under age five are:

- Nearly two times more likely to be in "fair or poor health;"
- Nearly two times more likely to experience developmental delays;
- Two times as likely to have behavioral problems;
- More than twice as likely to be hospitalized;
- Two and a half times more likely to have headaches, and
- Three times more likely to have stomach aches.

Food insecure children are more likely to be behind in social skills and reading performance in kindergarten. By elementary school they are four times more likely to need mental health counseling. Risks keep accumulating: malnutrition from childhood food insecurity has been linked to adult diseases including diabetes, hyperlipidemia and cardiovascular disease. The stress and anxiety of early childhood hunger also make it harder to learn skills that help later relationship development, school success and workplace productivity.

Babies born to food insecure mothers face tragic odds: they are more likely to be born preterm and at low birthweight and to struggle with breastfeeding which contributes to increased infant mortality rates. Babies who survive are more likely to struggle with disabilities during childhood and adolescence and face higher risks of chronic disease as adults. School-age food supports of free and reduced price breakfast and lunch are critically important to the health and academic success of older children

See WATCH, Page A12

DHCD Host Community Forum on Annual Action Plan

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

LARGO, MD—The Prince George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will host a Community Forum on Monday, February 22, 2016 at the Oxon Hill Library Auditorium, 6200 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill, MD 20745 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. DHCD will present to community stakeholders its FY 2017 Annual Action Plan for Housing and Community Development. The Annual Action Plan covers July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

and the forum allows DHCD staff to give citizens an overview of the goals and objectives of the County's future housing and community development needs.

"We want to encourage Prince George's County residents to attend as we outline what the future holds for housing and community development in our County," said Eric C. Brown, Director of the Prince George's County Department Housing and Community Development. "We all have a stake in our neighborhoods and communities."

The Community Forum is free and open to the public and

ample parking is available. The snow dates for this event are Tuesday, February 23, 2016 and Monday, February 29, 2016, same time as above.

Sign language for the hearing impaired and interpretive services can be made available. To request these services, please call the Department of Housing and Community Development at (301) 883-5540 or TTY (301) 883-5428.

For additional information, please contact Ms. Shirley E. Grant, CPD Administrator (301) 883-5540.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Surviving Valentine's Day Without Someone Special

February is a month full of "holidays." While "Laugh and Get Rich Day" has already passed, "Do A Grouch A Favor Day" is still coming, as is "International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day." But clearly the holiday that most of us are most familiar with is Valentine's Day.

While it's a holiday whose origins and traditions go back centuries, today's primary focus is primarily on Valentine's cards, candy, flowers and romantic dinners. That's all well and good for those in loving relationships, but this can be a painful time for those who are not.

Thanks to the commercial aspects of Valentine's Day, it's a difficult celebration to ignore. We are bombarded with stories and pictures of happy couples, as well as ads for romantic products or services.

Although Valentine's Day may be difficult to ignore, it needn't be overly painful even if you aren't in a relationship now or have had one end recently.

Start by accepting that not having someone special to share this Valentine's Day with isn't a permanent situation. Your being without a partner is likely only temporary, especially if you begin to take steps to move the odds for a new relationship in your favor.

A good start is to realize that you really aren't alone. We all have friends, co-workers or family members who are capable of understanding where our life is currently. In interacting with them, don't wallow in stories of how lonely you are, but instead vow to take a positive attitude.

It also helps to step back and take a look at your life. Are you taking care of yourself physically? Do you have some structure in your life which brings you pleasure, such as meeting with friends or being involved in a local social, civic or religious groups? Can you increase the time you make for these interests?

If you're alone this Valentine's Day because a relationship has ended, forgive and forget your ex-lover. Don't hold onto the past or try to rekindle what is clearly over.

The key to surviving Valentine's Day is to focus on you, on the good things in your life, on the value you have as a human being and the potential you have for the future. If you feel totally overwhelmed by where you are in life and love, consider talking to a professional counselor for the help to get some happy back in your life.

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

Gifted from A1

instruction, professional development, and program management and evaluation.

The 2015 EGATE schools are:

Calverton Elementary School, Prince George's County Public Schools

Fountaindale Elementary School for the Arts and Academic Excellence, Washington County Public Schools (previously a 2010 awardee)

Hamilton Elementary/Middle School, Baltimore City Public Schools

Hampstead Hill Academy, Baltimore City Public Schools

Kenmoor Middle School, Prince George's County Public Schools (previously a 2010 awardee)

University Park Elementary School, Prince George's County Public Schools

In the six years of the award's existence, 39 schools from 10 school systems have earned the EGATE status. Members from the Maryland Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education and local school system personnel review and score the EGATE applications, which document the school's gifted and talented program activities over a 15 month period.

This year's new EGATE schools will be recognized during Maryland's Gifted and Talented Education month at a reception and awards ceremony on February 24 from 5-8 p.m. at North County High School in Glen Burnie.

EGATE schools receive a citation from the Governor, and the EGATE banner to display on their school buildings and websites. They host celebratory visits from Advisory Council members and MSDE staff and serve as models for other schools that want to achieve this status.

More information on the EGATE School Awards Program is available at <http://marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/programs/giftedtalented/index.html>. Schools interested in applying for the 2016 EGATE program will submit applications to MSDE for review by December 2, 2016.

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Comptroller Franchot Outlines Taxpayer Protection Act to Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Comptroller Calls for Quick Action to Protect Maryland Taxpayers

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Comptroller

ANNAPOLIS, MD—A day after announcing that his agency was no longer accepting questionable tax returns from seven businesses in the Baltimore region, Maryland Comptroller Peter Franchot went before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee today to discuss tax fraud and identity theft and to outline the key provisions of his top legislative priority, The Taxpayer Protection Act. The proposed legislation would provide the Comptroller's Office with enhanced tools to protect taxpayers' information, prevent fraud and hold fraudsters accountable.

"Tax fraud and identity theft represent the single greatest risk facing taxpayers today. It has become the defining challenge for federal and state tax administrators throughout the nation, and there is no greater priority for me and the members of my team," Franchot said.

Comptroller Franchot also updated the committee on his agency's ongoing efforts to combat tax fraud and identity theft.

The Comptroller's Taxpayer Protection Act is the latest in a series of actions he has taken to combat fraud, which has made the Maryland Comptroller's Office a national leader on this issue. Over the past nine years, the Comptroller's Office has made unprecedented investments in dedicated personnel and advanced technology and has employed sophisticated fraud detection techniques through the agency's state-of-the-art data warehouse.

On Wednesday, the Comptroller announced that his agency has stopped processing tax returns from Liberty Tax Service at six locations in Baltimore and one in Dundalk. With his highly-trained personnel and sophisticated fraud detection technology, the agency stopped and prevented 1,100 fraudulent tax returns from being processed and traced them to these businesses. A full-scale investigation has begun and the information has been shared with the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

Since 2007, the Comptroller's Office has stopped more than \$153 million in tax fraud.

Nationally, the Internal Revenue Service estimates nearly \$25 billion worth of tax fraud schemes annually. In 2015, the Comptroller's Office has stopped 19,150 fraudulent returns totaling more than \$39 million, compared to 314 fraudulent returns worth approximately \$657,000 in 2007. Already this calendar year, the Comptroller's Office has detected and prevented 615 fraudulent returns worth \$780,000.

"These financial criminals are now more sophisticated and brazen than ever before, and for that reason the threats to taxpayer security have never been greater. In order to protect Maryland taxpayers from harm, we need every possible legal tool at our disposal, which is why I'm urging the General Assembly to pass the Taxpayer Protection Act as soon as possible."

The Taxpayer Protection Act will:

- Place greater legal responsibility on tax preparers to properly file returns.
- Extend the statute of limitations for tax crimes to six

years from the current three years to allow sufficient time to investigate fraud cases in what are commonly highly sophisticated schemes.

- Add fraudulent return preparer penalty.
- Provide legal authority to issue injunctions against preparers under investigation for fraud to protect consumers during investigations.
- Specifically include tax fraud to the existing enforcement responsibilities of the agency's Field Enforcement Division under the Tax General Article.
- Change the due date for businesses to submit withholding files to the Comptroller's Office to January 31 from February 28 each year to assure accurate taxpayer data and more reliable fraud detection.

This past November, the Comptroller signed a Memorandum of Understanding in collaboration with the IRS, state departments of revenue and the tax services industry to protect taxpayers from the burdens associated with identity theft and refund fraud.

Networking from A1

Agenda for 2016 focuses on safeguarding the County's budget priorities. We need our legislators to know that we cannot stand further cuts to funding for essential programs that make our County better for our residents, businesses and visitors. Our success as a County, in partnership with the State, is good for Prince George's County residents and business, and for the prosperity of the State of Maryland."

Mr. Majett outlined the County's legislative priorities, which included securing previously committed State funding for the Regional Medical Center, developing incentives to attract the Federal Bureau of Investigation's headquarters, and working to protect State funding for critical road projects, mass transportation, and pedestrian safety throughout the County, as well as funding for local road maintenance projects.

"The Prince George's Economic Development Corporation is your conduit to making the radical changes you may need to take your business to the next level," said Mr. Coleman. "My team and I are here 24/7 to personally connect you to the people that can 'Activate Prosperity' for yourself and your family. The connections made in this room tonight could be transformative for your business and that is what we are here for. We are here to serve."

FBI from A1

Avenue in Washington, for a new site in either suburban Maryland or Virginia.

The campaign for a location in Maryland is being spearheaded by Maryland Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, the ranking Democrat on Senate Appropriations Committee and the Commerce.

"This is great news for both the new FBI headquarters and the security of our nation," Mikulski said in a Jan. 22 statement. "I've fought tooth and nail for men and women of the FBI, working to secure \$390 million significant down-payment in the FY16 funding bill."

Earlier this year, Coleman announced the EDC's 'Activate Prosperity' initiative in which the EDC released a three-year plan to reduce the county's poverty rate, close income inequality gaps and reduce joblessness. The plan includes maximizing the State's investment in County projects, securing federal grant funding to deploy a One-Stop Career Center in the Prince George's County Correction Facility, and hosting the county's economic development summits throughout the County to build raise awareness of the job opportunities and business resources available to residents.

"There is a new sense of optimism in Maryland," said Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford. "We have been working to ensure that the 'anti-business' environment, once prevalent in Maryland, has changed and that we are Open for Business. We will continue to focus on business to business opportunities and to employ more of our citizens."

Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller he rallied the capacity crowd on the latest development projects coming to Prince George's County.

"Not only does Prince George's County have MGM National Harbor currently looking to hire more than 9,000 people within the next six months, and the possible relocation of the FBI to Greenbelt or Landover, we are going to make sure Prince George's County has a teaching hospital by July of this year," said Senator Miller. "I cannot

be more proud to be a part of the team that Prince George's County has in place today. We will work with the Governor, the House and Senate, the County Executive and County Council to get this done."

Maryland Commerce Secretary Mike Gill shared great news about local company 2U announcing their expansion into previously unoccupied space in New Carrollton and adding more than 900 new jobs in the County over the next four years.

"I'm extremely excited about the sales organization that is the State of Maryland today," said Secretary Gill. "I have always said that economic development is a team sport and I am pleased to stand here today to let you all know that Prince George's County, the State of Maryland, and the Department of Commerce have never been more on the same page as Prince George's; taking it to a place that it has never been before. You can count on Commerce to be right there for Prince George's County to make sure these business opportunities happen."

After the short program, attendees took advantage of the opportunity to meet with their elected officials on issues their businesses are in need. Collectively, the business owners seemed pleased to know about the services available at the Economic Development Corporation and how Prince George's County was so engaged at all levels of government.

Others backing the FBI's relocation to Maryland include Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Mechanicsville, Rep. Donna Edwards, D-Fort Washington, and Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker III.

The two areas in Prince George's County under consideration are Greenbelt and Landover. "This is a competition," said Cardin spokeswoman Sue Walitsky. "The GSA and FBI narrowed down the field to three sites and will base final decisions on the environmental and economic assessments."

The goal of the relocation is to provide the FBI with a consolidated facility, bringing its 25 satellite centers throughout the capital region together into a single space of more than 2.1 million square feet. The GSA is looking for a site that can accommodate more than 11,000 FBI employees.

Placing the new headquarters in either Greenbelt or Landover would have widespread benefits, according to David Iannucci, the head economic and development adviser to Baker.

"The FBI coming to Prince George's County would be an historic opportunity for this county that could fundamentally change the local economy," Iannucci said.

"Tonight's networking event was helpful for my business on many levels," said Michael Smith, Consultant with Smithmark Research Consumer Insights who has recently relocated to Prince George's County. "It gave me a better understanding of what our (County) objectives are relative to what we do in the State House for Prince George's County. As a new resident, you want to understand not only what you can do politically, but also what we are doing to manage businesses. The wonderful team at the Economic Development Center told me about this event this afternoon when I happened to search trade initiatives. I am glad I made the trip to Annapolis."

The next networking opportunity will be on March 14th when the EDC, in partnership with the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce will host its 'Connections for Success' forum that will address "Enhancing Relationships With Customers for Long Term Growth". It will be held from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 140, Largo, MD 20772.

Admission and parking are free. Breakfast will be provided. Attendees must RSVP to Crystal Ballard (cballard@co.pg.md.us) at 301-583-4650. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Sangrea Watkins (Swatkins@co.pg.md.us) or 301-583-4619.

There are more than 75,000 federal workers who currently live in Prince George's county but only 25,000 federal government jobs, according to a state report.

With 43 percent of Washington area federal workers residing in Prince George's county, "having the FBI in Maryland could create an opportunity that would potentially take cars off the highways with both prospective sites Maryland lying within a two-mile radius of Metrorail stations," Iannucci said.

The GSA is expected to make a final decision on the FBI's new location later this year.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

The Hateful Eight

The Hateful Eight
Grade: B+
Rated R, very strong bloody violence, some sexual content, a naked dude, and all the profanity in the world?
3 hrs., 7 min

The Hateful Eight calls itself Quentin Tarantino's eighth movie, but that's only true if you count the two *Kill Bills* as one or don't count *Death Proof* at all (either method is acceptable). Fudging the truth to make the story better is second nature to a raconteur like QT, and his populates his movies with people who reflect that. It's especially true of *Hateful Eight*—which really has nine characters ("Hateful Nine" doesn't have the same ring to it)—almost all of whom are fabulists, exaggerators, or flat-out liars. They're Tarantino's kind of people, and not just because they love the N-word.

Our setting, filmed in glorious 70mm widescreen Cinerama®, is rural Wyoming several years after the end of the Civil War. Trying to outrun an impending blizzard, a black Union officer, Maj. Marquis Warren (Samuel L. Jackson), now a bounty hunter, catches a ride with a colleague, John Ruth (Kurt Russell), who's heading to town with a prisoner to see her hanged. Yes, her: she's Daisy Domergue (Jennifer Jason Leigh), a murderous, spiteful, slightly insane Southern woman who we are led to understand deserves every inch of the noose that awaits her. Still, we cringe every time John Ruth punches her, which is often, and usually at her own provoking.

These three, along with stalwart stagecoach driver O.B. (James Parks), are joined by Chris Mannix (Walton Goggins), a proud Rebel racist who says he's actually the new sheriff of the town they're headed for. They end up snowed in at Minnie's Haberdashery, a way station in the mountains. Minnie is nowhere to be found; she seems to have left the place in the care of Mexican Bob (Demian Bichir). Three other travelers are already there when



ROTTENTOMATOES

Set six or eight or twelve years after the Civil War, a stagecoach hurtles through the wintry Wyoming landscape. The passengers, bounty hunter John Ruth and his fugitive Daisy Domergue, race towards the town of Red Rock where Ruth, known in these parts as "The Hangman," will bring Domergue to justice. Along the road, they encounter two strangers: Major Marquis Warren, a black former union soldier turned infamous bounty hunter, and Chris Mannix, a southern renegade who claims to be the town's new Sheriff. Losing their lead on the blizzard, Ruth, Domergue, Warren and Mannix seek refuge at Minnie's Haberdashery, a stagecoach stopover on a mountain pass. When they arrive at Minnie's, they are greeted not by the proprietor but by four unfamiliar faces. Bob, who's taking care of Minnie's while she's visiting her mother, is holed up with Oswaldo Mobray, the hangman of Red Rock, cow-puncher Joe Gage (Madsen), and Confederate General Sanford Smithers. As the storm overtakes the mountainside stopover, our eight travelers come to learn they may not make it to Red Rock after all.

we arrive: English chap Oswaldo Mobrey (Tim Roth), the very hangman Daisy is destined to meet; taciturn cowboy Joe Gage (Michael Madsen); and Gen. Sandy Smithers (Bruce Dern), an old Confederate coot who has come to Wyoming in search of his missing son.

Well, the war may be over, but the issues between North and South have not yet been sorted. Gen. Smithers and Sheriff Mannix have plenty to talk about, and neither wants anything to do with Maj. Warren—not just because of his race (though that's 80 percent of it), but because of certain anti-Confederate deeds he committed during the war. John Ruth doesn't care about any of that and just wants to keep tabs on his prisoner until the weather clears.

The rest of the men's attitudes and loyalties vary between the two extremes represented by Samuel L. Jackson's Marquis (pronounced "Mark-wes") Warren and Walton Goggins' Chris Mannix—and it re-

ally is these two who emerge as the main characters of the story, not Warren and John Ruth like you'd think. Warren and Mannix are opposites with a lot of parallels, soldiers turned lawmen(-ish) who have killed more men than they had to, war or no war, and who are convinced of their righteousness. Jackson and Goggins give boisterous, energetic performances, both keyed up in a way that's contrasted by Russell's more cool-headed (and delightful) turn as John Ruth. And don't overlook Daisy, chained to John Ruth yet some how lurking in the background, biding her time. Jennifer Jason Leigh is an electric mix of scary and crazy.

The closed-room scenario is reminiscent of Tarantino's first film, *Reservoir Dogs*, especially after things go awry and it becomes clear that somewhere between one and nine of these people are not who they say they are. There are also echoes of *Django Unchained*, of course—though unlike that film, this one

is actually about racism (at least in part), and doesn't just use the topic as the jumping-off point for a revenge fantasia. The lies that the characters tell—to themselves and to others—reflect America's ongoing effort to come to terms with (or to cover up) its history. I won't say who it is, but I was surprised when I realized which of the *Hateful Eight* is never revealed to have lied about anything.

Like most QT productions, however, the main thing *The Hateful Eight* is "about" is fun. It means to be a rowdy story, entertainingly told—a bit of pulp fiction, if you will. In this it is largely successful, with colorful characters, cutely phrased dialogue, outrageous sudden violence, flashbacks, narration, and a few perfectly executed surprises. And a murder mystery! And hey, didn't I see Channing Tatum's name in the opening credits? Where's he? The film's length is indulgent, but man, nobody does indulgent better than Tarantino.

Congress Moving to Aid Prisoners with "Second Chance" in Society

By JOELLE LANG
Capital New Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congress appears to be moving forward on a bill aimed at helping former prisoners get a second chance in society.

The legislation passed by a voice vote in the House Judiciary Committee on Jan. 12 and is expected to be voted on by the full House, though no date has been set. An identical bill in the Senate was introduced in July and is awaiting action by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Advocates are hopeful the Senate will follow the House's example.

"Considering the recent action by the Senate Judiciary Committee on other criminal justice bills, we're hopeful they'll support this bill, as did the House Judiciary Committee earlier this month," said Michael Clark, spokesman for the Council of State Governments Justice Center. "Speaker [Paul] Ryan's

latest comments about criminal justice reform being one of the top issues he'd like to see Congress act on this year also has us keeping our confidence high."

The House bill, written by Rep. Danny Davis, D-Ill., and Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee Chairman Jim Sensenbrenner, R-Wis. is known as the "Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2015." It reauthorizes and changes the distribution of grant funding to programs aiding ex-prisoners. The original law was enacted in 2008.

The House measure places a new emphasis on ex-prisoners who work with a mentor to help them stay out of prison and focuses funding on programs that deal with those with histories of mental illness or substance abuse. The bill also shifts funding to focus on research on prison education programs and expands funding to include non-profit organizations.

The legislation is one of seven bills introduced in the House Judiciary Committee as a part of its bipartisan "Criminal Justice Reform Initiative."

Supporters of the "second chance" bill include Reps. Donna Edwards, D-Fort Washington, Elijah Cummings, D-Baltimore, Chris Van Hollen, D-Kensington, and John Delaney, D-Potomac.

Van Hollen said the bill is an important step in making the justice system more fair by providing the funding to give ex-prisoners the chance to start fresh as they reenter society.

"Reforming our criminal justice system is a pressing national priority," Van Hollen said. "Part of that effort requires that skills training and career support are available to those who have served time so they are able to reenter their communities with the tools necessary to succeed."

Cummings has recently taken steps to support prisoners, such as hosting earlier this month a

documentary screening and discussion on the topic of reentry and introducing a bill in September aimed at helping ex-prisoners find employment.

"All too often, a criminal record in this country is like a life sentence," Cummings said in a statement. "Second Chance Act grants support the nonprofits and state and local governments doing crucial work on the ground helping formerly incarcerated individuals become productive, contributing members of their communities."

"Successful reentry efforts simply would not be possible without them, and we must do all we can to support their work," the congressman added.

States together spend more than \$52 billion annually on corrections, most of which is spent on state prisons. The spending is increasing at such a high rate it falls second only to Medicaid

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Women Roar: The Story of the Year at the Intersection of Sports and Politics



This past year saw no shortage of people who tried to leverage the sports world to boldly speak out on issues beyond the field of play. The football players at Missouri going on strike against racism; the remarkable activists in Boston—led in many neighborhoods by people of color and women—who kept out the rapacious Olympics; the continuing fight in advance of the 2016 Rio Olympics that's taking on both the International Olympic Committee and the Brazilian government; South Carolina football coach Steve Spurrier speaking out against the Confederate flag before and after the Dylann Roof murders at Mother Emanuel Church; the courageous statements—amid an ugly atmosphere—of Baltimore Oriole Adam Jones, manager Buck Showalter, and front-office chief John Angelos after the police killing of Freddie Gray and the property destruction outside of Camden Yards; tennis living legend Serena Williams returning to Indian Wells 14 years after being showered with racist invective by "fans"—a return she combined with raising funds for the Equal Justice Initiative; NBA Ref Bill Kennedy coming out of the closet as a responseto Rajon Rondo's homophobia; Atlanta Hawk Thabo Sefolosha's pursuit of justice after getting his leg broken by the NYPD; the odyssey of Olympic gold medalist Caitlyn Jenner; or even Steph Curry putting the name of slain Muslim student Deah Barakat on his shoes before the All-Star Game. I could name even more. We are clearly in a sports moment when social crisis and inflamed bigotry, conjoined with social media, has created a space for athletes to take their beliefs straight to the public. It's courageous, and it matters, puncturing the privilege that surrounds the lives of so many fans, like LeBron catching a Bay Area aristocrat in mid-heckle.

That being said, I will not remember the past 12 months primarily for the aforementioned athletic actions. For me, 2015 will be recalled as the Year of Women in sports: a time when female athletes muscled for center stage and masses of people—men and women—put aside their prejudices to join the party.

In June, this moment crystallized for me when my 7-year-old, sports-obsessed son asked me to name my top five must-see athletes. The five mentioned off the top of my head were Serena Williams, soccer star Lionel Messi, Steph Curry, mixed-martial artist Ronda Rousey, and pro wrestler Sasha Banks. It was only after speaking that I did the double take at the ratio. The following month, my entire family was in front of the television cheering on the US women's World Cup team (except for my daughter, who was pushing for Japan because ... she is really into Japan.) Of course, we were not alone. The World Cup finals had ratings that would have made any men's league—save the NFL—cry with envy, as well as a goal from Carli Lloyd that will be replayed forever.

We also had WNBA player Maya Moore continuing to go for GOAT status, and Elena Delle Donne showing that she may not be too far behind. We saw Sasha Banks and Bayley giving us the wrestling match of the year ... twice, and we continued to witness Breanna Stewart's UConn Huskies reign with unchallenged dominance. Women's sports also gave us the year's two most stunning and compelling upsets: Serena's gut-punch US Open semifinal loss to the unheralded Roberta Vinci, and Rousey going down after a kick in the head from Holly Holm. If you weren't talking about these contests, then you were not engaged with the sports world of 2015.

In many ways 2015 could not have ended with a moment that was more on the nose. Serena Williams was named *Sports Illustrated* Sports Person of the Year: a glaringly obvious choice after three grand slams at the age of 34. Yet a small sector of social media erupted with anger that the award—for Sports Person of the Year, remember—did not go to a horse, triple-crown winner American Pharoah. It was dead-enders showing their own irrelevance, while Serenallyterally took the throne.

Time will tell, but I believe that we will remember 2015 as a pivot point when women in sports took it to that next level and through their play offered the sharpest possible rebuke to what has at times seemed over the years like an anchored, immobile state of second-class citizenship. Let's see what 2016 and beyond will bring, but for the father of a daughter who often thinks sports is not for her and a son we're trying to raise in the 21st century, 2015 was a game changer. This was the Year of Women in sports, and over the next years I think we will see the reverberations of last 12 months well beyond the playing field.

Calendar of Events

February 11,—February 17, 2016

Teen Summit 2016:

No Excuse For Dating Abuse—The Dating Game

Date and Time: Thursday, February 11, 2016, 6:30–9:30 pm
Description: There will be an all-male panel talking to a female audience about dating violence. Topics include sexting and cyber violence along with a session on how gentlemen are supposed to treat young women. The evening will also feature a “Walk Above Abuse” Fashion Show and entertainment by teens who have written original pieces on the effects of dating violence.
Cost: Free
Ages: 12 & up
Location: Newton White Mansion
2708 Enterprise Road, Mitchellville MD
Contact: 301-249-7200; TTY 301-699-2544

Seniors: Black History in Motion

Date & Time: Friday, February 12, 2016, 10:30 am–12 noon
Description: In celebration of Black History Month, seniors will enjoy live performances at the Bowie Center for the Performing Arts. Admission is a donation of non-perishable food items for the local food pantry.
Cost: Free (donation of non-perishable goods are encouraged)
Ages: 60 & better
Location: Bowie Center for the Performing Arts
15200 Annapolis Road, Bowie, MD
Contact: 301-446-3400; TTY 301-699-2544

G.E.A.R.: Movie Star Night

Date and Time: Friday, February 12, 2016, 7–9 pm
Description: Tonight we are rolling out the red carpet for all the movie stars! Dress up to the nines and have your makeup, nails and hair done. Once that's done, you'll get the movie star treatment with a photography session.
Please pre-register and give your dress size. Please bring heels or dressy flats.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17
Location: Deerfield Run Elementary School Community Center
13000 Laurel-Bowie Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-552-1093; TTY 301-699-2544

Engineering the Dream!

Date & Time: Friday, February 12, 2016, 9 am–3 pm
Description: Have you ever dreamed about becoming an aerospace engineer, software engineer, audio engineer, or civil engineer? If so, don't miss out on this action-packed, interactive day full of games and hands-on projects!
Fee includes supplies and pizza for lunch.
Cost: Resident: \$25; Non-Resident: \$30
Ages: Ages 5-12
Location: Southern Technical/Recreation Complex
7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington, MD
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-699-2544

Family Night Dinner & a Movie

Date and Time: Friday, February 12, 2016, 6–9 pm
Description: Guests will enjoy a catered dinner and viewing of the movie *The Butler*. Based on a true story of Cecil Gaines, who served eight presidents during his tenure as a butler at the White House, the Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam, as well as other major events affecting his life, family and American Society. Rated PG-13 - Parental Guidance is a must!
Pre-registration is required.
Cost: \$10/person
Ages: 13 & up
Location: Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD
Contact: 301-583-2400; TTY 301-699-2544

Valentine Shrinky-Dink Workshop

Date and Time: Saturday, February 13, 2016, 2–4 pm
Description: The DIY arts and crafts icon from the 80's is back! And, nothing says “love” like a hand-made, pre-shrunk Valentine. Families are invited to create beautiful jewelry, key chains, and other Valentine's Day gifts for their loved ones.
Children will receive their first 2 sheets of blank Shrinky Dinks free, additional sheets will be available to purchase for 50 cents each.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Brentwood Arts Center
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Standing on the Shoulders of our Ancestors

Date & Time: Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 10:30-11:30 am
Description: The Nu World Art Ensemble shares the stories and rich cultural contributions of Africans and African Americans through song, dance, and theatre. In doing so, they convey terrible struggles and powerful triumphs throughout history.
Cost: \$5/person
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Harmony Hall Regional Arts Center
10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, MD
Contact: 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2544

Black History Month Programs at Prince George's County Memorial Library System Branches

Date and Time: Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 4:30 pm (Hillcrest Heights Branch)
Description: Montpelier Mansion educators present Black History Month programs that explore Maryland and Prince George's County history. These hands-on programs include scientific experiments, historical documents, the making of weather instruments and more.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: PGC Memorial Library System Branches
Check location
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Why Are Greens Opposed to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)?

Dear EarthTalk:

Why do many green groups oppose the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) governing trade in the Pacific?

—Jane Donahue,
Larchmont, NY

The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is an international agreement that seeks to unite the economic interests of 12 countries that border the Pacific Ocean by lowering trade tariffs and establishing an international trade court to settle disputes. TPP emerged as a West Coast equivalent to the proposed Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, designed to ease trade restrictions between the U.S. and Europe. But TPP has progressed much faster thanks to the willingness of Pacific nations to “play ball.”

International negotiators released a draft of the TPP agreement in October 2015 and are awaiting approvals from participating governments. However, despite the theoretical advantages of more fluid international trade, the current draft has several complications that could lead to a variety of problems for participating nations and others, meaning its implementation is far from a sure thing at this point.

Green leaders criticize the Obama administration and negotiators from other countries for keeping early talks on the formation of the TPP closed to

observers and media. Many individuals and public interest groups requested access to the discussions, fearing that the agreement would unfairly favor large corporations. However, those appeals were ignored and the drafted document revealed what many feel was a prioritization of corporate interests over health and environmental concerns. Without any enforceable guarantees for environmental protection, the TPP could actually significantly contribute to global warming through increased exportation of U.S. fossil fuel supplies.

Additionally, differences in national policies regulating chemical use, artificial fertilizers and seeds from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) have yielded an agreement that encourages minimal protection. The non-profit Public Citizen points out that existing U.S. regulation of pesticide and GMO labeling on packaging could be challenged in the international court as “trade barriers.” Another point of contention is the distinct advantage given to foreign corporations under the current TPP model. Overseas firms would be able to sue the U.S. government over new policies that disrupt the company's “expectations.”

Perhaps more troubling is what's not included in the document, which fails to mention how it will protect from overharvesting of limited natural resources. Green groups point out that, while the TPP accounts for



CREDIT: GLOBAL TRADE WATCH, FLICKR/CC

Activists in Leesburg, Virginia want Congress to just say no to the TPP given the potential social justice and environmental implications of the trade agreement.

nearly a third of global fish harvest, there are no provisions to protect against overfishing. The draft also barely mentions enforceable safeguards of endangered species products, such as elephant ivory.

Yet another issue critics say is woefully ignored is social justice. With free-trade opening up, even more American jobs would be sent overseas to reduce costs. Economists estimate that five million U.S. jobs could shift overseas under the TPP, resulting in serious pay cuts for American workers. Meanwhile, the richest 10 percent would profit at even higher rates, adding to an already drastic U.S. wealth inequality.

Clearly, the current draft of the TPP agreement needs a lot of work before Congress should even consider it. Those opposed

to the current version of the TPP can voice their dissatisfaction by signing onto the Stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership petition on MoveOn.org, or by urging your representatives in Congress to vote against it altogether.

CONTACTS: TPP Page, <https://ustr.gov/tpp>; Public Citizen, www.citizen.org; MoveOn.org's Stop the Trans-Pacific Partnership Petition, petitions.moveon.org/sign/stop-the-trans-pacific.

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Centers for Disease Control & Prevention Issue National Alert About Flu

Marylanders Are Urged to Get Flu Shot, to Take Steps to Minimize Virus' Spread

By PRESS OFFICER
DHMH

BALTIMORE, MD—The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have issued an alert about an increase in seasonal influenza activity across the nation. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is reminding residents to safeguard their health by getting a flu shot and by practicing steps to minimize the virus' spread.

Influenza is a contagious respiratory disease that can cause serious complications, hospitalization or even death. The virus that causes influenza spreads from person to person through coughing or sneezing, as well as through direct contact with infected people and contaminated surfaces or objects. Common symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches and fatigue, and usually begin one to four days after a person has been exposed to the virus.

The influenza vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and your family from becoming ill with the flu. Yearly vaccinations are important because the strains of influenza that circulate change over time. Influenza vaccine is recommended for everyone older than 6 months. The flu shot is widely available, and Maryland residents are urged to get protected now by contacting their health care provider, local health department or neighborhood pharmacy.

According to the CDC, here are steps you should take to help prevent catching the flu:

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.

If you believe you are ill with the flu:

- Contact your healthcare provider for management of flu symptoms or treatment of any complications.
- Get rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- Cover your mouth and nose when sneezing or coughing.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizers and wash your hands with hot water and soap often.
- Avoid crowded places like shopping malls or public transportation.
- Avoid unnecessary visits to hospitals or other settings where people with other conditions may get your flu and may be affected severely.
- Stay home from work or school whenever possible to avoid spreading the flu.

According to the CDC, Clinicians should encourage all persons with influenza-like illness who are at high risk for influenza complications to seek care promptly to determine if treatment with influenza antiviral medications is warranted. Treatment with an appropriate neuraminidase inhibitor antiviral drug (oral oseltamivir, inhaled zanamivir, or intravenous peramivir) is recommended as early as possible for any patient with confirmed or suspected influenza who

- A. is hospitalized;
- B. has severe, complicated, or progressive illness; or
- C. is at higher risk for influenza complications. This list includes:
 - children aged younger than 2 years;
 - adults aged 65 years and older;
 - persons with chronic pulmonary (including asthma), cardiovascular (except hypertension alone), renal, hepatic, hematological (including sickle cell disease), metabolic disorders (including diabetes mellitus), or neurologic and neurodevelopmental conditions (including disorders of the brain, spinal cord, peripheral nerve, and muscle such as cerebral palsy, epilepsy [seizure disorders], stroke, intellectual disability [mental retardation], moderate to severe developmental delay,

- muscular dystrophy, or spinal cord injury);
- persons with immunosuppression, including that caused by medications or by HIV infection;
- women who are pregnant or postpartum (within 2 weeks after delivery);
- persons aged younger than 19 years who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy;
- American Indians/Alaska Natives;
- persons who are morbidly obese (i.e., body-mass index is equal to or greater than 40); and
- residents of nursing homes and other chronic-care facilities.

The State has an Internet-based Maryland Resident Influenza Tracking Survey (MRITS). This tool is designed to enhance the State's influenza surveillance by monitoring influenza-like illnesses among residents who might not seek medical care. Please volunteer! Sign up at <http://flusurvey.dhmh.maryland.gov/> to receive online surveys where you can report any flu-like symptoms each week. For more information about the seriousness of seasonal influenza and the benefits of vaccination, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/> or <http://goo.gl/y4YpFX>, or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO. Stay up-to-date on influenza activity in Maryland by visiting <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/fluwatch> for weekly updates.

Maryland Department of Parks and Recreation is Searching for Centenarians

By PRESS OFFICER
MNCPPC

LANDOVER, MD—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County is looking for County residents who are ages 95 and older to invite them to a special Centenarian Celebration in May.

Special recognition will be given to Centenarians—residents who are 100 years old and older.

To sign up, fill out this form or call 301-206-3350. Entrants must sign up no later than February 19, 2016.

The Department of Parks and Recreation, which has won an unprecedented six National Gold Medal Awards for excel-

lence in the field of park and recreation management, provides comprehensive park and recreation programs, facilities and services which respond to changing needs within our communities. The Department strives to preserve, enhance and protect our open spaces to enrich the quality of life for present and future generations in a safe and secure environment.

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pgparcs.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.