

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Since 1932

Vol. 84, No. 45 November 10 — November 16, 2016 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents



PHOTO BY JAMES GATHANY, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION VIA AP

In this photo taken by James Gathany and provided by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the *Aedes albopictus* mosquito, better known as the Asian tiger mosquito, bites a human host. The Asian tiger mosquito is found in Maryland and can carry the Zika virus.

Maryland Focuses on Zika, Despite Lack of Cases

By ROBBIE GREENSPAN
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Mosquito season may be waning in Maryland, but Zika research here is in full force.

Although Maryland accounts for fewer than 3 percent of the Zika cases nationwide, there are at least five sites in Maryland researching the virus: The Johns Hopkins Hospital, U.S. Army

Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Silver Spring, and the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center in Bethesda.

"There is a lot of research going on in biomedical sciences located in the Baltimore-Washington corridor," said Dr. Matt Laurens, a pediatrician

and the director of international clinical trials for the University of Maryland School of Medicine. "It is a magnet for biomedical research."

Being a leader in medical research is a natural fit for Maryland, said Chris Garrett, a spokesman for the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

"(It) is characteristic of Maryland, given our proximity

to the nation's capital, as well our stature in public health, preparedness and response," Garrett said. "Maryland was one of the principal states leading the response to the Ebola virus in 2014 and 2015, as well."

The hospital-based Johns Hopkins Zika Center opened in Baltimore this summer to help

See ZIKA Page A5

Adelphi Woman Receives Children's National Health System Award

By PRESS OFFICER
Children's
National Health System

WASHINGTON, D.C.—When a child is admitted to the hospital as a Behavioral Health patient, it's occasionally appropriate that a more permanent treatment facility is necessary to provide the best level of care. When this situation arises, a Case Manager works with the patient's family and potential facilities to coordinate admission and transportation to the new fa-



PHOTO COURTESY CNHS

Jacki Carver-Pecku

See AWARD Page A7

Local PG County Man to Compete for the Title of America's Best Insulation Installer

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Parks & Recreation

DENVER, CO—Jorge Sanchez of American Building Systems of MD, LLC based in Upper Marlboro will compete in the 14th annual America's Best Installer competition (Nov. 10-12) at the Exdo Events Center in Denver. He will compete against more than 30 insulation installers from coast-to-coast to test his skills in a fast-paced competition for the \$10,000 grand prize.

Created in 2003 by building products manufacturer Johns Manville and Insulate America, the America's Best Installer competition emphasizes the impor-

ance of a quality insulation installation as an important way to increase energy efficiency and decrease energy waste in a home.

"America's Best Installer gives industry professionals the opportunity to show off their skills and learn from some of the country's best installers, while engaging in a friendly competition," said Danelle DeGroot of Johns Manville. "We're proud to recognize the skilled installers who continue to raise the bar in the quality of installations to ensure a more energy efficient and comfortable home."

See INSTALLER Page A3

Maryland-National Capital Park Police Win International Award: Honoring Community Policing Initiatives

By PRESS OFFICER
MNCPPC

RIVERDALE, MD—For the second time in less than 10 years, Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Prince George's County Division receives international acclaim for its community policing initiatives. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) award, sponsored by CISCO, recognizes community policing initiatives that prevent and decrease crime and terrorism through partnerships with the local community.

Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Prince George's County Division Chief Stanley Johnson says, "Thank you to all the hardworking and community oriented Park Police staff. Your commitment to the community policing philosophy is duly recognized and award worthy."

Award winners were chosen based on their performance in five categories. Additionally, award applicants were screened

based on their ability to demonstrate the effectiveness of their community policing initiatives.

IACP Committee Chairman Ronal Serpas says, "Recent events have demonstrated that trust between law enforcement and the community it serves is essential. The agencies we are honoring today have demonstrated how incorporating the community policing philosophy into their mission has built a stronger agency and awarded them with strong and lasting relationships with their communities."

"Cisco is proud to be a part of the IACP Community Policing Awards and all that it represents. The men and women and public safety organizations honored by this award are the embodiment of best in breed in law enforcement," said Bob Stanberry, Senior Law Enforcement Advisor for Cisco. "I am honored to support these organizations

See PARK POLICE Page A3

Prince George's County Selected as the Host For the 2016 Miss World Festival

By LORI C. VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation President and CEO Jim Coleman announced that the 2016 Miss World Festival will be held in Prince George's County. As the largest and the longest running international competition in existence, Miss World will bring more than 3,000 visitors from around the world to the region and its Grande Finale will be televised in over 180 countries. According to Miss World officials, the Festival will be seen by more than two billion viewers.

"This is a big win for Prince George's County. I am honored and elated to have had a small part in bringing this wonderful pageant to Prince George's County," said Coleman. "Being able to facilitate this partnership between festival officials, the Petersons at National Harbor and government without any taxpayer money in the mix is a 'Win/Win' for everyone. Not only is this the very first time that this festival has been held in the United States, it is also



PHOTO COURTESY LORI C. VALENTINE

Jim Coleman (Far Left) Served as a Judge for the 2016 Miss World America Competition

one of the biggest events that have ever been held in Prince George's County. This is a fantastic opportunity to bring the County's outstanding assets to the world and we are proud to be a part of it."

Over the years, the presence of a Miss World competition has shown to have brought in upwards of \$8 million to \$10 million—conservatively—to countries who have hosted the

competition in the past. As Mrs. Julia Morley, Chairman and CEO of Miss World Limited, and competition officials took on the task of locating a venue for the Miss World Festival this year, Prince George's County, Maryland was one of several cities they visited in the United States. However, after meeting with Prince George's County officials, specifically EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman, and seeing

the ambience of the Gaylord at National Harbor, the decision was made to hold the 2016 Miss World Grand Finale at the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor.

As the host nation and county, Prince George's County can expect to see a substantial increase in economic activity and tourism

See MISS WORLD Page A3

INSIDE

31,000 Maryland Residents Buying May Be Eligible for Affordable Care Act Premium Tax Credits

Counting both Marketplace and off-Marketplace consumers, more than 70 percent of all QHP-eligible individuals currently insured through the individual market have incomes that could qualify them for tax credits.

Community, Page A3

Ohio Bus Tour Encourages Voters of Color to Head to the Polls

With confusing new statutes on the books for the first time in a Presidential election, the National Urban League and other civil rights groups took to the road to educate and encourage voters, starting with the state of Ohio

Commentary, Page A4

USDA Invests Over \$300 Million to Help Hundreds of Small Businesses Improve Energy Efficiency, Adopt Renewable Energy Systems

USDA has provided more than \$380 million in grants and almost \$688 million in loan guarantees to agricultural producers and rural small business owners since the start of the Obama Administration

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: *The Girl on the Train*

With the aid of exhausting flashbacks to six, four, and two months ago, the film reveals more about Megan's past and her relationship with Scott. Meanwhile, pathetically trying to clear her own name, Rachel contacts Scott to tell him what she witnessed the last time she saw Megan from the train.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

Is it true that polyester fleece clothing is a huge contributor to the problem of plastic in our oceans?

—Mickey Walton,
Seattle, WA

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Once-local Wimpy Kid author is 2nd highest-paid in the world

Jeff Kinney, a Bishop McNamara High School graduate and author of the popular Diary of a Wimpy Kid series, was back at his old school, Potomac Landing Elementary in Fort Washington, last week for a reading and the signing of his new book, *Double Down*, the 11th in the series.

The books are a global publishing phenomenon that, according to *The Washington Post*, has sold 180 million copies in 52 languages. Kinney is now the second highest-paid author in the world, in between James Patterson and J.K. Rowling.

Kinney now lives with his wife and two sons in Plainville, a small Massachusetts town near Rhode Island, where he recently opened a bookstore.

1982 murder case of former Camp Springs man reopened

Thomas Carbine, a graduate of Crossland who grew up on Darel Street in Auth Village, spent a few years of his life traveling up and down the west coast working fishing boats. By the 1980s he was a fisherman by trade in Alaska.

On July 15, 1982, he had just gotten off the boat, flew into Kodiak, dropped off his luggage and headed to the Beachcomber where he talked with people at the bar and bought rounds of drinks. The bartender said Carbine had lots of cash on him. He left the bar at 3:30 in the morning and ten minutes later was found dead between two parked cars in the parking lot with no money and no wallet.

The investigation went nowhere and eventually turned cold. However, in recent years Investigator Jim Stogsdill of the Alaska State Troopers' Cold Case Unit, reopened the case. He believes there is a chance this more than 30-year-old cold case could thaw.

People

Samir Patel, Deputy Chief of the Prince George's Police Department, dropped by the Skyline Citizens' Board Meet-

ing Nov. 2 to introduce the new Command Staff at Police District IV: Major Brian Reilly, Commander, and Capt. Kevin Hughes, Deputy Commander, effective Nov. 1.

Michael Bozeman, Clayton Sam Redden and Veronica Harris are among the 2016 inductees in the Bishop McNamara High School Hall of Fame. The 1986 and 1988 men's championship golf teams were also honored at the Sept. 30 ceremony.

Coming up

Tues., Nov. 15: Morningside Town Meeting, 7 p.m. at the Town Hall

Wed., Nov. 16: Skyline Citizens Meeting, 7 p.m. at the Morningside Fire House

Sat., Dec. 3: E-cycling (electronics recycling) at Surrattsville High School, 6101 Garden Drive in Clinton, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free.

Changing landscape, etc.

The County Dept. of Public Works & Transportation conducted its Annual Snow & Ice Dry Run exercise on Oct. 28. DPW&T Director Darrell Mobley announced, "This winter weather season, we will continue to work to ensure that our roadways are cleared and safe for the motorists in Prince George's County."

The new trend-setting Laurel Library is opening this month, twice the size of the last. And now, I understand, a new Surrattsville Library will be opening in a couple of years. The current library will close next spring to allow for the construction. That's my favorite library these days and I'll miss it, but I look forward to a trend-setting library of our own.

The African American Museum has announced that later this month they'll start allowing walk-up visitors on weekdays.

Morningside memories: November 1956

The Women's Civic Group met at the Town Hall (corner of Forest & Woodland Roads) on Nov. 5 to induct two new members, Mrs. Mae Journey and Mrs. Mildred Travis.

And on Nov. 19, the Ladies Auxiliary of VFW Post 9619 met to induct Mrs. Helen Shaw.

May they rest in peace

Daniel Joseph Quagliarello, 83, a chemical engineer with Naval Air Systems Command (NASC), died at his longtime home in Oxon Hill on Sept. 26. A native of Philadelphia, he graduated from Drexel University, was a Navy officer and chemical engineer, retiring from NASC with 32 years service in 1988. He then was an insurance agent with the Knights of Columbus. He was active with the Sons of Italy and K of C Council 3877. He's survived by his wife of 56 years Frances Anne; children, Danelle Chapman, Daniel, Anthony, Maria Clark, David, Michelle Clewley and Mark; sister Loretta Braccili; and nine grandchildren. Services were at St. Ignatius Church with burial at Resurrection Cemetery.

Louise Tapager-Kirk, 93, who retired in 1987 as Technical Writer at the Census Bureau, died Sept. 12 at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home. A native of Atlanta, she served as a WAVE in 1943, graduated from Mexico City College and earned a master's at the Latin American Institute in New York City. She moved to Prince George's in 1952 and was a charter member of Bethany Lutheran Church in Suitland. She volunteered with the Girl Scouts, Food Pantry, Habitat for Humanity and Meals on wheels. She was married to James R. D. Tapager who died in 1976, and to Russell D. Kirk who died in 2010. Survivors include three children, two stepchildren, 14 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren, and a brother. Burial will be at Arlington.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Cindy Lewis, Nov. 12; Robin Brown, Nov. 13; Tyrell Boxley, Nov. 14; Ty Poe, Bob Davis and Carolyn Holland Bennett, Nov. 15; Kendra MacLean and Katie Frostbutter, Nov. 18.

A special greeting to VFW Post 9619 Auxiliary, which was chartered Nov. 13, 1938.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

LINE DANCING

Do you know how to do the Southern Ladies, Wobble or do the Isn't to Proud? If not, stop by and sign up to learn the latest line dances with Ms. Jonnetta at Baden Community Center from 7:00 PM-8:00 PM. Ages 13 and up, \$40 R/\$52 NR and drop in \$7/\$10.

Baden Community Center is located at 13601 Baden-Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Telephone number is 301-888-1500 and TTY 301-579-2535.

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS 30th ANNIVERSARY

Join us as we celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Winter Festival of Lights in Prince George's County Friday, November 25, 2016 through Sunday, January 1, 2017 from 5:00 PM-9:30 PM nightly. This spectacular holiday drive-through event features more than one million twinkling lights, wonderful themed displays, and one of the tallest tree displays in the state. Make a difference this sea-

son and bring canned goods for donation to local food banks.

New fees for 2016 are \$10/car or mini-van, \$15 multi-visit, transferable ticket booklet for cars and Vans (3 visits). \$20/min-bus (seats 13 to 24) or limo, \$30/bus (seat 25 or more) no reservations required. Free on December 5 for Community Service Providers Appreciation Night. Free on December 25. Sorry, cash only checks and credit cards not accepted.

Visit the website at http://www.pgparke.com?Festival_of_Lights.htm or call 301-699-2456; TTY 301-699-2544 for information.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Yoga is coming to Clinton United Methodist Church, Thursday, November 10, 2016 from 6:30 PM-7:15 PM. This will be our first class. Patrice Perkins is the instructor.

Please mark your calendars because Sunday, November 20, is Clinton United Methodist Women's Day at their 8:00 AM

and 10:30 AM Services. Colors this year are purple and pearl.

Church address is 10700 Brandywine Road, Clinton, Maryland 20735. Office: 301-868-1281 or 301-868-2464. E-mail: cumcmd@verizon.net. Pastor is Rev. Dorothea J. Belt Stroman.

DARNALL'S CHANCE HOUSE MUSEUM

Visitors will have the opportunity to come and view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses at the 17th Annual Gingerbread House Contest and Show and vote in the Viewer's Choice Award Competition. Please contact the museum for further details if you are interested. The deadline to enter the contest is November 12, 2016. Groups are welcome by appointment. Fee is \$1 per person (cash only) and free for children 4 and under.

Darnall's Chance House Museum is located at 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone number is 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544.

Neighborhoods

BGE Recognized for Volunteerism and Corporate Citizenship

BALTIMORE, MD—Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) was recognized for its commitment to central Maryland communities at the 33rd Annual Governor's Service Awards held in Annapolis yesterday. The Maryland Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism presented BGE with a citation for volunteerism and philanthropy as the company marks 200 years of service to the region.

"We are extremely grateful to be recognized by Governor Hogan, Lieutenant Governor Rutherford and the Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism for the dedication of our company and its employees to community engagement and philanthropy," said Alexander G. Núñez, BGE's senior vice president of regulatory and external affairs. "Giving back to the community is part of BGE's culture and we are proud that this commitment has extended throughout our 200-year history."

In 2016, BGE is contributing nearly \$5 million to non-profit organizations throughout its service area. Employees also volunteer more than 22,000 hours annually with nearly 200 community organizations. BGE's parent company Exelon also maintains a longstanding tradition to community service. Last year employees across the company recorded nearly 129,000 hours of volunteer service—an Exelon record.

The Governor's Commission on Service and Volunteerism was created and appointed by the Governor in 1994 and serves as a body of ambassadors for service and volunteerism in local communities. Governor Hogan appointed Anita Maddox Jackson, chief of staff to BGE CEO Calvin G. Butler Jr. to the Commission in January of this year.

Through the use of shareholder dollars, BGE supports programs that deliver measurable and sustainable impact in areas of education, environment, community development and arts and culture. To learn more about BGE's community investments, visit bge.com

More Than 2,000 Students Receive Boost Scholarships for 2016-17

New Program Provides Financial Aid to Attend Nonpublic Schools

BALTIMORE, MD—The new Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) Program provided scholarships this fall to more than 2,000 low-income Maryland students to attend non-public or faith-based schools.

The BOOST legislation was created in the 2016 legislative session with the support of Senate President Mike Miller and House Speaker Michael Busch, and was signed into law by Governor Larry Hogan. The new program provides scholarships for low-income students eligible for the free or reduced price lunch program.

"Every Maryland child should have access to a world-class education, regardless of the neighborhood they grow up in," said Governor Hogan. "With innovative programs like this, Maryland is giving students the opportunity for a better education and a brighter future."

As of September 2016, a total of \$4.3 million in scholarships had been awarded to 2,039 students. Scholarships ranged from \$1,000 to \$4,400 each, with the highest award amount going to students who qualified for the Free Meal Program and attended a public school last year. Altogether, nearly \$5 million will be awarded for the 2016-17 school year.

The BOOST program was available for students in kindergarten through 12th grade who already attend or had applied to attend one of the participating schools. The program was announced this summer, with an application deadline of July 11.

MSDE compiled a list of applicants, ranking eligible students by family income expressed as a percent of the most recent federal poverty levels. The BOOST Advisory Board made final decisions regarding how the scholarship funds were allocated among eligible applicants.

BGE Reminds Customers of Natural Gas Safety This Heating Season

BALTIMORE, MD—Despite the unseasonably warm temperatures this month, the cold weather is quickly approaching. Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) would like to remind customers to familiarize themselves with the natural gas safety tips provided in BGE's natural gas safety brochure which is being distributed to homes and businesses in and around BGE's natural gas area. Customers should also have their heating systems checked and inspected by a qualified technician to ensure safe and efficient operation for the heating season.

"BGE is dedicated to maintaining a safe and reliable natural gas system. Just as BGE prepares for the heating season, we urge customers who utilize natural gas to heat their homes and businesses to prepare as well," said Christie McMullen, vice president gas distribution for BGE. "BGE's natural gas safety brochure educates our customers on living and working safely around natural gas, pipelines and facilities."

BGE's natural gas safety brochure will be mailed to all customers. The brochure provides information in English and Spanish, detailing how to recognize and report natural gas leaks. Additionally, a scratch-and-sniff odor indicator is included that reminds customers about "mercaptan," a safety additive that BGE and other utilities put in natural gas to give it a distinctive rotten egg odor that makes gas easier to detect. Captain Mercaptan, BGE's natural gas safety hero who provides simple tips to children and their families about natural gas safety, derives his name from the safety additive.

If you detect a gas leak:

- Leave the building or area immediately and go to a safe place where you can call BGE, toll free, 24 hours a day at 1.800.685.0123.
- Extinguish all open flames. Do not use matches or lighters and do not attempt to light an appliance.
- Do not use any phones, electric switches, thermostats or appliance controls. All of these devices, including battery

operated equipment, can cause sparks, and ignite natural gas.

- Do not start or turn off vehicles or motorized equipment. Abandon any motorized equipment you may be operating.

- Do not attempt to find the source of the leak or to repair a leak.

- When you call, BGE will respond promptly to survey the area, perform safety measures, and repair BGE's equipment. There is no charge to investigate a gas leak.

- For more information on natural gas safety and to view an electronic version of BGE's natural gas safety brochure, visit bge.com/naturalgassafety.

WSSC is First in Country to Go Underground With Zinc Pipes Wrapped in Latest Technology

LAUREL, MD—(October 27, 2016)—Hindsight is 20/20, especially when it comes to infrastructure investment. Water mains, roads, bridges—many need replacing.

While the investment can't be made overnight, WSSC is making an innovative change to water main replacement, greatly benefitting generations to come.

Zinc-coated ductile iron pipe and V-Bio® Enhanced Polyethylene Encasement are now standard materials.

Why should you care? Because traditional ductile iron pipe lasts about 50-75 years. When it breaks or wears out, WSSC digs up your street to replace a section—sometimes even a mile or two—of old water main. That costs money and it's an inconvenience.

By switching to zinc-coated, V-Bio® encased ductile iron pipe, WSSC expects to put that pipe in the ground and not come back to replace it for 100 years or more!

The protective zinc coating on the ductile iron pipe provides active corrosion control. The V-Bio® encasement is an additional level of active protection that works in concert with the zinc coating. It targets anaerobic bacteria activity and inhibits the formation of corrosion cells under the wrap.

"Our engineers are always researching, studying and collaborating to come up with sustainable, smart and financially responsible solutions for our customers," said Carla A. Reid, WSSC General Manager/CEO. "The switch to zinc-coated ductile iron pipe means the replacement cost for future generations will be greatly reduced."

"Zinc-coatings have been successfully used in Europe for decades and now WSSC is the first water utility in the country to make zinc-coated pipe with V-Bio® film standard materials," said Allen H. Cox, P.E. Ductile Iron Pipe Research Association Regional Director. "This combination highlights the Commission's commitment to employing innovative solutions to benefit its customers."

KC Water in Kansas City, Missouri is believed to be the first water utility in the United States to use zinc-coated ductile iron as a standard material for water main replacement. WSSC is believed to be the first to use the combination of zinc-coated ductile iron pipe and V-Bio® Enhanced Polyethylene Encasement.

ADVERTISE! in The Prince George's Post

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

How a Little Work Could Lead to Over \$1,000 in Savings

How long would it take you to earn an extra \$1,000? Contrary to what spam and internet ads tell us, after taking taxes and deductions into account, it's not an easy task. But you might be able to save over a thousand dollars with a little work. The key is to decrease or eliminate unnecessary recurring expenses.

You can use the savings to build up an emergency fund or invest them for important long-term goals, such as travel or retirement. Additionally, a savings safety cushion can help keep an unexpected setback from ballooning into a financial crisis, such as a broken down car or the loss of a job leading to debt. First, identify savings opportunities. You may want to start by connecting your bank and credit card accounts to budgeting software, or uploading previous months' statements and categorize purchases. You'll get a quick snapshot of your finances, which can help you identify savings opportunities and get a sense of how much money is on the line.

Cancel services and regularly negotiate rates—save over \$100 a month. "Cord cutting" is a popular and simple way to save money. Rather than pay for cable or satellite TV, you might choose to cancel your service and opt for lower-cost entertainment options.

If you don't want to eliminate services entirely, you could try to negotiate rates with your cable or internet providers. A successful call could lower your bill by \$20 a month or more, saving you a couple hundred dollars a year. A few tips: ask for the cancellation department and request the business match a competitor's lower price or give you the current promotional rate. Don't be afraid to try again if you're not successful—it can take several attempts to connect with a representative who will work with you.

Avoid bank fees—save over \$10 a month. Occasionally paying to withdraw money from an ATM or paying fees for a low-balance checking account might not seem like a big deal, but the money adds up. Two ATM fees and a checking-account fee could cost you over \$10.

Some accounts waive fees as long as you maintain a minimum balance, and there often isn't an ATM fee for withdrawing money from an in-network ATM or getting cash back when making a purchase. There are also checking accounts that refund ATM fees at the end of each month. There can be advantages and disadvantages to any account, read the terms of your checking and saving account agreements to understand when, and why, you may need to pay a fee.

Shop for insurance discounts—you might be able to save over 20 percent on your premiums each month. Use online comparison tools to quickly and easily get quotes on auto, renters, homeowners and other types of insurance. Compare the rates, coverage and insurance companies to see if switching makes sense for you.

Ask your agent about potential savings if you decide to stick with your current insurer. You might be eligible for discounts you aren't receiving because the information on file doesn't reflect your current situation. If not, there are usually discounts for simple purchases, such as a fire extinguisher for your home or an anti-theft device for your car.

Buy products that more than pay for themselves—save hundreds each year. Sometimes you need to spend money to save money. Buying a coffee maker for your home is the cliché example, but that doesn't mean it's without merit. Purchasing a water pitcher with a filter rather than bottled water can also lead to immediate savings.

Other purchases are long-term investments. It might take months to break even after buying LED bulbs or upgrading your appliances to energy-efficient models, but after that you could save money on your utility bill each month.

Bottom line: Start your savings effort as soon as possible and you can build your emergency fund, a safety net that can help you avoid stressing about potential financial setbacks. Lowering your monthly cable bill will lead to almost instant savings, while making an investment in energy-efficient appliances will pay off after months or years. Add it all up and in the end you could find that just a bit of effort leads to over \$1,000 in annual savings. It's a great start.

Park Police from A1

and am in awe of their determination to make our communities and citizens safer."

The Maryland-National Capital Park Police are tasked with protecting approximately 27,000 acres of park property in Prince George's County, as well as those who visit and staff M-NCPPC sites. The Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Prince George's County Division consists of 117 authorized



PHOTO COURTESY NATHANIEL SILLIN

sworn personnel, 29 civilian employees and approximately 40 volunteers.

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pgparcs.com and stay connected on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. 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.

31,000 Maryland Residents Buying Off-Marketplace Health Coverage May Be Eligible for Affordable Care Act Premium Tax Credits

HHS Encourages Maryland Consumers to Evaluate Marketplace Options During Upcoming Open Enrollment

By PRESS OFFICER
HHS Office of Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Since the Affordable Care Act became law, millions of Americans gained coverage or found more affordable options thanks to premium tax credits available through the Health Insurance Marketplace. Today, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released data showing that 31,000 Maryland residents who currently purchase off-Marketplace individual market coverage may qualify for tax credits if they shop for 2017 coverage through the Marketplace. Nationally, the report finds that 2.5 million Americans who currently purchase off-Marketplace individual market coverage may qualify for tax credits.

"More than 9 million Americans already receive financial assistance through the Health Insurance Marketplace to help keep coverage affordable, but today's data show millions more Americans could benefit," said Secretary Sylvia M. Burwell. "We encourage everyone to check out their options on HealthCare.gov or their state Marketplace and see if they qualify for financial assistance. Marketplace consumers who qualify

for financial assistance usually have the option to buy coverage with a premium of less than \$75 per month."

Today's analysis estimates that about 6.9 million individuals currently purchase health insurance in the off-Marketplace individual market. Of those, about 1.9 million either have incomes that would qualify them for Medicaid or place them in the Medicaid coverage gap or are ineligible to purchase Marketplace coverage due to immigration status, while the remainder could enroll in Marketplace qualified health plans (QHPs).

Counting both Marketplace and off-Marketplace consumers, more than 70 percent of all QHP-eligible individuals currently insured through the individual market have incomes that could qualify them for tax credits. If the Marketplace-eligible uninsured are included as well, today's analysis indicates that almost 80 percent of all Americans eligible for Marketplace coverage could qualify for tax credits based on their income.

Many consumers remain unaware of the financial assistance available to them through the Marketplace. For example, a recent Commonwealth Fund survey found that only 52 percent of uninsured adults were aware

that financial assistance is available through the Marketplaces.

Tax credits available through the Marketplace are designed to both improve affordability and protect consumers from the impact of rate increases. Consumers may be eligible if their incomes are between 100 and 400 percent of the federal poverty level (about \$100,000 for a family of four). If all premiums in an area go up, the large majority of Marketplace consumers will not have to pay more because tax credits will increase in parallel. A recent HHS analysis found that, in a hypothetical scenario where all 2017 rates increased by 25 percent, 73 percent of current Marketplace consumers would be able to purchase coverage for less than \$75 per month thanks to tax credits.

During the upcoming Open Enrollment, HHS will be placing new emphasis on making sure people currently buying individual market coverage off-Marketplace know their options. For example:

- For the first time, our decisions about where to target our outreach efforts—from regional TV and radio to search and digital marketing—will be based in part on where we can reach these consumers, supplementing our

continued use of data to target the remaining uninsured.

- We are strengthening our relationships with agents and brokers. Agents and brokers are a critical channel for reaching off-Marketplace consumers, who often purchase coverage with the help of an agent or broker. Changes this year, such as offering agents and brokers new Marketplace training tools and faster registration, will make it easier for agents and brokers to enroll people in Marketplace plans. Improvements to agent and broker education and resources will ensure that they and their customers know all their options.

- We are working with issuers to provide consumers with more and better information about the Marketplace. This includes updating standard notices to make them shorter, simpler, and more user friendly.

- We are making it easier for issuers to facilitate transitions from a parents' plan into the Marketplace. Specifically, recent guidance from the Department of Labor makes clear that the sponsors of employer plans can—and are encouraged to—provide additional information that will help young adults understand their options and enroll in Marketplace coverage as appropriate.

Installer from A1

During the competition, each competitor will install various types of JM formaldehyde-free insulation batts into a mock home structure complete with construction obstacles, such as electrical outlets, pipes and a vaulted ceiling. Industry-expert judges will evaluate the individual performances based upon real job site criteria, including quality of workmanship and installation, speed, and material use.

In addition to the grand-prize Best Installer winner, the competition also will recognize the

second-place winner with a \$5,000 cash prize, the third-place winner with a \$3,500 cash prize and the fourth-place winner with a \$2,500 cash prize. America's Best Installer and the runners-up will be announced during an awards ceremony at Exdo on Nov. 12.

About Johns Manville

Johns Manville, a Berkshire Hathaway company (NYSE: BRK.A, BRK.B), is a leading manufacturer and marketer of premium-quality products for building insulation, mechanical insulation, commercial roofing,

and roof insulation, as well as fibers and nonwovens for commercial, industrial and residential applications. JM serves markets that include aerospace, automotive and transportation, air handling, appliance, HVAC, pipe and equipment, filtration, waterproofing, building, flooring, interiors and wind energy. In business since 1858, the Denver-based company has annual sales of approximately \$2.6 billion and holds leadership positions in many of the key markets that it serves. JM employs approximately 7,000 people and operates 44 manufacturing facil-

ities in North America, Europe and China. Additional information can be found at www.jm.com.

About Insulate America

Insulate America is the nation's largest independent insulation contractor. With 200 locations serving 46 states, Insulate America is committed to the highest quality workmanship and service. Training, education, sharing ideas, rigorous certifications and life-long learning separate Insulate America as professionals in the industry. Learn more at www.insulateamerica.com.

Miss World from A1

as a result of the contestants from 140 countries descending on the Washington metropolitan area in late November to begin their journey to become Miss World. During the week of December 11th, contestants will arrive at the Gaylord Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland for the final week of the Miss World Festival, culminating in the crowning of Miss World. Conservatively, the County could realize at least \$5 million to \$8 million increase in tourism dollars

with the contestants, crew and international visitors attending the activities leading up to the Grand Finale which will be broadcast live on December 18th.

"The Miss World Organization is excited about bringing the 66th edition of the Miss World Festival to the Washington, D.C. region. For the first time in history, approximately 140 countries will start their journey to becoming Miss World by arrive in Washington, D.C. to and then traveling down the Potomac River to National Harbor for the final week of the festival," said

Veronica Jeon, spokesperson for the 2016 Miss World Festival. "Mrs. Morley introduced 'Beauty with a Purpose' in 1972, and it is the true beauty of Miss World. Each country will bring their own 'Beauty With A Purpose' project to share with the world. We appreciate the efforts of the Prince George's County Economic Development Team in bring the festival to fruition in Prince George's County and we look forward to sharing the work being done by these phenomenal women with Prince George's County and the world."

The Miss World competition premiered in 1951 and has evolved over the years to become synonymous with charitable humanitarian efforts around the world. Its 'Beauty with a Purpose' philosophy was incorporated in 1972 to empower women across the globe who serve as role models for respective communities and have raised over a billion dollars for charities worldwide.

For more information on Festival events and programming, contact Veronica Jeon at vjeon@vagencyinc.com.

Bowie State's Hall and Tamba Receive CIAA Weekly Football Honors

By PRESS OFFICER
Bowie State University

CHARLOTTE, NC—The Bowie State duo of junior Victor Tamba (District Heights, Md.) and sophomore Amir Hall (Bowie, Md.) earned CIAA weekly honors for week #9 as selected by the conference's head coaches and Sports Information Directors on Monday (10/31) afternoon. Tamba was tabbed Offensive Lineman of the Week for the second time this season while Hall was bestowed Quarterback of the Week honors

for the fourth time following Bowie State's 41-23 road win at Lincoln (Pa.) University.

Tamba played an outstanding game from his right tackle position, helping the Bulldogs amass 641 yards of total offense. The 641 yards is second best all-time for the Bowie State program. Hall completed 21-of-34 passes (no interceptions) for a game-high 294 yards and two touchdowns. Hall was also Bowie State's second leading rusher versus Lincoln (Pa.) with 87 yards and two scores.

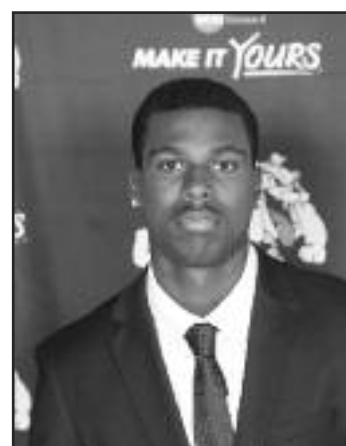


PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE
Amir Hall



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE
Victor Tamba

COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin

United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin: With Passage of CR, Federal Government Will Not Shut Down for Now, But Long-Term Certainty Still Elusive

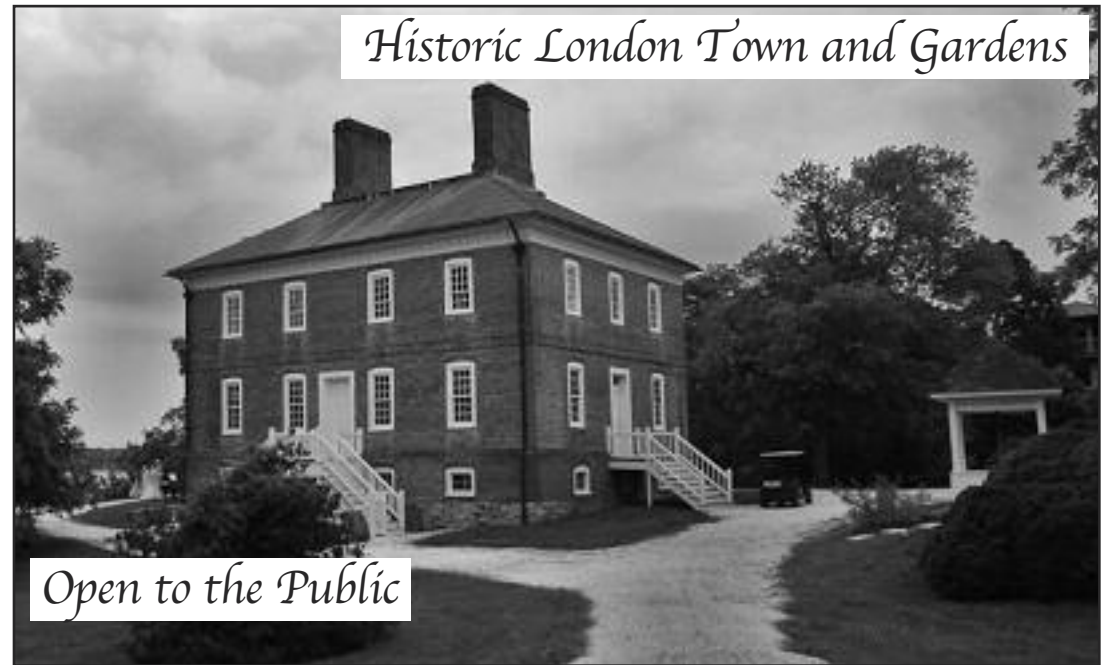
WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.), a member of the Senate Finance Committee, released the following statement after the Senate approved a Continuing Resolution that funds the federal government through December 9, 2016.

“Continuing Resolutions should not be the norm for Congress, but they have become just that. We agreed to a two-year budget deal last year and this year, the Senate Appropriations Committee reported 10 of its 12 bills by a vote of 30-0 and another by a vote of 29-1. Yet Republicans wanted to break the deal and their desire to put partisanship before the needs of the American people pushed us to the fiscal edge once again, adding uncertainty to our economy by threatening another government shutdown. Our dedicated federal workers deserve better. The American people deserve better.

“The good news coming from this latest Continuing Resolution is that the government will not shut down and we will provide long-overdue funding for the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, researchers and public health officials who are essential in combating the spread of the Zika virus. Recent data shows in the U.S. and its territories more than

23,000 Americans have been infected, and more than 2,000 pregnant American women show some sign of infection. Women’s health care and fighting Zika have been intertwined since the start of this crisis and it was unconscionable that some considered restricting funding for women’s health care at this important time.

“Key to finalizing this Continuing Resolution was a pledge by the Majority Leader that we will advance legislation to help the people of Flint, Baltimore and other communities around the country who are coping with crumbling, lead-polluted water infrastructure and the health issues that come with it. Americans have a right to expect that water coming from their taps is safe to drink and that Congress will do everything within its power to ensure that happens. I was proud to author key provisions in the Water Resources Development Act that recommit the federal government to a critical role in water infrastructure investment, lead remediation, and the strong drinking water protections provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues as our bill, which passed with an overwhelmingly bipartisan 95-3 margin, is reconciled with the less-robust House version.”



Historic London Town and Gardens

Open to the Public

HISTORIC LONDON TOWN AND GARDENS

23-acre museum and park features history, archaeology, and horticulture. Explore the Historic Area, which includes the circa 1760 William Brown House, a National Historic Landmark, reconstructed colonial buildings, and an ongoing archaeological investigation in search of the “lost town” of London. Wander the eight-acre Woodland Garden of native plants and exotic species arranged along a one-mile trail before enjoying the seasonal Ornamental Gardens overlooking the South River. Our modern Visitor Center and Pavilion support weddings, business meetings, family events, as well as school and group tours. Museum hours are every Wednesday through Saturday, from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm, and Sunday hours are 12:00 pm to 4:30 pm. Admission is free to members, \$10.00 for adults, \$9.00 for seniors and \$5.00 for children ages 7 to 17. There is no charge to explore the gardens.

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Announces Final Passage of FY17 Spending Bill Keeps Promises Made to America’s Veterans and Military

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced Senate passage of the final fiscal year (FY) 2017 Military Construction and Veterans Affairs (VA), and Related Agencies funding bill. This legislation builds on reforms in VA funding and benefits claims, and invests in healthcare, benefits and compensation. Senator Mikulski will continue to fight for the resources to make sure promises made to veterans are promises kept.

The final FY 2017 Military Construction and VA, Related Agencies spending bill reflects the priorities of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives’ Appropriations Committees. It is accompanying the Continuing Appropriations Act of 2017, a bill to keep the federal government open through December 9, 2016. This package of legislation has been passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and signed into law by President Obama.

“I believe the support we provide our military in the field must be matched by support for our veterans at home,” Senator Mikulski said. “Our brave men and women who fought for our freedom shouldn’t have to fight the red tape of bureaucracy for healthcare when they return home. That’s why I am working hard every day in the Senate to meet the needs of our veterans and military families by ensuring the federal government upholds its commitment to them. Promises made must be promises kept.”

Advance Appropriations for Veterans Benefits

This year’s budget provides full advanced funding for VA mandatory benefit programs totaling \$66.4 billion. Senator Mikulski ensured the bill includes advanced funding for veterans’ pensions, compensation for service-related injuries and education benefits. This change in law, which she initiated in the

Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015 (Public Law 113-235), ensured that beginning in FY16, veterans and military families have certainty in the benefits they’ve earned and deserve, regardless of shutdowns or gridlock in Congress.

Advance funding provides certainty for veterans benefits including compensation for illnesses and injuries while serving in the military such as combat wounds, hearing loss and PTSD. It also provides funding for pensions for those who have been permanently disabled while serving in the military, education benefits, including the G.I. Bill, ensuring military veterans get assistance with college education, housing, books and board while in school, and spousal support for deceased veterans.

Ending Benefits Claims Backlog

The funding in this bill continues the efforts started in FY 2014 by Senator Mikulski to re-

duce the backlog of pending disability claims and begins to shift the VA focus to reducing the large inventory of appeals. In March 2013, the disability claims backlog (claims pending longer than 125 days) stood at over 611,000 claims. As of September 17, 2016, the backlog stood at 77,041.

This bill will continue the VA’s efforts to break the backlog as well as focus on the soaring number of appeals. Specifically, funding is provided to the Veterans Benefits Administration to hire an additional 300 new employees focused on non-rating and appellate work, as much of the appeals work is done at the regional office level well before it gets to the Board of Veterans Appeals. In addition, the bill also includes \$156.1 million for the Board of Veterans Appeals, an increase of \$46 million over current funding, to hire more than 240 new employees at the Board

See **Spending Bill**, Page A6

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Ohio Bus Tour Encourages Voters of Color to Head to the Polls

“If I hear anybody saying their vote does not matter, that it doesn’t matter who we elect—read up on your history. It matters. We’ve got to get people to vote. I will consider it a personal insult—an insult to my legacy—if this community lets down its guard and fails to activate itself in this election. You want to give me a good sendoff? Go vote.”

—President Barack Obama

New voter I.D. requirements. Early voting cutbacks. Limitations on absentee voting.

When overall Black voting rates reached parity with white rates in 2012, many state lawmakers wasted no time passing new discriminatory voter suppression restrictions aimed at driving down Black voter turnout. The Supreme Court’s decision in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act, opened the door for Black voter suppression.

With confusing new statutes on the books for the first time in a Presidential election, the National Urban League and other civil rights groups took to the road to educate and encourage voters, starting with the state of Ohio. Last weekend’s “Our Vote Matters” bus tour took us to Cleveland, Akron and Canton, to schools and churches and community centers. We knocked on doors, visited barber shops and beauty shops, and spread our message across the airwaves.

We were joined on this important mission by the National Action Network, the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, led by Melanie Campbell and Show Your Power, led by activist Moses Boyd. Reality star and entrepreneur Chanita Foster and R&B singer Nicci Gilbert lent their considerable talents to spread the word, supported by the millennial media movement Revolution Nation.

We were inspired by the enthusiasm we found along the way—many voters we encountered

had already taken advantage of early voting in Ohio, and others were looking forward to casting their votes. We educated voters about the need to bring I.D. to the polls, and what forms would be accepted, how to find their polling place and where to get their questions answered.

In Ohio, early voting was slashed by six days, eliminating the opportunity to register and vote on the same day. It is one of 14 states with new voting restrictions in place for the first time in a presidential election. The others are Alabama, Arizona, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin. The new laws range from strict photo ID requirements to early voting cutbacks to registration restrictions.

The states most likely to pass new voting restrictions were those with the highest African American turnout in 2008, those with the highest Hispanic population growth between 2000 and 2010, and those formerly covered under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Section 5 required states with a history of racially-motivated voter suppression to seek pre-clearance from the federal government before changing any voting rules.

Of the 11 states with the highest African American turnout in 2008, 6 have new restrictions in place. North Carolina also fits this category, but its law is currently blocked for the 2016 election. The three-judge federal appeals panel that struck it down called it “the most restrictive voting law North Carolina has seen since the era of Jim Crow” and said lawmakers had targeted “African Americans with almost surgical precision.”

We’ve come too far from the days of poll taxes and grandfather clauses to watch our rights be diminished. Visit www.866ourvote.org or call 866-OUR-VOTE for more information and follow us on social media with the hashtag #OurVoteMatters.”

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Contents © 2016, The Prince George’s Post

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Prince George’s County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George’s Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George’s Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151. Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790. Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George’s Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Recognizing Teen Depression As a Serious Problem

Virtually every teenager is going to be unhappy at times. It's a period in life when there are all kinds of pressures and changes every teen faces. Add in hormone havoc and it's easy to understand all those of mood swings your teen displays.

But depression is different than just passing periods of stress and sadness. Depression is a very real mental health issue that can produce serious effects and is usually a factor in teen suicides. It's a more common problem than many parents realize, with studies indicating about one out of eight adolescents is suffering from teen depression.

So how do you tell the difference between normal teen unhappiness and a real problem of depression? A starting point is to ask how long you are seeing an unhappy teen. While many things can make the average teen unhappy (relationship issues, school performance, social status with peers), these are usually transitory and forgotten about in days.

But when your teenager's unhappiness lasts for two weeks or more, in combination with other symptoms of depression, there may be a serious problem which needs the help of a health professional.

Symptoms of depression aren't always easy to spot. Most teens tend to be stressed, private and not eager to communicate their feelings, and especially their problems, to their parents.

But when a teen is facing a serious form of depression it will begin to interfere with the teen's ability to function normally. You may notice previously good grades suddenly slipping, or see a dramatic change in the child's attitude. There may be a loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, a major change in friends, or a withdrawing from relationships and becoming uncommunicative.

Don't ignore warning signs. Be more involved with your teen. Ask questions—about school, friends, and current activities. Your child may resent the intrusion, but you need to show you care, are concerned and want to help.

If you suspect problems, talk to adults who know your teen, including teachers, school counselors and sports coaches. If they have also noticed potential problems, seek help. Your school counselor, family physician or local mental health organization can usually offer suggestions for professional counselors specializing in teen issues.

Teen depression is not just a "phase" that will be outgrown. Ignoring it can leave your teen's life hanging in the balance.

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

USDA Invests Over \$300 Million to Help Hundreds of Small Businesses Improve Energy Efficiency, Adopt Renewable Energy Systems

By PRESS OFFICER
USDA

AUSTIN, TX—Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing more than \$300 million to help hundreds of small businesses across the country save money on their energy costs by adopting renewable sources or implementing more efficient energy options. Vilsack made the announcement at Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center in Austin, Texas, today during a meeting with several local business owners who will make use of these loans and grants.

"Cutting our energy waste is one of the fastest, easiest and cheapest ways to help families save money on their energy bills while reducing harmful carbon pollution. Over the course of nearly eight years, the Obama Administration has taken strong actions to advance energy efficiency in our homes and businesses," Vilsack said. "Through efficiency upgrades and private-sector partnerships, America has been able to cut its carbon emissions, create jobs and save families hundreds of dollars at the pump and on their utility bills every year. The Rural Energy for America Program alone has helped roughly 15,000 rural small businesses, farmers and ranchers improve their bottom lines by installing renewable energy systems and energy efficiency solutions. When businesses lower their energy costs, they are also able to expand their services and contribute to stronger local economies."

Nationwide, USDA is investing \$237 million to support 423 businesses through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP). Recipients will use the loans and grants to install renewable energy systems such as biomass, geothermal, hydropower and solar. The funds also may be used to make energy efficiency improvements to their heating, ventilation and cooling systems; insulation; or lighting and refrigeration units.

USDA is investing nearly \$80 million for energy projects in Texas today, building on the \$100 billion commitment USDA has made in the Lone Star State over the course of the Obama Administration. USDA's initiatives support the state's farmers and ranchers, ensure the availability of affordable housing, create jobs and promote economic opportunity for those who live, work and raise their families in rural areas.

Nine Texas businesses will receive more than \$870,000 in REAP grants today, and two businesses will receive loans of \$5 million each. In Austin, the Vickery Wholesale Greenhouse Inc. is receiving a \$28,238 REAP grant to install a 40.32 kW roof-mounted solar array. The electricity produced from this new installation will offset the company's annual energy consumption with an expected output of 198 million BTUs.

Vilsack also announced that Pedernales Electric Cooperative of Johnson City, Texas, received an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Loan Program (EECLP) loan of more than \$68 million to fund system-wide energy efficiency improvements

to assist a rural portion of the co-op's service territory. Pedernales' energy efficiency program will offer members low-interest loans of up to \$20,000 for solar photovoltaic and energy storage equipment. Members will make loan payments through on-bill financing. The EECLP was created in November 2013 and has issued nearly \$127 million in loans to cooperatives in Arkansas, North Carolina and Vermont.

Pedernales received its first Rural Electrification Administration loan on Sept. 27, 1938, with the help of then Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson. USDA's Rural Utilities Service, which administers EECLP, succeeded the Rural Electrification Administration in 1994.

Other examples of REAP projects receiving awards today include Inter-State Hardwoods in Bartow, W.Va., which is getting a \$237,331 grant to replace four wood-fired boiler systems. This is expected to decrease energy consumption by 39 percent—876,000 kWh—per year. Inter-State is a sawmill and wood processor specializing in hardwoods. Minnesota's Chippewa Valley Ethanol Cooperative, LLP is receiving a \$250,000 grant to make energy efficiency improvements to an evaporator at an ethanol refinery.

From 2009 to date, REAP has helped finance more than 11,600 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that have reduced energy costs for roughly 15,000 rural businesses. Among them is GrandyOats, an organic foods company located in a former elementary school in Hiram, Maine. In 2015, it received a

\$20,000 REAP grant to install a renewable energy system. In doing so, the company has made history, becoming Maine's first 100 percent solar-powered, net-zero food production facility. Its 228-panel, solar photovoltaic system generates 96,000 kWh of electricity annually. The company's focus on renewable energy encompasses all parts of the production process, from cooking to heating and more.

USDA has provided more than \$380 million in grants and almost \$688 million in loan guarantees to agricultural producers and rural small business owners since the start of the Obama Administration. When operational, these projects will generate or save almost 9 million megawatt hours—enough to power more than 750,000 homes and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 5 million metric tons in carbon dioxide each year. That is the equivalent of removing 1.5 million cars from our roads.

Since 2009, USDA Rural Development (@USDARD) has invested nearly \$13 billion to start or expand nearly 112,000 rural businesses; helped 1.1 million rural residents buy homes; funded nearly 9,200 community facilities such as schools, public safety and health care facilities; and helped bring high-speed Internet access to nearly 6 million rural residents and businesses. USDA also has invested \$31.3 billion in 963 electric projects that have financed more than 185,000 miles of transmission and distribution lines serving 4.6 million rural residents. For more information, visit the website www.usda.gov/results.

Business Spotlight

Social Security Announces 0.3 Percent Benefit Increase for 2017

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 65 million Americans will increase 0.3 percent in 2017, the Social Security Administration announced today.

The 0.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 60 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2017. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2016. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$127,200 from \$118,500. Of the estimated 173 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2017, about 12 million will pay more because of the increase in the taxable maximum.

Information about Medicare changes for 2017, when announced, will be available at www.Medicare.gov. For some beneficiaries, their Social Security increase may be partially or completely offset by increases in Medicare premiums.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit the website at www.socialsecurity.gov/cola.

Zika from A1

patients and infants with Zika. According to Johns Hopkins' website, the center has specialists from epidemiology, infectious diseases, maternal-fetal medicine, orthopedics, pediatrics, physiotherapy, psychiatry and social work to treat patients with Zika.

Patients from around the world are welcome at the center, which is integrated into the hospital. Patients with similar symptoms are treated in rooms near each other for convenience, although there is not a separate wing of the hospital for the Zika Center.

Dr. William May, associate professor of ophthalmology at the Wilmer Eye Institute and co-director of the Johns Hopkins Zika Center, said he has seen two patients from Maryland, including one baby.

The most common symptoms of Zika in adults are fevers, rashes, joint pain and conjunctivitis, as well as muscle pain and headaches.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, Zika can also cause Guillain-Barre Syndrome, an autoimmune reaction where the immune system attacks the nerves and can cause severe paralysis. Patients usually recover, but it is fatal in 1 percent of victims.

However, the virus can have much more serious effects on babies.

Typically contracted in the womb when their mothers are bitten by a mosquito carrying the virus, babies with Zika can have severe fetal birth defects, including eye problems, hearing loss and impaired growth. According to the CDC, it can also cause mi-

crocephaly, a birth defect that causes a baby's head to be smaller and the brain to not fully develop or grow.

Microcephaly can lead to seizures, developmental and intellectual delays, hearing loss, and vision and feeding problems. In severe situations, it can also lead to death, according to the CDC.

There have been more than 100 cases of locally acquired Zika cases in the United States, all in Florida. Of the more than 4,000 cases of Zika confirmed in the states, about 3,900 have been travel-related, or contracted when people were travelling outside the country.

Maryland has had 105 confirmed cases of Zika as of Oct. 27, none locally contracted.

Yet with the mosquito population dwindling in the fall and winter months, the Zika focus shifts, said Garrett.

"There is a danger with people associating Zika solely with mosquito transmission," Garrett said.

Besides being transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito, Zika can be contracted through sex, blood transfusions, or laboratory exposure, according to the CDC.

There has been one documented case in Maryland of Zika being contracted through sexual activity. A woman contracted the virus after having sex with an asymptomatic man less than two weeks after he returned from the Dominican Republic.

About 80 percent of people who get Zika are asymptomatic, said Laurens, making it difficult to track and contain the virus.

May said he believes the virus will spread throughout the United States in a matter of years.

"It has taken about a year and a half for it to go through Central and South America into the United States," he told the University of Maryland's Capital News Service. "If it keeps up that rate it will take over the U.S."

The Walter Reed Army Institute of Research has been working with Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston on a vaccine for Zika. According to Debra Yourick, a representative for Walter Reed, researchers completed the second round of preclinical studies in August.

The researchers found a vaccine that completely protected rhesus monkeys from experimental infection with the Zika virus, according to an Aug. 4 news release.

Yourick also said clinical trials are scheduled to begin next week at Walter Reed's Clinical Trials Center, as well as at other, unannounced locations.

The National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, a part of the National Institutes of Health Clinical Center in Bethesda, is working with the University of Maryland School of Medicine and Emory University to develop a vaccine as well.

At least 80 volunteers, ages 18–35, are enrolled in the study among the three sites. According to a report from the NIH, the study began in July and will continue until December 2018.

Unlike the flu shot or other vaccines, the immunization the NIH is developing for Zika does not contain the virus. Instead, Laurens said, it is DNA-based.

The vaccine instructs the body to make a small amount of Zika virus protein, which may build an immune response, according to the NIH.

"That is what we are evaluating in this phase 1 study," Laurens said. "We hope that the vaccine will produce a robust immune response, capable of preventing Zika infection in persons vaccinated."

The CDC is still researching how long Zika can stay in genital fluids, how common it is for Zika to be passed during sex and whether Zika passed to a pregnant woman during sex has different risks for birth defects than Zika transmitted by a mosquito bite, according to the CDC website.

To combat Zika, the Maryland Department of Agriculture has been using prevention techniques.

"The best way to prevent (mosquitoes) from carrying anything is to not allow them to breed," said Brian Prendergast, the program manager of mosquito control for the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture has 15 state inspectors who go to Maryland homes, checking for still water. The inspectors generally work during mosquito season, which is May to August, said Prendergast.

But due to the unseasonably warm weather this year, the inspectors were still working into late October, he said.

After the inspectors receive permission from the homeowner, they search the front and back yards for any water vessels. The Aedes species of mosquitoes that can carry Zika breeds in objects that hold rainwater, Prendergast said.

"They do not breed in swamps or ditches or puddles," he added.



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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

The Girl on the Train

The Girl on the Train
Grade: C+
Rated R, a lot of
sexual profanity and vulgarity,
some nudity and sex,
brief strong violence
1 hr., 53 min

The Girl on the Train is feel-bad misery porn that desperately wants to be *Gone Girl* but lacks that story's surprises and cathartic, twisted resolution. Based on Paula Hawkins' best-selling novel and directed by Tate Taylor (*The Help*), this dreary film has a melodramatic murder-mystery plot that could be straight from a routine episode of *Law & Order*, if *Law & Order* focused on the victims and suspects instead of the cops. Everything ends up solved, with no loose ends, but you don't feel like you saw anything of consequence.

What you will have seen is nearly two hours of various downcast individuals wallowing in their respective pits of despair. Rachel (Emily Blunt) is a drunken stumblebum who's still stalking and harassing her ex-husband, Tom (Justin Theroux), a philanderer who's now married to the woman he cheated on Rachel with. That would be Anna (Rebecca Ferguson), a new mother who doesn't have employment outside the home yet can't handle her baby without a nanny's assistance. The nanny is Megan (Haley Bennett), a listless young wife herself, married to the controlling Scott (Luke Evans), who keeps pressuring her to have a baby she doesn't want. (She doesn't even like taking care of someone else's.) Megan is seeing a therapist (Edgar Ramirez), but good grief, everyone in the cast should be on his client list.

Every day, Rachel's commuter train passes Tom and Anna's house—which used to be her house—and the house of



Rachel, devastated by her recent divorce, spends her daily commute fantasizing about the seemingly perfect couple who live in a house that her train passes every day, until one morning she sees something shocking happen there and becomes entangled in the mystery that unfolds. Based on Paula Hawkins' bestselling novel.

Megan and Scott, whom she doesn't know but who live a couple doors down. She imagines Megan and Scott's lives based on the glimpses she sees of them (they are not opposed to having sex in front of a giant window visible from the train), all the while fretting and stewing about Tom and Anna and their precious baby, which is something she always wanted (a baby of her own, I mean, not theirs specifically).

Then Megan, the sad nanny, goes missing, on a night that happens to be one of Rachel's blackout-and-not-remember-anything nights. Rachel has no motive to have targeted Megan, but Megan does look a lot like Anna, and there are many mistakes you can make when you're blind drunk. Of course, Megan's husband and therapist are suspects, too, and eager Det. Riley (Allison Janney) is

going to get to the bottom of it, don't you worry.

With the aid of exhausting flashbacks to six, four, and two months ago, the film reveals more about Megan's past and her relationship with Scott. Meanwhile, pathetically trying to clear her own name, Rachel contacts Scott to tell him what she witnessed the last time she saw Megan from the train. It doesn't occur to Rachel that striking up a friendship with the husband of a missing woman doesn't look good for anyone.

Indeed, many things do not occur to Rachel. Not having things occur to her is the only thing she is good at. Perpetually sad, rheumy-eyed, and disheveled, she is perhaps the most relentlessly pitiful movie character of the year, and the runners-up are all on the screen with her. Everyone is unhappy and mistrusting—and with good rea-

son, because everyone around them is lying and/or disappointed in them. These are the kind of people whose preferred verb when discussing sex isn't "have sex" or even "screw" but just plain old "f***" no matter the context or who they're talking to. Who talks like that? People who don't care about anything anymore, that's who.

Despite the bleakness of being populated entirely by wet blankets, the film gets by for a while on the mechanics of its plot. Whether we like these people or not (we don't), we want to see how the whole tawdry mystery plays out. Unfortunately, how it plays out is: conventionally. Yep, one of the people we thought might have done it did it. Yep, for the reasons we suspected. Sure enough. Case closed, Det. Allison Janney. Good work. Why'd you have to drag us into it?

Spending Bill from A4

focused solely on working cases that reach the Board.

Senator Mikulski's objective is to end the benefits claims backlog, and ensure veterans and their families have access to the care and benefits they've earned and deserve. To continue progress toward achieving this goal, the legislation:

- Provides \$2.86 billion to support the reduction of claims backlog, an increase of \$30 million over the budget request. This increase will hire and train 300 new claims processors. Claims processors are in charge of collecting data in order to process claims. The collection of data can be done through medical professionals, government agencies, or other authorities. Once all data is collected the claims processor will recommend final benefits for the Veteran.

- This includes \$180 million to sustain and enhance the electronic claims processing system, increasing its functionality and efficiency. In 2015, there were nearly 1.4 million claims filed nationwide, 67,000 more than the year prior, and the highest number of claims ever received by the VA. Senator Mikulski has worked aggressively with the VA officials to create a plan for the Baltimore Regional Office in order to reduce Maryland's backlog by more than fifty percent. Today, the Baltimore Regional Office is handling less than 4,500

benefits claims, down from a high of nearly 10,000 in 2013.

- It also includes \$153 million to improve to the Veterans Claims Intake Program (VCIP). This is \$10 million over the budget request to continue to convert paper documentation to electronic files. The purpose of VCIP is to help the VA end its dependence on paper-based claims. The document conversion service, has been implemented in all fifty-six VA regional claims processing offices across the country, including the Baltimore Regional Office. The conversion of these records cuts processing time down by more than two weeks.

In addition, the legislation continues to require the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the VA, to establish and transmit to Congress a coherent governance plan for modernization and enhanced interoperability of Electronic Health Records (EHR) among each agency and the private medical facilities who support veterans. In the past, despite multiple agreements to focus on this issue, the VA and DOD have both failed to make the necessary improvements. The bill fences seventy-five percent of EHR funding until several requirements are met. Among these conditions are for the VA to provide the Appropriations Committee the Analysis of Alternatives and Business Case outlining the need for continuing modernizing the legacy

system versus purchasing a commercial off the shelf platform; and a strategic plan (including security requirements analysis) identifying metrics and timelines for future development.

Ending Veteran's Homelessness

The legislation includes \$1.62 billion, an increase of \$30 million above the budget request, to continue to reduce veteran's homelessness. There are an estimated 48,000 homeless veterans in America. Between 2010 and 2015, the estimated number of homeless veterans has been reduced by 36 percent, a decline of more than 26,360. This includes a nearly 50 percent drop in the number of unsheltered veterans sleeping on the street.

Funding included in this legislation will support the Supportive Services for Veterans Families program, which works to quickly offer shelter to homeless veterans. The goal of the program is to promote housing stability among very low-income veteran families who reside in or are transitioning to permanent housing.

It also supports the HUD—Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program, which combines rental assistance from HUD with case management and clinical services provided by the VA. Through the program, local public housing authorities provide rental assistance to homeless vet-

erans while nearby VA Medical Centers (VAMC) offer supportive services and case management. VAMCs work closely with homeless veterans then refer them to public housing agencies for these vouchers, based upon a variety of factors, most importantly the duration of the homelessness and the need for longer term more intensive support to obtain and maintain permanent housing. Veterans participating in the HUD-VASH program rent privately owned housing and generally contribute no more than thirty percent of their income toward rent.

Supporting Veterans Health Care

The bill includes \$64.4 billion dollars for Veterans Medical Care. It also makes sure we are meeting our commitment to our most recent generation of veterans, those who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan. The bill provides \$5.66 billion to meet the health care needs of the over 923,000 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans who utilize the VA for their healthcare.

Senator Mikulski fought to provide \$675.4 million for medical and prosthetic research, and charges the VA to integrate complementary and alternative medicine to ensure America's heroes receive the full spectrum of treatment available. This is a funding increase of \$44.6 million over the current funding level and \$12 million over the request.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Why a Radio Station Censored the East Carolina University Band and Deepened a Backlash



On October 1, 19 members of the East Carolina University marching band, black and white, made the decision to take a knee in an anti-racism protest during "The Star Spangled Banner." Given that they did this in highly conservative Greenville, North Carolina, driving distance from Fort Bragg, their action was by any measure, brave. As *Shaun King of the New York Daily News* reported, "I have spoken with dozens of @EastCarolinastudents. They are NOT protesting soldiers. The protest is not even anti-war. It's anti-injustice."

The band was then vociferously booed when they came out at halftime and has reported receiving threats over social media. Then things got bizarre. The local radio affiliate ESPN Fayetteville refused to broadcast this upcoming weekend's game, calling its decision "a protest of the protest."

But this is not actually "a protest of the protest." If the station organized people to protest the band, or brought them on the air to defend taking a knee, that would be a protest. This is Orwellian erasure enacted by a media conglomerate.

We attempted to find out what was behind the station's unusual decision. First we contacted ESPN. The World Wide Leader made it explicitly clear that it had nothing to do with this. In an e-mail, Diane Lamb from ESPN PR said, "100.1 FM is an affiliate that carries some ESPN Radio national programming. Local programming decisions, however, are strictly in their purview. Background: ESPN does not own the station."

So who does own the station? It turns out that it is an organization called—I kid thee not—Colonial Radio Group. Chairman/CEO Jeff Andrulonis said about the situation, "Difficult is the best way to describe it." There is some money being lost here because of the non-broadcast, but Andrulonis reasoned that the station's decision serves the FCC's "public interest" mandate.

One would think that it would be in the "public interest" to not censor a local protest and have this debate in as public a forum as possible. But instead, Andrulonis said, "Local radio is supposed to be reflective of the local area."

And local thinking, as Andrulonis has decided, is on the side of silence. In a phone call he said the station has received "call after call, e-mail after e-mail, text on text" in support of the decision. He then read several e-mails, including one that said, "Congratulations on your stance. No one has the guts or the patriotism to do what you did," and another acknowledging the band's right to protest but also affirming the station's right to counter-protest. (Again. This is not a counter-protest).

What Andrulonis does not accept responsibility for—and he should—is the fact that the decision by ESPN Fayetteville has deepened and validated the backlash against these young people. First, a professor on campus, Dr. Tracey Tuten—who describes herself on Twitter as an "Ayn Rander" and a "Pirate"—said she would arm herself on campus as a response to the protest, writing, "Since the band members can act on the first amendment without regard to university rules, I too want to act on my second amendment rights to bear arms." It seems she has reconsidered this position after Interim Police Chief Jason Sugg said, "While I can appreciate Dr. Tuten's intent to bring attention to constitutional discussions, carrying a handgun on campus property in the manner in which she described is currently prohibited by state law."

Then four members of the school's administration threw these young people under the bus, publishing a letter that reads, in part, "We regret the actions taken by 19 members of the East Carolina University Marching Pirates on game day October 1st felt hurtful to many in our Pirate family and disrespectful to our country. We understand and respect this is an issue where emotions are strong."

For all the talk about college students demanding "safe spaces" from difficult discourses, it is these administrators, professors like the Pirate Dr. Tuten, and CEOs like Jeff Andrulonis howling for a safe space where they don't have to even entertain the fact that young people at the college do not want to live in a world as unjust and racist as their parents'. Instead of engaging with or even confronting their actions, they have chosen to intimidate band members who dared protest the status quo. They have chosen to shame them. They have chosen erasure. They have chosen to validate every threat raining down on the heads of these young people. But the band members are not alone. They are a link in a chain of protests breaking out at sporting events around the country. That is a community of righteous support the forces of reaction in Greenville could never understand.

Phuc Pham contributed to the reporting of this piece.

Calendar of Events

November 10 — November 16, 2016

Smooth Sounds for Seniors: Akua Allrich

Date and Time: Thursday, November 10, 2016, 12 noon
Description: Performing songs from her album Uniquely Standard, this D.C.-native vocalist describes her unique sound as a “conglomeration of my personal musical experience, which is jazz, soul, blues, and pan-African music. I guess the best way to describe the album is a soulful approach to standard jazz tunes.”
Cost: \$12/person
Ages: Ages 60 & better
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

STEAM: Ready. Set. Go. BristleBot Challenge

Date and Time: Friday, November 11, 2016, 5:30–7 pm
Description: Are you ready for this BristleBot challenge? Children will design, assemble, and race your BristleBot. Who will come out on top?
Cost: Free
Ages: 8–17
Location: Good Luck Community Center
8601 Good Luck Road, Lanham, MD
Contact: 301-552-1093; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: Jewelry Making

Date and Time: Friday, November 11, 2016, 7–10 pm
Description: Join us for a night of jewelry making! Bring a friend and customize your jewelry, make original pieces to update your collection.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth iD
Ages: 10–17
Location: Vansville Community Center
6813 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, MD
Contact: 301-937-6621; TTY 301-699-2544

Nature Hike

Date and Time: Saturday, November 12, 2016, 9:30–11:30 am
Description: Enjoy a nature hike through our beautiful woodlands, swamp, and tidal marsh conservation trail. Patrons will learn about local plants and animals.
Cost: Resident \$3; Non-Resident \$4
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Patuxent River Park
16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-627-6074; TTY: 301-699-2544

Trash to Treasure Green Craft Fair

Date and Time: Saturday, November 12, 2016, 10 am–4 pm
Description: GO GREEN with your holiday shopping this year! Join us for our 8th Annual Trash to Treasure: Green Craft Fair at Watkins Nature Center, located in beautiful Watkins Regional Park. Explore local crafters and artists who create treasures made from at least 50% recycled, organic, fair trade or sustainably-harvested materials.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Watkins Nature Center
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-218-6702; TTY 301-699-2544

3D Modeling for Teens

Date and Time: Saturday, November 12, 2016, 2–4 pm
Description: Are you interested in learning 3D design? Would you like to learn how to use a 3D printer? Check out Brentwood Arts Exchange's new MakerBot and learn the basics of 3D printing. You'll come away from this class with your very own three dimensional object! Registration is required and seating is limited.
Cost: Free
Ages: 16–17
Location: Brentwood Arts Center
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Prince George's Ballroom Bridal Expo

Date and Time: Sunday, November 13, 2016, 1–4 pm
Description: Planning a memorable event? Come to the Prince George's Ballroom to make planning easy! Caterers, photographers, event planners and over 20 vendors will ensure your success! No advance registration required.
Cost: Resident: \$5; Non-Resident: \$7
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Prince George's Ballroom
2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover, MD
Contact: 301-341-7439; TTY 301-699-2544

The Wisdom of Old Houses

Date and Time: Sunday, November 13, 2016, 2–4 pm
Description: In 18th century Maryland, smart phones, smart TVs, and smart cars hadn't been invented yet. But they had a lot of smart PEOPLE, who made some very clever stuff! Houses for example. It took many, many skilled people to build Montpelier. Through hands-on activities, experimentation, and observation, you'll learn some of the secrets of early American designers and laborers, and why Montpelier is still called one of the finest houses in Maryland.
Cost: Free
Ages: 5–12
Location: Montpelier Historic Site
9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

Concert: Washington Saxophone Quartet

Date and Time: Sunday, November 13, 2016, 3 pm
Description: Since 1997, WSaxQ's recorded arrangements have aired daily throughout the United States on NPR's broadcasts of “All Things Considered.” The instruments evoke the refined sounds of a string quartet, the rich harmonies of an organ prelude, and the excitement of a jazz sax section.
Cost: Free; \$5 donation appreciated
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Polyester Fleece: Trashing Our Oceans One Wash Load at a Time?

Dear EarthTalk:

Is it true that polyester fleece clothing is a huge contributor to the problem of plastic in our oceans?

—Mickey Walton,
Seattle, WA

We're all familiar with the issue of non-biodegradable plastic debris (shopping bags, soda bottles, fishing nets etc.) clogging up our waterways and making its way out to sea—sometimes accumulating in huge “gyres.” But what you might not realize is that even if you are responsible about recycling and not littering, you may still be contributing to the ocean's plastic burden by virtue of the clothes on your back.

“The single biggest plastic pollution problem facing our ocean is microfiber: trillions of pieces of tiny fibers flowing into the ocean—every time we use our washing machines,” reports the nonprofit Rozalia Project. “Our synthetic clothing is breaking up, sending this plastic microfiber out with the drain water.” According to the group, just one fleece jacket could shed over 81,000 minute strands of polyester per wash. “New York City, alone, could have 6.8 billion microfibers flowing into its harbor every day.”

According to activist Sarah Mosko, the tiny size of microplastics actually adds to their dangers. “Because plastics are lipophilic (oil-loving), oily

contaminants in seawater are drawn to them,” she reports on Algalita's blog. “Japanese researchers found that plastic pellets no more than a half millimeter in diameter could adsorb hazardous chemicals (like polychlorinated biphenyls, nonylphenols and derivatives of DDT) onto their surfaces at up to one million times the concentrations in the surrounding water.” The tiny size of microplastics means that even minute creatures can ingest them, thereby introducing any chemicals they carry into the very bottom of the food chain.

The Rozalia Project adds that “ingested pollutants can un-stick from the plastic and end up in the stomachs and tissue” of everything from plankton to whales, causing issues at the cellular level as well as digestive problems. Rozalia researchers found that two-thirds of all fish species tested from markets in California had microfiber or microplastic in them. Even those who don't eat fish may not be able to avoid ingesting microfibers, given that farm animals are typically fed fish meal as a dietary staple.

So what can be done? Rozalia has developed “the world's first consumer solution” to stop microfiber pollution. The patent-pending microfiber catcher works in any washing machine, catching microfibers so they can't flow out with the drain water. “Early test results show the microfiber catcher keeping



CREDIT: PATAGONIA.

Polyester fleece clothing sure is cozy and comfy, but at what cost to the environment and marine ecosystems?

2,000-9,000 pieces of synthetic microfibers from flowing into our public waterways per wash per household.”

Outdoor clothing and gear makers are starting to realize that they can be part of the solution as well. Earlier this year, Patagonia commissioned microbiologists from UC Santa Barbara to study the problem and suggest ways the company could reduce microfiber pollution moving forward. The company is sharing the findings with its competitors in order to collaborate on industry-wide solutions.

We probably can't do much, concludes Sarah Mosko, about the microplastics that are already contaminating our oceans, but we can start making smarter clothing choices, adding that “natural fiber cloths like cotton, silk, wool,

bamboo, hemp and even soy may be better choices for those concerned about the environment. All derive from renewable sources, are intrinsically biodegradable, and their fibers would not attract oily chemicals out of seawater.”

CONTACTS: Rozalia Project, www.rozaliaproject.org; Algalita, www.algalita.org; UC Santa Barbara study, www.esm.ucsb.edu/research/2016Group_Projects/documents/PatPlastBrief.pdf.

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Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Zika from A5

These mosquitoes cannot travel far, often less than 50 yards. Because they are not flying long distances, finding their rafts (mosquitoes' nests) is essential.

“If we eliminate their breeding, we eliminate the skeeters,” Prendergast said.

When examining the yard, the inspector dumps out any item that holds water. They then place it in a way that will hold no water in the future, before notifying the homeowner about what they found.

“We expend a lot of energy because people do not take the simple step of dumping anything that can hold rainwater,” Prendergast said.

The inspectors from the Maryland Department of Agriculture use three pesticides to kill mosquito larvae and a different pesticide on adult mosquitoes, Prendergast said. The inspectors can treat “any type of standing water that can't be dumped with pesticides,” he said.

The three pesticides the inspectors use against the larvae include two chemicals and a bacterium. The tools “have no toxic

ity to anything other than mosquito larvae and midge larvae,” Prendergast said. “It all is environmentally friendly.”

To control adult mosquitoes, the inspectors use a pesticide called Bifenthrin, and the Department of Agriculture also uses trucks spraying Permethrin 30-30 pesticide.

Prendergast stressed all the pesticides used are “biorational,” or non-toxic.

Preventing mosquitoes from reproducing is a big step for preventing Zika transmission, but, Garrett said, his focus is still on people.

“Marylanders need to make sure they follow the CDC guidance on prevention,” he said. “Particularly if they or their partners have occasion to travel to areas with ongoing Zika transmission.”

Zika is not common in Maryland, and Garrett sees the collaboration of different groups as a good way to maintain that, and potentially defeat the virus.

“We all want to see an end to the scourge of Zika and to the birth defects it has been proven to cause.”

Award from A1

cility. For one patient, Jackie Carver-Pecku, RN, CCM, MEd, BSN, was the difference in the journey to recovery after she dedicated her off-duty time to ensure this patient was transferred to a facility in a timely fashion to receive the specialized care needed.

During her sixteen year career at Children's National, Jackie has had the opportunity to work in various roles around the organi-

zation, including an ambulatory nurse in our outpatient clinics, and a Children's School Services' school nurse educator. Around eight years ago, Jackie transitioned into a role on the Children's National Case Management team, and couldn't love it more. The aspiration to become a Case Manager stemmed from Jackie's desire to see the difference she was making in our patients and their family's lives. Her previous roles allowed her to empathize with the

situations that the families found themselves in when coming to Children's National for medical care, and provided her with the experience she needed to be successful in the role.

During the eight years that Jackie has been a case manager, she's been responsible for helping our patients and their families make the transition from inpatient care to home once they're discharged. This includes finding any support programs that fami-

lies are eligible to benefit from, coordinating the logistical aspect to ensure that insurance coverage continues, and procuring any equipment that may be required to continue care. “One of the most important things to me is ensuring the quality of care remains the same as a patient transitions home. The families are able to relax knowing all of the stressful logistics are handled, and that's incredibly important to ensure a smooth transition.”

PROTECT YOUR PETS AGAINST FLEAS AND TICKS

Taking care of your pets responsibly includes protection from fleas and ticks. Think of these important safety tips when applying liquid pesticides.

- ▶ Check with your veterinarian about the best products to use to protect your pets from fleas and ticks;
- ▶ Use a flea comb to suppress adult fleas;
- ▶ Focus on combing those parts of the pet where more fleas gather which is often the neck or tail area; and
- ▶ Put any fleas in soapy water to kill them.



Prince George's County Second Hand is an initiative of the Department of the Environment, Planning and Official Control Services, to promote cost savings and sustainability in our everyday lives.

Hedrick E. Riley, III
County Executive

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