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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO COURTESY SABEIN BURGESSY

Exoneree Sabein Burgess hangs out in his hometown of Baltimore on Tuesday, Oct. 20. Though the Maryland legislature has passed several laws facilitating the vacation of wrongful convictions, advocates and lawmakers say local prosecutors are blocking further progress.

Here in Maryland, Efforts to Streamline Exonerations Stymied

By ELEANOR MUELLER
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Sabein Burgess wasted no time trying to prove his innocence.

Convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in June 1995, the then-24-year-old waited

just 10 days after his trial before filing a motion for a new one.

The act was his first step in a battle that would last 19 years, during which the Baltimore resident would spend the prime of his life in a jail cell.

"From the day I was locked up, I was saying I was innocent,"

Burgess, now 46, said. "From the night I spent in homicide to the day I came home (from prison)."

Baltimore City prosecutors had charged Burgess with the murder of his then-girlfriend, Michelle Dyson, whom he discovered fatally shot in the basement of her Baltimore home

that fall. Evidence against him included gunpowder residue discovered on his hands; none was ever found on his body or clothes, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

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Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation and New York Life's Greater Washington Office Host Clean-Up Day at Langley Park Boys & Girls Club

More Than 100 Volunteers Participate in Clean-Up Day, Youth Sports Clinic and Equipment Donation

By PRESS OFFICER
Maroonpr.com

HYATTSVILLE, MD—The Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation and New York Life's Greater Washington Office, the Home Depot Foundation and Aaron's, along with more than 100 volunteers, yesterday participated in a Clean-Up Day at

the Langley Park Boys & Girls Club. The volunteer crew provided the facility with outdoor landscaping, gymnasium enhancements, computer work stations, installation of a new TV, computer and printer, as well as new furniture,

See CAL RIPKEN Page A6

William Doerner Appointed, A. Shuanise Washington Reappointed to PG County Planning Board

By PRESS OFFICER
MNCPPC

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—On Tuesday, November 1, the Prince George's County Council unanimously confirmed the nomination by County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III of

William M. Doerner, Ph.D. for appointment and A. Shuanise Washington for reappointment as members of the Prince George's County Planning Board and The Maryland-Na-

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Economic Development Corporation Building Relationships to Build Ports in Liberia

"We're Bringing Jobs and Investments to Our 'Cousins' in Liberia," Says Coleman

By LORI C. VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—On October 12, the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) hosted a delegation of ten government and business leaders from Liberia who are looking to share investment opportunities with Prince George's County, specifically their vast port system. EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman and his executive team, along with EDC Board Member Eric Henderson, and local business moguls shared their insight regarding U.S. investment and trade in Africa. Through passionate dialogue, it became apparent that a partnership between Prince George's County and the Port Authority of Liberia will have very fruitful returns for both sides.

"I have a personal interest in helping to make Liberia's economy thrive," said Coleman. "When I learned of my family's direct connection to the very foundation of Liberia, I knew



PHOTO COURTESY LORI C. VALENTINE

EDC President & CEO Jim Coleman (3rd from left) with members of the Liberian Delegation, local business leaders and Team EDC.

that there would be no better time for us to leverage our relationships and resources to find investment opportunities that will create jobs and rebuild a flourishing business environment in

this port community. Today's discussion has helped us cross a bridge to bring my 'cousins' together with the resources we have in Prince George's County and in the United States."

Members of the delegation included Gabriel Williams from the Embassy of Liberia,

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INSIDE

U.S. Department of Education Releases Guidance Encouraging Well-Rounded Education

Too often, students from low-income families and students of color do not have access to arts, science, social studies or advanced coursework. Likewise, gender gaps persist in many disciplines. Science achievement gaps can show up as early as kindergarten. Community, Page A3

Bringing America Together for Our Children's Sake

Every child today is endangered by our violence-saturated culture and excessive consumerism and greed. Buying is equated with happiness. Possessing things is equated with success. Children are marketed sex, alcohol, tobacco, and guns as the way to be accepted and hip. Commentary, Page A4

MGM National Harbor Will Offer Elegant Meeting Spaces and Customized Experiences Within New Integrated Resort

For uniquely tailored meeting locations, the 308-room resort and casino has been designed with stunning indoor and outdoor venues providing groups numerous options to customize their event. Business, Page A5

Movie Review: American Honey

Arnold vividly captures the cocky ignorance and exuberant recklessness of kids who were never taught any better, reminding us that such young people are often sexualized by adults (and each other) while presenting a convincing depiction of a foolish young romance. Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

What kinds of changes to federal environmental policies can we expect to see from Donald Trump when he assumes the presidency?

—D. Shelley, Bounder, CO

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Festival of Lights, Christmas past, gingerbread houses and more holiday events

Nov. 25-Jan. 1: Festival of Lights at Watkins Park, in Upper Marlboro. Spectacular holiday drive-through features more than one million twinkling lights and one of the tallest tree displays in the state! Hours: 5 to 9:30 p.m. Cars, \$5. Remember to bring canned goods for local food banks.

Nov. 25-27, Dec. 2-4, Dec. 9-11, noon to 5 p.m.: The 17th Annual Gingerbread House Contest & Show at Darnall's Chance House Museum in Upper Marlboro. Visitors have the opportunity to vote for their favorite entries—each winning entry will receive \$200. Admission: \$1. Info: 301-952-8010.

Nov. 26: Holiday Performances at National Harbor at 1 p.m. You can also admire the 60' Christmas tree, decorated with 20,000 lights.

Dec. 1: Free healthy holiday cooking demonstrations at the Sports & Learning Complex, 8001 Sheriff Rd., in Landover. Enjoy samples, take home new recipes and learn to prepare delicious meals for your loved ones this Christmas season. No registration required. Hours: 7 to 8 p.m. Info: 301-583-2400.

Dec. 3-4: The 15th annual Victorian Christmas at the Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House in Waldorf, decorated, as it would have been in the Victorian period. Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus, Civil War encampment, music, refreshments, and a walking tour of the House. Hours: 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Admission: \$8 for adults and \$2 for children. Info: 301-274-9358.

Dec. 5: Day of Prayer at Loyola on the Potomac, in Faulkner. The day begins with continental breakfast at 9 and concludes at 3 p.m. Fee: \$40. Info: 301-392-0800 or www.loyolaonthepotomac.com.

The Surratt House, in Clinton, invites you to enjoy Christmas past with the display of period decorations, exhibits, tours and treats. Admission. Wed.-

Friday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sat & Sun, noon to 4 p.m. Info: 301-868-1121.

No-Shave November

As he opened the town meeting on Nov. 15, Morningside Mayor Benn Cann apologized for not shaving. He's participating in No-Shave November. The goal is to grow awareness by "embracing our hair, which many cancer patients lose." Money spent on shaving and grooming should be used for cancer prevention education and men's health issues.

People

Shhh! Santa will be showing up at Morningside's Breakfast with Santa on Dec. 10 (but he'll really be Oscar Portillo).

Cpl. Conrad D'Haiti, Skyline's first C.O.P.S. officer some years ago, is retiring from the county police at the end of the year. He dropped by the Skyline citizens' meeting Nov. 16 at the firehouse, to say goodbye. Among his recent activities was taking Police Explorers to Arizona National Park. He was given an award as a Distinguished Advisor for the Explorers.

Morningside Mayor Cann will graduate Dec. 12 from the Citizens Police Academy at Prince George's Community College. The Academy is a 12-week program that features all sorts of police activities.

I have enjoyed having daughter Therese Gallegos visiting the past several weeks. I finally saw her off Nov. 17, headed for a visit with former classmate Cecelia DuMais and her husband Jim Rohan in West Virginia before driving to West Chester, Ohio, to spend a week with my daughter Kathleen Shearer, before heading home to Brownsville, Texas.

Changing landscape

County Executive Baker delivered remarks at the groundbreaking of the new state-of-the-art Oxon Hill Fire/EMS Station, at 6500 Clipper Way, on Nov. 7. The station will be about one mile from Oxon Hill

Fire/EMS station No. 821 and about two miles from Oxon Hill Fire/EMS station No. 842. Officials hope for completion by December 2017.

For the first time in its 65-year history, the Miss World pageant is coming to the U.S.—to the Gaylord at National Harbor. Contestants from 140 countries will compete. The grand finale will be on Dec. 18.

I make frequent trips into Washington, and for three years I've seen the Capitol shrouded in scaffolding. On Oct. 27 the last scaffolding was removed. Among the repairs, 14 layers of paint (including some of the very first coat) were removed and the surface repainted with 1,215 gallons of paint in three layers. The top coat color is "Dome White."

Did you know that the Capitol dome is the tallest cast-iron dome in the world? And it looks wonderful.

Suitland Memories: 1950

On Nov. 17, 1950, the Suitland Improvement Association was incorporated by the State Tax Commission and later changed its name to The Suitland Citizens Association. By 2002, this community organization revamped its name yet again and became the Suitland Civic Association, with meetings at the new Water Tower on Suitland Road.

Noted inventor dies in Oxon Hill fire

George Naufflett, 84, a renowned African American chemist and inventor, died in a fire at his Oxon Hill home on Oct. 28. He and his wife attempted to escape together; she escaped but he didn't make it out.

He was born in the segregated South and left school after 8th grade, but he was able to get his GED, join the Air Force, graduate from Tougaloo College in Jackson, Miss., and

See **MORNINGSIDE** Page A3

Neighborhoods

Melwood Achieves CIMS and CIMS-GB Certification

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Cari DeSantis, President & CEO of Melwood, announced today that Melwood achieved the coveted ISSA Cleaning Industry Management Standard (CIMS) and CIMS-Green Building (GB) certifications. ISSA is the international cleaning industry association that accredits businesses and organizations providing custodial and janitorial services worldwide, certifying adherence to industry standards and excellence in customer service. Melwood, a nonprofit agency that employs hundreds of individuals with differing abilities, provides custodial services for dozens of federal agencies and military installations in the Greater Washington, D.C. Metro Area and the State of Maryland.

Compliance with the ISSA CIMS and CIMS-Green Building standards demonstrate that a cleaning organization has the systems in place to deliver consistent, professional services designed to meet customer needs and expectations and is prepared to deliver a comprehensive green cleaning program based on LEED EB: O&M green cleaning criteria. CIMS and CIMS-GB certification are required in many cleaning service bid specifications as customers look for an effective way to identify high-quality providers committed to customer satisfaction.

"CIMS and CIMS-GB certification make it easier for customers to find contractors like Melwood that understand the value of clean as providing a safe and healthy environment for their employees. These certifications demonstrate to our customers that Melwood is well equipped and capable of delivering excellent, professional services now and into the future," said Cari DeSantis, president and CEO of Melwood. "We are honored to have earned these certifications and proud of our staff's dedication to excellence."

Independent, accredited assessors verify that CIMS and CIMS-GB certified firms meet the industry standard for:

- Quality systems
- Service delivery
- Human resources
- Health, safety, and environmental stewardship
- Management commitment
- Green Building

Recently, CIMS-GB became a direct compliance option to meet the green cleaning policy prerequisite of Version 4 of the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) revised Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Existing Buildings: Operations and Maintenance (LEED EB: O&M) rating system.

"CIMS-GB certified organizations are subject to a rigorous third-party assessment, which provides end customers with assurance that their cleaning service provider is committed to effective management and customer satisfaction and is prepared to partner with them in the LEED certification process," says DeSantis. "These certifications are a testament to the hard work done each day by our employees."

For more information about CIMS and CIMS-GB certification, visit issa.com/standard.

About Melwood:

Melwood is a nonprofit organization that advocates for and empowers people of differing abilities to transform their own lives through unique opportunities to work and play in the community. Melwood envisions a world where people with differing abilities are fully included. Using an innovative and effective social entrepreneurial model, Melwood offers job training, employment, life skill improvement, community support and recreation opportunities to more than 2050 people each year in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area and the State of Maryland. Melwood operates a training program graduating approximately 100 workers with differing abilities each year and employs more than 1,600 workers, including over 900 with differing abilities. For more information visit www.melwood.org.

BGE Redesigns Bill in Response to Customer Feedback

New color graphics and easy-to-read charts will help customers better manage their energy

BALTIMORE, MD—BGE customers receiving paper or electronic bills this week will take another look—as their bill has a new, colorful format. The graphic-enhanced bill was designed to make it easier for customers to understand their monthly energy delivery charges and energy consumption information. Standard bill features such as the amount due and due date are now more prominent and easy to find at-a-glance, and new features have been added to assist customers with managing their energy more efficiently. BGE added all of the updated features based on customer feedback.

"Customers expect simple, useful, accessible information from their service providers, and the monthly bill is our most frequent customer touchpoint," said Rob Biagiotti, BGE vice president of customer operations and chief customer officer. "Our research showed that customers wanted certain bill details highlighted so they could find them quickly each month. Customers are also seeking information that will help them better manage their bills. Our redesigned format has taken that all into account."

BGE's redesigned bill includes:

- Graphics illustrating the breakdown of current charges for electricity, gas, and all other charges and credits
- Charts with detailed explanations of electric and gas use for the current bill period as well as a 12-month period
- A line-by-line description of each bill component.
- Supply price comparison detailing dollar amounts paid per kilowatt-hour.
- Smart Energy News, BGE's customer newsletter, incorporated directly into the regular bill pages

The bill refresh is part of BGE's ongoing efforts to meet customers' changing needs. It follows upgrades including the company's launch of new customer communications tools earlier this year, including the option to select text, email and phone communications to learn about specific

topics including energy use and outage status.

For more information on BGE's customer tools and programs, visit bge.com

BGE, founded in 1816 as the nation's first gas utility, is Maryland's largest natural gas and electric utility. Headquartered in Baltimore, BGE delivers power to more than 1.25 million electric customers and more than 650,000 natural gas customers in central Maryland. The company's approximately 3,200 employees are committed to the safe and reliable delivery of natural gas and electricity, as well as enhanced energy management, conservation, environmental stewardship and community assistance. BGE is a subsidiary of Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC), the nation's leading competitive energy provider. Like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter, YouTube and Flickr.

Citizens Group Will Convene to Begin Review of WSSC's Rate Structure

Input from broad spectrum of stakeholders will inform future of water and wastewater funding issues

LAUREL, MD—WSSC is convening a Stakeholders Representative Group (SRG) on Tuesday, November 1, at its Laurel headquarters for the first of three meetings to solicit feedback regarding potential water and wastewater rate structures. The SRG's members include civic federations, industry representatives, environmental groups and individual citizens.

WSSC has been examining its entire financial structure for a number of years with an eye on meeting current and future needs. Aging infrastructure, combined with flat water usage and growing population, is putting significant stress on WSSC's budget. The current conservation-based, tiered-rate structure has been in place for nearly 40 years and has come under increasing criticism. (The number of tiers was reduced from 100 to 16 in July 1992.)

In 2010, WSSC formed the Bi-County Infrastructure Funding Working Group, made up of representatives from Montgomery and Prince George's county government, WSSC staff and external subject matter experts. Included in the 2012 group recommendations was a comprehensive study of WSSC's basic rate structure.

The first meeting of the SRG will serve as an overview and orientation to its members. Black & Veatch, the consulting firm that is conducting the Comprehensive Cost of Service Analysis and Rate study, will facilitate the meeting. Subsequent meetings will be held on Tuesday, November 29, and Thursday, January 5, 2017. These meetings will delve deeper into WSSC-specific rate issues.

SRG meetings will be open to the public, with the first meeting being held at WSSC Headquarters, 14501 Sweitzer Lane, Laurel, MD 20707. All meetings will begin at 6:30 p.m. While the public is welcome to attend, questions or comments will be held until the end of each formal SRG session.

If you plan on attending or have questions, please contact Letitia Carolina-Powell at 301.206.8379 or Letitia.Carolina-Powell@wsscwater.com.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONY

The Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Southern Area Aquatics and Recreation Complex was held at the Brandywine Volunteer Fire Department Monday, November 14, 2016 at 10:30 AM. The 77,030 square feet facility will be located on 65 acre parcel owned by M-NCPPC known as Brandywine Area Park in Brandywine, Maryland along Missouri Avenue. More information to follow in my next article.

30th ANNIVERSARY FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

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 season 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, Community Service Providers Appreciation Night. Free on December 25. Sorry, cash only, checks and credit cards not accepted.

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

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Westphalia United Methodist Church Annual Christmas Concert will be Saturday December 17th at 6:00 PM. Rev. Dr. Timothy West is the Senior Pastor. Church address is 9363 D'Arcy Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT & VENDOR FAIR

Please join other crafters by participating in our Christmas Craft & Vendor Fair Saturday, December 3, 2016 from 8:30 AM-2:30 PM. (crafters/vendor set-ups 5:30 PM-7:30 PM, Friday December 2nd 7:00 AM-8:30 AM. Saturday, December 3rd). To reserve your space or get more information please e-mail: Newhopeevent@gmail.com or

call 301-627-0028. Limited number of tables for rent or bring your own table.

Fair will be at the Family Life Center/New Hope Fellowship-Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church. The address is 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

SPORTS PROGRAMS

Participate in year round sports for wellness and health opportunities. Programs offered are adapted sports, league play and many more. Activities include Ice skating, baseball, soccer, track and field, volleyball and many more activities. Contact pgparcs.com or 301-699-2255, TTY 301-699-2544 for more information.

ANNUAL PRAYER BREAKFAST

Join us Saturday, December 3, 2016 for St. Philip's Annual Prayer Breakfast at 9:00 AM. Guest Speaker will be Pastor Kermit C. C. Moore. Admission is \$10 Adults and \$5 for children 10 & under. The Prayer Breakfast will be at St. Philip's Church-Baden Parish.

The address is 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Telephone number is (301) 888-1536.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

Salary Negotiations Can Help Boost Your Income When Changing Jobs

Whether you're actively looking to make a move or being lured away by a recruiter, a new job offers many opportunities for growth. Discovering how different organizations run and tackling the learning curve during the first few months is part of the fun, and struggle, of making a change.

Switching employers can also greatly benefit your financial future. While staying at the same job could lead to a modest annual raise, you might be able to negotiate a much larger jump in pay when changing companies. Negotiating a job offer can be daunting, but consider what happens if you don't negotiate—you might wind up earning less than a hiring manager was willing to offer.

Do your homework to find an appropriate salary range before negotiating. Whether you are a veteran or a novice negotiator, you may want to spend time researching before sitting down at the table. Keeping in mind that compensation can vary depending on location, look online for studies or personal accounts that reveal the salaries of someone in a similar role.

Several for-profit companies compile and share compensation information online, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics has pay data based on occupation and geography. You could also reach out to recruiters who focus on placing candidates in your industry as they're accustomed to discussing compensation.

The more data on your profession's compensation you can get the better, because you want to be able to make a fact-based request. Ask for too much and you risk being seen as unreasonable or out of touch. Ask for too little, and that might be all you get.

Job seekers often get stuck on who says a number first. While advice ranges, one thing is for certain—you don't necessarily want to use your previous salary as a starting point. Especially if your research reveals you're below the current market rate, you want your next offer to reflect the experience and talent you bring to the table. If you're being pressed to respond first, answer with the salary range you're aiming for during your job hunt.

Don't get stuck on money—keep the big picture in mind. It can be easy to fixate on the cash portion of your compensation when negotiating, but sometimes there isn't any wiggle room in the budget. Look at the big picture of your potential pay and benefits. Perhaps a lower-than-desired cash offer is offset by a generous retirement contribution matching program, great health-care benefits, stock incentives or bonus opportunities.

When the total compensation doesn't meet your expectations, try to think outside the box and give the hiring manager alternative options. You could request additional paid time off, the freedom to work from home one day a week or a professional development stipend. After all, flexibility and personal growth can be more valuable than money.

At smaller companies, you could ask for a quarterly lunch with an executive in your department or your direct supervisor. A lunch won't cost the company much money, but it could give you insight into the company's future, let you know which skills to focus on developing and strengthen your personal relationship with higher ups.

Back up your request with valid reasons. Aim to reinforce each of your negotiation requests with a valid, relatable and quantifiable reason. When asking for more money, point to experience or skills that distinguish you from other candidates. Less traditional requests, such as meetings with an executive, could be justified by your dedication to self-improvement and desire to stay in touch with the company's needs.

Bottom line: While changing jobs and negotiating an offer can be a challenge, moving to a new company could accelerate your salary's growth. Before jumping into negotiations, take time to research the market, consider your overall wants and validate your requests. Presenting a coherent argument can help win over a hiring manager and set you apart from other candidates.

Morningside from A4

go on to Howard University for graduate school.

He worked 42 years in a Navy lab where he received more than two dozen patents for his inventions. His work was featured in *The Inventive Spirit of African Americans: Patented Ingenuity*.

He met his wife Minnie when they were teenagers in Mississippi and they married in 1964. They had three children; sadly, one son died in a car accident in 1984.

One of the last things George and Minnie did to-



Nathaniel Sillin is a financial advisor and author of the article.

gether was to vote early in the presidential election.

Milestones
Happy birthday to Darryl Moss, Nov. 26; Arthur Rose, Nov. 27; Thomas Shipman, Sr., Nov. 28; Devin Kane Blade, Nov. 29; Karen Windsor, Alexis R. Paige and Ramona Britt, Nov. 30; Mary Doyle, Susan McKay and Jon Foster, Dec. 1.

Happy anniversary to Gary and Ivy Kline on Nov. 28.

Happy Thanksgiving to all my Readers!

U.S. Department of Education Releases Guidance Encouraging Well-Rounded Education

By PRESS OFFICER
U.S. Department of Education

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. Department of Education today released non-regulatory guidance to help states, districts and schools provide students with a more well-rounded education under Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (SSAE). The new grant program in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) focuses on safe and healthy students, and how technology can be integrated into schools to improve teaching and learning in addition to emphasizing access to a well-rounded education that includes a wide variety of disciplines—such as music, the arts, social studies, environmental education, computer science and civics.

"As a social studies teacher, I know the value of a well-rounded education for students," said U.S. Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. "For me and for so many students, a wide range of possible subjects in school, powerfully and creatively taught, can be exactly what it takes to make the difference between disengagement and a lifelong passion for learning. Literacy and math skills are necessary but not sufficient for success in college, careers, and

life. The world our children will be working, leading and succeeding in will be one of constant innovation and connection from across the globe. In order to fully maximize the potential of this world of ideas and cultures, it's vital that we redefine a well-rounded education for all students that includes access to learning new languages, in addition to science, social studies and the arts. Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, we have an opportunity to broaden the definition of an excellent education to strike the right balance in our nation's classrooms and expand opportunities to learn for all students to build a strong foundation for college and career."

The guidance—which serves as a resource to help support effective implementation of the new grant program—provides examples of allowable uses of funds, discusses the role of state education agencies, details fiscal responsibilities, and identifies local application requirements.

Under the new program, states, districts and schools have the flexibility to tailor investments based on the needs of their unique student populations.

As King said earlier this year, while strong literacy and math skills are essential for success in college, career and life, they are not sufficient. King told the au-

thors at Las Vegas Academy of the Arts that varied disciplines—including music and the arts, social studies and civics, science and technology—"aren't luxuries that are just nice to have. They're what it means to be ready for today's world."

One recent survey found, though, that elementary school students spend just 21 minutes a day on social studies, and just a little bit more on science. With the passage of ESSA, states, districts and schools can refocus on the characteristics of a comprehensive, well-rounded education—and do so in ways that and ensure access and equity for all students.

Too often, students from low-income families and students of color do not have access to arts, science, social studies or advanced coursework. Likewise, gender gaps persist in many disciplines. Science achievement gaps can show up as early as kindergarten. Further, there is evidence that students get better at math when they take classes that make the connection between STEM and the arts. Students can also grow in self-confidence, in linguistic skills, and in creativity when they have certain courses in the arts.

Through this guidance, the Department provides resources, tools and examples of innovative strategies to support the ef-

fective implementation of the SSAAE grant program. Areas of focus include:

- Strategies to leverage federal, state, and local funds as well as develop partnerships to maximize the impact of the programs and services;
- Steps to guide districts in examining their needs and investing in areas that will have the greatest impact on their communities;
- Tactics to improve school conditions for student learning so students are healthy and feel safe and supported;
- Effective practices to carefully design and thoughtfully apply technology to accelerate, amplify, and support student learning;
- Approaches to engage students in educational opportunities across multiple subjects and domains.

Importantly, the guidance highlights that SSAAE funds may not be sufficient to independently fund many of these innovative activities. This guidance discusses leveraging other state and local resources in combination with the SSAAE grant funds to achieve the goals of SSAAE programs and activities. For the full guidance please visit <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essassaagrntguid10212016.pdf>.

Liberia from A1

Gerald F.B. Cooper, Planning Chair with Marylanders for Progress (Liberia) Inc., the Honorable John G. Bestman, Chair of the Board of the Liberia National Port Authority and David Williams, Managing Director of the National Port Authority of Liberia. Mr. Williams provided a detailed overview of the port system in Liberia and its value proposition for redevelopment.

"We are delighted to have been a part of today's briefing as we discussed how we can create a linkage between the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation and the Port Authority of Liberia," said

Williams. "This is an exciting time for Liberia as a result of the renaissance that has taken place in the country as a whole, but in particular the ports. We had a very interactive discussion about the port systems and how we can go about getting capital for some of the projects. We hope to establish a committee to have further discussions about collaborations that we intend to pursue. We are very glad to be here and express our gratitude to Mr. Jim Coleman and the entire EDC Team."

Members of the delegation were extremely interested in how the County and the U.S. can utilize its vast resources to bring foreign investors and better opportunities with key busi-

ness owners to redevelop and diversify the ports of Liberia. During their lively discussion, EDC Board member Eric Henderson suggested that the group formally adopt a memorandum of understanding that specifically identifies the most profitable investment opportunities in Liberia. With this document in hand, the EDC will be able to share Liberia's value proposition in tandem with local investment opportunities.

"I'm excited to be here to promote the interest of the Sister/State agreement with Liberia," said Morris Koffa, Co-Chair of the Maryland Liberia Sister State Committee. "I think the discussion we had today was quite interesting and

something that we can build on for the future. We hope to move forward with this program and shape other relationships with the help of the EDC. Together we can form a greater community for Prince George's County and Liberia."

The Sister State agreement was established in 2007 between Liberia and the State of Maryland to further enhance cultural and historic understanding and cooperation, and to promote international trade between the USA and Liberia. The MOU that will be created as a result of today's discussions will complement the Sister State agreement by stimulating the port economy and enhancing the quality of Liberia's imports.

Exoneree from A1

"It was a heart-wrenching experience," Burgess, who was holding Dyson's body when police arrived, said. "Nobody can really understand what it's like to be innocent and still go about your daily activities as if you were guilty."

Just three years after Burgess's conviction, a man named Charles Dorsey wrote multiple letters confessing to the murder, according to The National Registry of Exonerations, a law school project that tracks every known exoneration since 1989. He was then serving a 45-year prison term on different charges brought after Dyson's death.

However, it took 16 years—spanning multiple motions for new trials, the uncovering of new evidence, and the involvement of innocence advocates—before the prosecution agreed to vacate Burgess's conviction.

"To do something about him (Dorsey), they would've had to help me, and they didn't want to help me," Burgess said. "It wasn't in their best interest to admit they were wrong and I was right.

"You look back on all those years, and all the stuff they had," Burgess told Capital News Service. "People keep asking me all the time why they didn't do something—if I knew that, I'd be rich."

In Maryland, prosecutors and judges make it unusually difficult to overturn wrongful convictions, lawmakers and advocates say. Though the state boasts a Democratic electorate and a progressive legislature, its judicial and prosecutorial climate is surprisingly uncondusive to securing exonerations for the wrongfully convicted; meaning cases take far longer than expected.

"It is, for some reason, incredibly hard in Maryland to get prosecutors or judges to admit that people who are innocent get convicted," said Shawn Armbrust, executive director of the Mid-Atlantic Innocence Project, an advocacy group that helped Burgess become exonerated. "It's surprising, because it's Maryland—the legislature has been great, it's a progressive state—but there's not much enthusiasm in other areas of the system.

"If we were talking about Alabama, this wouldn't be a story. But we're not."

Not Alabama

To the layman, Maryland may appear poised to be a nationwide leader in exonerations. Some of the most high-profile cases took place here; Marylander Kirk Bloodworth became the first American to be spared the death penalty by DNA evidence, in 1993.

Most critically, its Democrat-controlled legislature is one of the most progressive in the country on the topic.

Since 2008, some members of the Maryland General Assembly have worked closely with innocence advocates to push through some of the most exoneration-friendly laws in the nation, among them progressive policies concerning eyewitness identification, false confessions, and post-conviction DNA testing.

In 2009, lawmakers enacted a statute that permits a convicted person to file a petition for a "writ of actual innocence" based upon a claim of newly discovered evidence—a relatively low bar, experts say.

However, these efforts have been stunted by state prosecutors and judges who appear unwilling to entertain the possibility of actual innocence, advocates and lawmakers say.

"The intent of the legislature has been to provide a mechanism for people who have been wrongfully convicted to have their cases heard and heard in an expeditious manner, but we don't see that happening," said Michele Nethercott, director of the University of Baltimore Innocence Project Clinic. "The legislative branch has been quite responsive; however, other players in the criminal justice system have not been."

This contrast is unique to Maryland, said Rebecca Brown, policy director for New York-based advocacy group Innocence Project.

"It's extremely rare that all of the innocence-related activity is centered in the legislature," Brown said. "Usually it's a cumulative effort."

In illustration, Armbrust points to neighboring Washing-

COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Announces More Than \$66 Million in Federal Energy Assistance Funding for Low-Income Maryland Families

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) today announced that \$66,017,758 in federal energy assistance funds will be available to Maryland families struggling to pay their heating bills this winter through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). In fiscal year 2015, Maryland LIHEAP provided 111,071 households with LIHEAP financial assistance.

"No family should be forced to choose between paying the heating bill and putting food on the table," Senator Mikulski said. "Too many people are being stretched and stressed by high energy costs. This critical energy assistance for

low income families will help those most in need care for themselves and their families as winter approaches."

"This is good news for low-income Maryland families who now know that their homes will be safe and warm during the cold winter months. LIHEAP is an indispensable lifeline for the most vulnerable among us," said Senator Cardin. "As temperatures begin to drop, I want struggling Marylanders to know that they have strong federal partners to provide the assistance they need to help prevent utility-shut offs this winter."

Eligibility for LIHEAP is based on income, family size and the availability of resources.



Winter Festival of Lights

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: WATKINS PARK

WINTER FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS AT WATKINS PARK

301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Runs November 25, 2016–January 1, 2017 from 5–9:30 p.m. daily. \$5 per car; \$15 for mini-buses and limos; \$25 for buses; \$10 for multi-visit passes for cars and vans (good for three visits). The festival is FREE on December 25. You may bring canned food items to donate to local food banks for the holidays. Winter Festival of Lights is Prince George's County, Maryland's spectacular drive-through Christmas light display featuring more than a million twinkling lights.

The park is also home to the following facilities: Watkins Nature Center, the Chesapeake Carousel, Old Maryland Farm, the Watkins Regional Park miniature train and the Watkins Miniature Golf Course. Those who enjoy nature, sports, picnics, hiking, camping, or outdoor family activities will find plenty to do at Watkins Regional Park. Throughout the year the park hosts a variety of exciting special events including summer concerts in the park, the Winter Festival of Lights, National Senior Health Fitness Day, and charity runs/walks.

Cong. Chris Van Hollen House Democratic Minority Whip



Van Hollen Statement on Passage of Bill Inspired by Maryland Farmers

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen released the following statement after House passage of the Clyde-Hirsch-Sowers RESPECT Act, legislation co-sponsored by Congressman Van Hollen that would prevent the IRS from seizing taxpayer funds unless those funds were obtained from illegal activity:

"Today, the House took an important bipartisan step to protect American taxpayers from overzeal-

ous actions by the IRS. Thanks to the advocacy of Maryland farmers Randy and Karen Sowers, who had \$63,000 unnecessarily seized from their bank account by the IRS, this commonsense legislation is one step closer to helping other small business owners live without the fear and inconveniences they suffered. I commend Representatives Roskam and Crowley and members of the Ways and Means Committee for their bipartisan work on this issue."

Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



Bringing America Together for Our Children's Sake

If there is anything that we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves.

—Carl Gustav Jung

What kind of people do we want our children to be? What kind of moral examples, teachings, choices—personal, community, economic, faith, and political—are we parents, grandparents, community adults, political leaders, and citizens prepared to make in this new century and millennium to make our children strong inside and empower them to seek and help build a more just, compassionate, and less violent society and world?

Over two thousand years ago Jesus taught that "Man shall not live by bread alone." His message is in danger of being lost as so many of our children of privilege and poverty chase material idols that fade, and stuff themselves with the cultural junk foods of violence, drugs, greed, and material things that fail to fill the deeper hunger for community and purpose all humans share.

The twentieth century was characterized by stunning scientific and technological progress. We split the atom, pierced space, walked on the moon, landed on Mars, and broke the genetic code. Instant communication led to an information explosion and daily money trading in the trillions. We witnessed astonishing and unjust increases in wealth for a few resulting from a tiny microchip and we can fly through the air faster than the speed of sound and cruise the seas quicker than the creatures inhabiting them. We created the capacity to feed the world's population and to prevent the poverty that afflicts millions of humankind. But something is missing. Our scientific and military progress have not been accompanied by comparable moral and spiritual progress.

Every child today is endangered by our violence-saturated culture and excessive consumerism and greed. Buying is equated with happiness. Possessing things is equated with suc-

cess. Children are marketed sex, alcohol, tobacco, and guns as the way to be accepted and hip. And a child or teen dies every 3 hours and 28 minutes from gunfire and is injured by a gun every 35 minutes in a nation where guns, other than toy guns, are the only unregulated consumer product although they take 30,000 lives a year, more than 2,500 of them child and teen lives.

I believe the Old Testament prophets, the Gospels, the Koran, other great faiths, history, moral decency, and common sense beckon us to examine anew as individuals and as a people what we are to live by and teach our children by precept and example. Parents, grandparents, teachers, preachers, neighbors, people of conscience, and people of faith must lift a strong counter voice to the corrupting messages of our culture and political process and teach our children that they can and must make a difference and be bridges between people of all colors, genders, sexual orientation, politics, and cultures.

I believe each of us is put on this earth for a purpose and with the duty to make our world a bet-

ter place. My parents and Black community elders taught, by word and deed, that service is the rent each of us pays for living and that the only thing that lasts is what is shared with others. They passed down the habit of service by creating opportunities for children to serve at very young ages. They took us to help the poor with them. They taught us about the duty of citizenship by taking us with them to vote. And they made sure we met great role models including great Black college presidents like Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, Dr. Mordecai Johnson, great singers Richard Hayes, Dorothy Maynor and Marian Anderson. And they taught us about our historic s/heroes like Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and Frederick Douglass to let us know there was a big world of opportunity beyond our segregated small town Jim Crow southern existence by following their courageous examples. They also taught that service and charity are not enough—that we must also raise our voices for justice

See WATCH, Page A8

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



Do Not Be Complacent in the Face of Hate

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."
—President Abraham Lincoln,
"House Divided" Speech, June 16, 1858

The day after Trump was elected the 45th president of the United States of America, a group of middle school students in Royal Oak, Michigan chanted, "build the wall" in their school cafeteria during lunchtime—a core Trump campaign slogan and promise to secure our nation's border with Mexico. On November 9, Minnesota high school officials discovered racist graffiti and Trump rhetoric scrawled in a boy's bathroom. The graffiti included #GobacktoAfrica, #Whitesonly and the Trump campaign's rallying cry to "Make America Great Again." Only a day after Trump became our country's President-elect, a woman in New York City, who was wearing a hijab, was told by a man on the subway, "Your time is up, girlie." The President-elect's campaign was no stranger to stirring anti-Muslim sentiment. As a candidate, Trump repeatedly called for a complete ban on Muslims entering the United States.

When confronted with reports of these hate crimes and harassment during an interview on *60 Minutes*, Trump said, "I am so saddened to hear that," adding, "And I say, stop it. If it, if it helps, I will say this and I will say right to the

cameras: Stop it." If only it were that easy, President-elect Trump.

What candidate Trump willfully disregarded, and would not denounce, during his quest for the White House, President Trump will soon have to grapple with in our freshly divided nation: you cannot court those mired in racist, misogynist or homophobic ideology—tacitly endorse and legitimize hate—then expect to put the deplorables back in the basket.

Since Election Day, there has been a disheartening spike in hate crimes and harassment. The surge in hate crimes is even more horrifying when you recognize that these acts of violence and hate are being done in the name of the President-elect, and by individuals invoking his campaign's divisive rhetoric. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which has been keeping a running tally of these crimes through "Hatewatch," there have been more than 400 incidents of hate, harassment and intimidation following the election. The reports were collected from social media, news reports and from direct submissions to the SPLC's #ReportHate page. We must report these crimes and hateful incidents. Help SPLC monitor these incidents to create the database and evidence that bears out our worst fear: that while America might feel great again for some, it has become appallingly unsafe for others.

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Sometimes School Complaints Shouldn't Be Ignored

Most children will occasionally complain about school. Every student has days when things don't go quite right. But when complaints are frequent, and more than just the "I don't like school," or "Math is too hard," it may be time to listen more carefully.

There are a number of ways in which a child may be trying to express deeper problems and that he or she needs some help. Children find it hard to say "I'm confused," or "I feel inadequate." Preteens and teenagers especially may have trouble admitting that they're struggling. Instead of saying, "I need help with my schoolwork," they say, "I hate school" or "My teacher is out to get me."

These comments, when frequent, and when combined with other behaviors, are often an indicator that serious school-related problems may exist.

Such behaviors may be your child being reluctant to discuss school and suddenly exhibiting a lack of motivation or confidence. He or she may be angry and hostile in regard to homework and studying, or very defensive or afraid in regard to criticism. A child may start to be withdrawn, avoiding any school-related questions and perhaps act self-condemning by saying things like "I'm stupid" or "I just can't do it."

When these signs are combined with declining or failing grades, it's a red flag that prompt action is needed. Ignoring the problem can affect a child's total well-being as self-esteem declines and negative behaviors may begin to increase.

A first step is to let your child know you understand and empathize with the difficulties being faced. Try talking about your own school struggles, offering academic assistance and complimenting cooperation and progress in order to rebuild confidence. If you find you can't effectively assist with homework or studying, and many parents can't, consider a qualified tutor to help overcome the academic problems.

You should also talk with your child's school counselor. He or she will have seen similar situations and will have the training and experience to offer assistance on how best to help your child. They may even have alternative explanations, from the school's perspective, on why your child is struggling.

School can and should be a positive and enjoyable experience for your student. Being alert for when a child is asking for help, even though indirectly, can bring not only better academic success, but a happier, better balanced child.

Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org

Business Spotlight

IRS Tax Preparedness Series: Special Tax Breaks for U.S. Armed Forces

ANNAPOLIS, MD—As tax filing season approaches, the Internal Revenue Service wants members of the military and their families to know about the special tax benefits available to them.

IRS Publication 3, *Armed Forces Tax Guide*, is a free booklet packed with valuable information and tips designed to help service members and their families take advantage of all tax benefits allowed by law. Here are some of those tax benefits.

- Combat pay is partially or fully tax-free. Service members serving in support of a combat zone may also qualify for this exclusion.

- Reservists whose reserve-related duties take them more than 100 miles from home can deduct their unreimbursed travel expenses, even if they don't itemize their deductions.

- The Earned Income Tax Credit may be worth up to \$6,269 for low- and moderate-income service members. A special computation method is available for those who receive nontaxable combat pay. Choosing to include it in taxable income may boost the EITC, meaning owing less tax or getting a larger refund.

- An IRA or 401(k)-type plan might mean saving for retirement and cutting taxes too. Service members who contribute to a plan, such as the Thrift Savings Plan, may also be able to claim the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit.

- An automatic extension to file a federal income tax return is available to U.S. service members stationed abroad. Also, those serving in a combat zone typically have until 180 days after they leave the combat zone to file and to pay any tax due. For more information, see Miscellaneous Provisions — Combat Zone Service.

- Most military bases offer free tax preparation and filing assistance during the tax filing season. Some also offer free tax help after the April deadline. Service members who prepare their own return qualify to e-file their federal return for free using IRS Free File.

- Both spouses normally must sign a joint income tax return, but if one spouse is absent due to certain military duty or conditions, the other spouse may be able to sign for him or her. A power of attorney is required in other instances. A military installation's legal office may be able to help.

- Those leaving the military and looking for work may be able to deduct some job search expenses, such as the costs of travel, preparing a resume and job placement agency fees. Moving expenses may also qualify for a tax deduction.

The IRS has a special page on IRS.gov with Tax Information for Members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

MGM National Harbor Will Offer Elegant Meeting Spaces and Customized Experiences Within New Integrated Resort

By PRESS OFFICER
MGM National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, MD—When the doors of MGM National Harbor open later this year, the integrated resort will provide a premier destination for groups who expect the best in amenities and service. The \$1.4 billion MGM Resorts International property will be like no other in the DMV (Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia) region and will be available to host small private gatherings, engaging meetings, wedding receptions and elegant galas.

With 50,000 square feet of versatile meeting space, the MGM National Harbor Conference Center has been thoughtfully planned with ballrooms, meeting rooms and boardrooms adjacent to open, airy foyers overlooking The Conservatory and tree-lined streets. All meeting spaces will incorporate sister properties' names to highlight the resort's connection to other top destinations: the 16,200-square-foot MGM Grand Ballroom with a wall of floor-to-ceiling windows and 6,000-square-foot terrace with spectacular views of the Potomac River; the 4,284-square-foot Bellagio Ballroom; three 1,838-square-foot meeting rooms—ARIA, Mandalay Bay and Beau Rivage; and two Mirage Boardrooms. Technology throughout the space will allow meeting planners to conduct business with ease. A video wall will welcome attendees or highlight a company's latest product; a 64x64 matrix router will provide intra-room connectivity to share audio, video and data throughout any room in the conference center; boardrooms will



PHOTO COURTESY MGM NATIONAL HARBOR

MGM National Harbor's 50,000 square feet of meeting space will feature ballrooms, meeting rooms and boardrooms, including the 16,100-square-foot MGM Grand Ballroom.

feature built-in 90-inch screens with video/teleconferencing capability and every room will have fiber optic ports.

For uniquely tailored meeting locations, the 308-room resort and casino has been designed with stunning indoor and outdoor venues providing groups numerous options to customize their event. The 3,000-seat Theater at MGM National Harbor will feature seven VIP suites and scalable chair and table designs to tailor set ups for high-impact banquets, speaking engagements, product launches and general sessions. Based on the configuration, the multi-use venue can accommodate groups from 500 to 4,000.

Overlooking the harbor with breathtaking views of the Potomac River and the nation's capital, Potomac Plaza will incorporate a soothing fountain and reflecting pool surrounded by lush greenery. These elements

will complement beautiful vistas, setting the stage for memorable outdoor events for groups of 50 to 500. Other locations available for private events will include the pool deck as well as the Capital and Corner Suites.

The resort's talented catering team will create food and beverage experiences to enhance any occasion. From popular regional cuisine featuring local-sourced foods to the finest international fare, guests are sure to enjoy the variety of culinary delights.

Beyond the meeting space, the resort will feature a powerhouse lineup of celebrated chefs including José Andrés, Marcus Samuelsson, and Bryan and Michael Voltaggio. Each concept has been carefully crafted to pay homage to the culture and influence of the region's prominent culinary landscape.

After a day of meetings, guests can unwind in luxury.

Spacious guest rooms, with floor-to-ceiling windows, will be stylish and refined with meticulous attention to detail throughout. Wi-Fi and Bluetooth technology will be standard throughout all rooms, enabling guests to conveniently stay connected.

"Our resort will offer groups flexible space as part of a stunning venue and overall experience," said Sheila Hession, executive director of Sales for MGM National Harbor. "A short distance from Washington, D.C. and just minutes from Alexandria, VA, MGM National Harbor will provide a resort destination unlike any other on the East Coast."

For more information or to book a meeting or event, please contact the MGM National Harbor Group & Catering Team at (301) 971-5800 or visit online at mgmnationalharbor.com/en/meetings-groups.

Exonerated from A3

ton, D.C., where its Superior Court initiated forming a committee to examine wrongful convictions, and nearby Virginia, where she says multiple prosecutors are "more receptive to these cases."

Utah, Alaska, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota and New Jersey also have courts that have issued rules to streamline the exoneration process, Brown said.

"That hasn't happened in Maryland," Armbrust said.

Enormous delays

As a result, trying to secure exonerations for those wrongfully convicted takes longer than it does in other states.

The nation has seen 1,913 exonerations since 1989, according to the National Registry of Exonerations. Maryland has seen 24, and neighboring states Virginia and Pennsylvania have seen 43 and 59, respectively, in that time.

Those wrongfully convicted in Maryland have spent an average of 11.3 years locked up; almost three years longer than the national average of 8.8 years, according to the National Registry of Exonerations.

"We see enormous delays," Nethercott said.

State judges are hesitant to grant motions for new trials. And, when they do, they delay the docketing of the cases, Nethercott said.

Moreover, state prosecutors and judges frequently oppose the release—let alone the testing—of new evidence, one of the ways

they can make it extremely difficult for defense attorneys to secure objects that may help prove their client's innocence, Nethercott said.

Malcolm Bryant, whose 1999 murder conviction was vacated in May, was also prosecuted in Baltimore City. It took him and his legal team eight years—and multiple trials—to obtain the release of the DNA evidence that proved him innocent.

"When the person is in the category of being wrongfully convicted, to put so many additional obstacles in their path is just immoral and counterproductive," state Sen. Delores Kelley, D-Baltimore County, said.

Slow-moving

"Often the response is not only surprising," Nethercott said. "The level of outright hostility we often encounter in connection with these claims—that's a little discouraging."

One possible reason prosecutors and judges could be so opposed is that vacating a conviction contradicts everything they work toward.

"It's hard for them to think, 'I did something that resulted in someone getting convicted,'" Nethercott said. "They view themselves as advocating on behalf of those victimized ... the idea that they may have participated in bringing about an injustice is at odds with their self-concept."

Another potential explanation is that entertaining the idea of wrongful convictions would mean having to evaluate the effectiveness of the criminal jus-

tice system.

"There's a fear that if you admit innocent people are in jail, you open up the system to too many questions," Armbrust said.

Rather, prosecutors in Maryland "tend to like the status quo," said Kelley.

"They do what they think will keep everybody comfortable," Kelley said. "It's sad, but I think that's impacting (exonerations) significantly."

The state's prosecutorial and judicial communities are taking steps to address the issue of wrongful convictions—just at a slower pace than the legislature, said Lauren Lipscomb, chief of the Baltimore City Conviction Integrity Unit.

"We're moving in the right direction," said Lipscomb. "I just think that with most things in the criminal justice field, things tend to be slow-moving."

However, some prosecutors say the state already has "robust post-conviction procedures," rendering any further progress on their part unnecessary.

"There are a number of places to make sure that we have it right with the right defendants," said Baltimore County State's Attorney Scott Shellenberger. "A lot of things have happened. We've made a lot of progress."

Shellenberger says the legislature's progressive stance on exoneration means that action on behalf of the state's prosecutors is redundant.

"I don't know how much farther we have to go," Shellenberger said. "We got a lot of laws."

Former Maryland Attorney General Douglas Gansler says se-

curing an exoneration isn't difficult—there just aren't any innocent people in jail in Maryland.

"It's not hard to get someone exonerated," said Gansler, who held office from 2007 to 2016. "There just aren't people who aren't guilty in jail."

When asked if he thought the state could use more Conviction Review Units like Baltimore City's, Gansler said Maryland doesn't need them.

"Every case that should be reviewed is reviewed," Gansler said. "There's no question of actual innocence."

The legislature is "skewed" to favor defendants, meaning that those accused are afforded so many protections that they are rarely—if ever—wrongfully convicted, Gansler said.

"There are just very, very, very innocent few people sitting in jail in Maryland," Gansler said. "There is nothing a lawyer would rather do than defend an actually innocent person, they are just extremely far and in-between."

Time for change

Looking back on that October night, Burgess says he bears no regret in remaining at the scene of the crime. If he hadn't, Dyson's young children would have discovered her body instead of him, he said.

"I slept well (in jail) every night because I did the right thing, even though it got me in a situation I had to endure," Burgess said. "Had I left, they would've had to have seen what I saw—and I wouldn't wish that on anybody."

"But that doesn't make what happened to me right."

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review

American Honey

American Honey
Grade: B+
Rated R, pervasive profanity,
sexual dialogue, graphic nudity,
bad teenage behavior
2 hrs., 43 min

American Honey won't make you feel very hopeful about The Kids These Days, but it may fill you with compassion for a generation of unwanted young Americans left to fend for themselves in a cratered economy and a collapsed middle class.

With a perceptive eye and unflinching attitude toward the trashy behaviors exhibited by rudderless, underprivileged teens, writer-director Andrea Arnold presents the story of Star (Sasha Lane), an Oklahoma girl who says she's 18 (we'll take her word for it) and escapes her dreary existence by joining a crew of feral kids who go door-to-door, town-to-town selling magazines. ("Does anybody actually buy those anymore?" Star asks. "F*** no" is the reply.) This motley assortment of tattooed, tank-topped youth, many of them played by non-actors found by Arnold, has for their captain one Jake (Shia LaBeouf), a rat-tailed trailer-park Casanova whose charms are the primary reason Star joins up. The real boss,



ROTTENTOMATOES

Star, an adolescent girl from a troubled home, runs away with a traveling sales crew who drive across the American Midwest selling subscriptions door to door. Finding her feet in this gang of teenagers, one of whom is Jake, she soon gets into the group's lifestyle of hard-partying nights, law-bending days, and young love.

though, is Krystal (Riley Keough), barely older than her employees, sometimes clad in a Confederate flag bikini, and not one to be messed with.

Arnold vividly captures the cocky ignorance and exuberant recklessness of kids who were never taught any better, re-

minding us that such young people are often sexualized by adults (and each other) while presenting a convincing depiction of a foolish young romance. Newcomer Sasha Lane, whom Arnold discovered on a beach during Spring Break, is uncannily good as the

wayward Star, earning our sympathy as she naively navigates her way into adulthood. Her arc is one of redemption, and the film's unwieldy length (163 minutes) underscores the scope of her personal odyssey. Some of the kids, at least, may be all right.

PG County from A1

tional Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC).

Commissioner Will Doerner brings a combination of practical and academic experiences in local planning issues to the Commission. He has served for the past two years on the Hyattsville Planning Committee and has worked in property appraisal and valuation for both state and county agencies in Florida. While earning his doctoral degree, he designed and taught classes on housing markets and land use regulations. Currently, he works at the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) where one of his main responsibilities is to produce nationwide house price measures; he also conducts applied research to help inform policy de-

cision-making in housing finance. Dr. Doerner has published over a dozen articles in academic journals on a range of topics like finance, housing, property taxation, and policy, and has presented at a number of national and regional conferences. He earned a Ph.D. and M.S. in Economics from Florida State University, and a B.S. in Mathematics-Economics and Urban Studies from Furman University. He was also a Rotary Ambassadorial Scholar in Guatemala, and is fluent in Spanish. Commissioner Doerner was appointed to fill the unexpired term of former Commissioner John Shoaff.

Commissioner A. Shuanise Washington is the president and chief executive officer of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. (CBCF) where

she oversees CBCF's public policy, research, educational and fund raising initiatives, including the Annual Legislative Conference (ALC). She previously served as a member and Chairwoman of the Foundation's Board of Directors and Corporate Advisory Council. Prior to her appointment as president of CBCF, she served as Principal of Washington Solutions, LLC, a provider of management consulting services for small, medium and large businesses, governments, and non-profit organizations—an organization she founded after retiring from a distinguished career in corporate America. During that career she served as Vice President, Government Affairs Policy & Outreach and Vice

President, External Affairs, for Altria Corporate Services,

and District Director, State Government Affairs for Philip Morris Management Corp. Commissioner Washington holds a B.S. degree in humanities and social sciences from the University of South Carolina, and a Cognate in mathematics. In addition to the numerous charitable efforts she undertakes, Ms. Washington is past chair of the board for the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation and is a member of The Future PAC, the Community Foundation Prince George's County and The Links, Incorporated. She has received numerous awards and has been featured in various national and local publications.

To learn more about the Prince George's County Planning Board visit www.pgplanning.org/Planning_Board.

Cal Ripken from A1

windows, lighting and plumbing throughout the club.

"Thanks to a team effort, kids in the Langley Park area now have a facility they can be proud of and where they can continue to play, learn and grow in a positive environment," said Steve Salem, president of the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation. "Because of dedicated partners and volunteers in New York Life, the Home Depot Foundation and Aaron's, we can continue to make a difference for our youth and inspire them to be catalysts for change within their respective communities."

The Clean-Up Day included guest speakers Ed Nemecek and Scott Caggiano, Managing Partners, New York Life's Baltimore General Office; Tim Bauer, College Park Home Depot Store Manager, Aaron's; and Steve Salem, President, Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation.

The refurbishments were made possible thanks to donations from The Home Depot Foundation and Aaron's. Following the Clean-Up, local

youth participated in a sports skills clinic and received an equipment donation courtesy of BSN Sports and the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation.

"We are excited to be partnering with the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation once again to dedicate a day toward improving a space that impacts kids within our local communities," said Nemecek.

To date, the Ripken Foundation has completed 60 multipurpose, synthetic turf Youth Development Parks in 16 states, including 13 throughout the Maryland-Washington D.C. region. Additionally, the Ripken Foundation continues to reshape the relationship between law enforcement and youth in Baltimore communities through its Badges for Baseball juvenile crime prevention program.

About the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation (CRSF)

For the last 15 years, the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation has worked tirelessly to implement youth development programs that directly address the prob-



PHOTO COURTESY MAROONPR.COM

lems facing at-risk youth in distressed circumstances across the country. Inspired by one of the most iconic baseball families, the Ripkens created the Cal Ripken, Sr. Foundation to honor the legacy of its family patriarch, longtime coach, and mentor, Cal Ripken, Sr. The Ripken Foundation use sports-themed programs to bring police officers, youth partners and underserved kids ages 8 to 14 together on a

level playing field to learn invaluable life skills.

In addition, the Ripken Foundation's Youth Development Park Initiative creates clean, safe places for kids to play on multi-purpose, synthetic surface fields that promote healthy living in an outdoor recreational facility. In

See CAL RIPKEN Page A7

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Ruth Bader Ginsburg Could Not Be More Wrong About Colin Kaepernick



There is perhaps no liberal in the land held in higher esteem than Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. "The Notorious RBG," as she is known, is the first Supreme Court Justice to not merely have admirers but actual fans. Whether or not one believes she has earned this iconic status really depends on whether you think SCOTUS decisions are the result of the sage judicial reasoning of the nine—or eight—individuals in black robes or a political reflection of social movements and shifts in public opinion.

For all her lefty street cred, in recent comments about Colin Kaepernick's anthem protests against police violence the progressive champion sounded anything but. Speaking on Yahoo News to Katie Couric, Ginsburg said of all the athletes, band-members, and cheerleaders taking a knee:

I think it's really dumb of them. Would I arrest them for doing it? No. I think it's dumb and disrespectful. I would have the same answer if you asked me about flag-burning. I think it's a terrible thing to do. But I wouldn't lock a person up for doing it. I would point out how ridiculous it seems to me to do such an act. If they want to be stupid, there's no law that should be preventive. If they want to be arrogant, there's no law that prevents them from that. What I would do is strongly take issue with the point of view that they are expressing when they do that.

There is a great deal to unpack here.

First I am less struck by the words "dumb," "stupid," and "arrogant" than by the words she does not say: "police," "racism," "injustice," or "death." There is no reckoning with the reason why so many people feel driven to kneel in protest and raise their fist in the name of black lives. It's as if she doesn't take this seriously; as if Colin Kaepernick is taking a knee because he's a bud of Ashton Kutcher and this is all just an elaborate reboot of *Punk 'd*.

I also find it disturbing that she would even broach the idea of arresting people for taking a knee, even if to say that she wouldn't be for it, as if that should in any way be a legitimate part of this discussion.

It is stunning that a person who has demonstrated such erudition, thoughtfulness and, when necessary, righteous rage, can be so slapdash, condescending and completely absent of empathy. As former NFL player Shannon Sharpe said, "I would ask Justice Ginsburg that when you see a man crying, don't tell him to stop crying."

These comments reveal a gap between The Notorious RBG's reputation and the views of the actual human being beneath the robe. If there is one word to sum it up, it would be the term she uses to describe Kaepernick: arrogant. It is arrogant for a Supreme Court Justice to make no mention of the ways in which the American legal system has failed black Americans, especially the families of those whose loved ones have been killed by a police officer's bullets.

On Tuesday Kaepernick spoke out in response to to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's criticism:

It is disappointing to hear a Supreme Court justice call a protest against injustices and oppression 'stupid, dumb' in reference to players doing that. I was reading an article and it refers to white critique of black protests and how they try to de-legitimize it by calling it 'idiotic, dumb, stupid,' things of that nature, so they can sidestep the real issue. As I was reading that I saw more and more truth how this has been approached by people in power and white people in power in particular ... At the end of the day the flag is just a piece of cloth and I am not going to value a piece of cloth over people's lives. That's just not something I can do, it's not something I feel morally right doing and my character won't allow me to do that.

Whether you love or hate the San Francisco 49ers quarterback, his political principles and actions are anything but arrogant. He has enough money and fame to live in a bubble that could reflect his most bacchanalian dreams. Instead, he is risking his precarious place in the sports world by choosing this moment in his career to stand up. That's not arrogance. It's conviction. To even call Kaepernick "arrogant" sounds much too close to "uppity" for comfort.

She is entitled to her opinion, but this isn't a court of law. Any liberals who feel squeamish about criticizing Bader Ginsburg for her comments should straighten their spines and stand resolutely against her views. If we want to see justice in this country, it won't be the last time we will have to stand up to the Supreme Court, no matter who is on the bench.

Calendar of Events

November 24 — November 30, 2016

Black Friday Sale

Date and Time: Friday, November 25, 2016, 10 am–7 pm
Description: This is what holiday shopping was meant to be: calm, friendly, local, and full of beautiful items. One day a year, fittingly the day after Thanksgiving, we reduce our commission on sales and mark down everything in the Brentwood Arts Exchange Fine Craft Store 20%—but still pay the artists the same as with a regular sale.

Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Brentwood Arts Exchange,
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: Dodge Ball

Date and Time: Friday, November 25, 2016, 7–10 pm
Description: Teens will compete in a fun, competitive game of dodgeball. Bring a friend, pick a team and hit the floor.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10–17
Location: Rollingcrest-Chillum Community Center
6120 Sargent Road, Chillum, MD
Contact: 301-853-2005; TTY 301-699-2544

17th Annual Gingerbread House Show and Contest

Date and Time: Friday–Sunday, November 25–27; December 2–4; & December 9–11, 2016, 12 noon–5 pm

Description: For a sweet treat, view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses. No nibbling allowed! Visitors will have the opportunity to vote in the Viewer's Choice Award Competition.

Groups are welcome by appointment.
Cost: \$1/person; Ages 4 & under FREE
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum
14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive,
Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

30th Annual Winter Festival of Lights

Date and Time: Friday, November 25, 2016–Sunday,
January 1, 2017, 5–9:30 pm (nightly)

Description: Bring a little twinkle to your holidays at the 30th Annual Winter festival of Lights! Don't miss this spectacular holiday drive-through event of more than one million twinkling lights! Please bring a canned good to donate to local food banks.
Cost: (Cash only): \$5/cars and vans; \$15/mini-buses and limos; \$25/buses; \$10/multi-visit passes for cars and vans.

Ages: All ages
Location: Watkins Regional Park
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD
Contact: 301-699-2456; TTY 301-699-2544

Exhibition: Get to Know Your Wild Neighbor

Date and Time: Monday, November 28–Saturday,
December 31, 2016

Description: This exhibition features work from the children's wildlife program, "Get to Know." This educational wildlife organization was founded in 1999 by painter and naturalist Robert Bateman. During this program children have the opportunity to engage with nature in a way that may not be built into their daily lives. "Get to Know" encourages an active lifestyle while interacting with nature. The connections and discoveries made outdoors will be explored through artistic projects and exhibited in our gallery.

Cost: FREE
Ages: All ages
Location: Brentwood Arts Exchange at Gateway Arts Center
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-699-2544

Holiday Songs: Music Around the World

Date and Time: Thursday, December 1, 2016,
10:15 am & 12 noon

Description: Travel the globe and explore some of the many celebrations that happen this time of year in this musical revue. Learn about traditional holiday songs from around the world, including "I Have A Little Dreidel," "Auld Lang Syne," "Away in a Manger," and "Santa Lucia."

Songs and stories come together for a truly magical winter-time show.
Cost: \$8/person; \$6/groups of 20 or more
Ages: Recommended for Grades Pre-K–5
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Rd, Cheverly, MD
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

Cal Ripken from A6

just five years, the Ripken Foundation has 60 completed parks across the country, impacting over 235,000 kids annually. In 2015, the Ripken Foundation impacted over 1 million kids nationwide through its Youth Development Parks and mentor programs.

About New York Life

New York Life Insurance Company, a Fortune 100 company founded in 1845, is the largest mutual life insurance company in the United States* and one of the largest life insurers in the world. New York Life has the highest possible financial strength ratings cur-

rently awarded to any life insurer from all four of the major credit rating agencies: A.M. Best (A++), Fitch (AAA), Moody's Investors Service (Aaa), Standard & Poor's (AA+). Headquartered in New York City, New York Life's family of companies offers life insurance, retirement income, investments and long-term care insurance. New York Life Investments provides institutional asset management. Other New York Life affiliates provide an array of securities products and services, as well as retail mutual funds. Please visit New York Life's website at www.newyorklife.com for more information.

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EARTH TALK ... What Will Donald Trump Do About Climate and Environment?

Dear EarthTalk:

What kinds of changes to federal environmental policies can we expect to see from Donald Trump when he assumes the presidency?

—D. Shelley,
Boulder, CO

Like many Americans, environmental advocates are alarmed at the results of the 2016 election. What worries them most is Trump's call for renegeing on the landmark Paris climate accord which secured commitments from the world's largest polluters to scale back emissions. The agreement just went into force and the U.S. is committed to it for four years, but Trump insiders report The Donald may try to submit the agreement for ratification by an unsympathetic Senate (Obama has maintained ratification isn't necessary) in efforts to derail U.S. participation.

"If Trump yanks the United States out of the Paris agreement, the deal won't die, but momentum could wane," reports Brad Plumer on Vox.com. "One can imagine China and India deciding they don't need to push nearly as hard on clean energy if the world's richest and most powerful country doesn't care. At best, progress would slow. At worst, the entire arrangement could collapse, and we set out on a path for 4°C warming or more."

Another sore spot for environmentalists is Trump's attitude toward the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Initially Trump said he would disband the agency, but more recently said he would keep it in a stripped down form refocused on its "core mission of ensuring clean air, and clean, safe drinking water for all Americans." Myron Ebell, a leading climate skeptic with the Competitive Enterprise Institute and no friend to the environmental community, is slated to run the new leaner EPA.

Meanwhile, proponents of pipelines to move petroleum products from the great gas and oil fields of the northern U.S. and Canada are overjoyed at the Republican sweep of Election 2016. Given Trump's stated goals of reducing the federal government's role in energy and environmental policy while encouraging more infrastructure projects to connect production with markets and consumers, environmentalists are bracing for a revival of the much-disputed Keystone XL pipeline project that President Obama rejected last year. There are fears as well of a green light for the Dakota Access Pipeline project currently in a holding pattern as native and environmental protestors stage a civil disobedience camp-out nearby. Not surprisingly, shares in the two companies behind the respective projects rallied following the election.



CREDIT: GAGE SKIDMORE, FLICKRCC.

President-elect Donald Trump is planning to tap a leading climate change denier to lead a streamlined Environmental Protection Agency while finding a way to get the U.S. out of its emissions reduction commitments made by the Obama administration under the Paris climate accord.

For their part, environmentalists are already starting to refocus on what they can do without the support of the White House. "Under President George W. Bush, the environmental community took the battle to the courts and Congress and watch-dogged political appointees; we blocked attacks on the environment; we galvanized the public to take action," says Kate Colwell, an activist with the non-profit Friends of the Earth. "After the more recent fights to kill the Keystone XL pipeline, ban fracking and shut down coal plants, the environmental movement is stronger than we have ever been."

"We will have to harness our new energy, join together, and

use every strategy possible to fight against hate and greed and environmental destruction," she adds. "While I wish we had a different fight before us, we must fight the one presented to us. The future of our country and planet depends on it."

CONTACTS: Vox,
www.vox.com; Friends of the Earth, www.foe.org.

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

Laurel Museum Open House Celebrates Holidays

By PRESS OFFICER
Laurel Museum

LAUREL, MD—From a new Laurel Theater ornament to Lost Laurel books, throws, special gifts, refreshments and more the Laurel Museum's Holiday Open House will have something for everyone. This year's Open House will run Friday and Saturday December 2 & 3 from 10am-2pm and Sunday, December 4 from 1 pm-4pm. The Museum is located at 517 Main Street, Laurel, Maryland.

The Snow Hill Garden Club is offering 15 hand-made

wreaths this year. Costing \$35 they must be pre-ordered by November 27.

The newest holiday ornament features the recently demolished Laurel Theater as it looked in when it opened in October, 1929. The theater was a popular Laurel landmark for many years. Its movie theater life ran until 1976. The Petrucci family transformed it into Petrucci's Dinner Theater from 1977 to 1992. From 1992-2007 it was a series of comedy clubs. The doors closed for good in 2007. The building was purchased by the City of Laurel and torn down in 2016.

Those unable to visit the Laurel Museum for the open house will be able to order many of the Laurel-themed gifts online, including more than 18 ornaments featuring historic Laurel landmarks, including the Laurel Christmas Tree, Old Liz Fire Truck, the Avondale Mill and Main Street. Ornaments cost \$18.

The Laurel Museum is located at 817 Main Street, Laurel, Md. Its current exhibit "Behind the Bricks: 20 Years of the Laurel Museum" runs through December 18. Admission is Free. For information



PHOTO COURTESY LAUREL MUSEUM

Laurel Museum's newest holiday ornament

visit www.laurelhistoricalsociety.org or contact: info@Laurelhistoricalsociety.org, or call 301-725-7975.

Panel Discussion on Projects of Service to Refugees

Wednesday, November 30, Greenbelt Community Center—Save the Date, Spread the Word

By PRESS OFFICER
Laurel Museum

Greenbelters and their neighbors are invited to come learn more about actions of welcome to refugees, past and present, far and near, at a free panel discussion on Wednesday, November 30, starting 7 pm at the Greenbelt Community Center, 15 Crescent Road. The program will include an author's talk about her recent book on the history of sanctuary movements, followed by presentations about how

donors and volunteers can support current projects that serve refugees newly arriving in nearby communities.

Panelists will include:

- Linda Rabben, human rights activist, associate research professor of anthropology at the University of Maryland, and author of *Sanctuary and Asylum: A Social and Political History* (University of Washington Press, 2016).

- Mira Mendick, Community Resource Coordinator for refugee and immigrant services,

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area, the State Department liaison nonprofit resettlement agency for our area.

- A spokesperson for the Takoma Park Welcoming Group for Syrian Families and Maryland Welcomes Refugees network.

Prince George's County Peace & Justice Coalition is sponsoring the event as a follow-up to the "Maryland Welcomes Refugees" campaign that won several local government bodies' official statements in favor of a humanitarian response to Syrian and

other asylum seekers. (See <http://www.md4refugees.org>.)

Some partners in that mainly political campaign have gone on to undertake practical projects serving the refugee families being resettled in Maryland. After an election season laced with bitter remarks about minority and immigrant groups, come be uplifted by our panelists' accounts of ordinary citizens' quiet but persistent helpfulness to persecuted strangers.

For more information contact justpeacepg@earthlink.net or Lucy Duff at 301-577-2350.

WHAT SHOULDN'T BE RECYCLED?

Knowing what to recycle can be confusing. As new trash and recycling receptacles are placed in County offices as part of the County Office Recycling Program, it's important that everyone separate recyclables from trash correctly. Some items that are not recycled in Prince George's County include **plastic bags, forks, spoons and knives; facial tissue and paper towels; and, food, which should be completely removed from any recyclable food containers.** If the container has a cover it should not be placed in the recycling receptacle separately, but reattached to the container. For more recycling tips visit environment.mypgc.us.