

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Since 1932

Vol. 85, No. 12 March 23 — March 29, 2017

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JACK CHAVEZ

BHSL project engineer James O'Sullivan stands in front of the fluidized bed combustion unit at Double Trouble Farms in this Jan. 27, 2017, photograph. The company runs eight similar units in the United Kingdom.

Irish Firm Brings Renewable Energy To Maryland Poultry Industry

By JACK CHAVEZ
Capital News Service

RHODESDALE, MD—Bob Murphy's Double Trouble Farms may be the most cutting-edge poultry operation on the Eastern Shore right now.

But the significance of the farm in Rhodesdale, Maryland, is not the poultry itself. It's the

technology used to repurpose chicken manure.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture and Irish agri-tech company Biomass Heating Solutions Limited, or BHSL, have committed nearly \$3 million toward manure-to-energy technology that they hope will significantly reduce the impact of Murphy's chickens—and perhaps

one day all Eastern Shore poultry—on the Chesapeake Bay.

"Our main objective is bird enhancement," BHSL project engineer James O'Sullivan told the University of Maryland's Capital News Service. "We want to completely diminish ammonium (from Murphy's chickens to the bay). We want to reduce humidity (in the

chicken houses) and have a drier atmosphere for the birds, hence drier manure."

The project was completed and went online in December. While O'Sullivan oversees the equipment on the farm, BHSL runs it off-site.

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\$2.05 Million in Grants Awarded for Stormwater Management and Citizen Engagement Projects

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

LARGO, MD—The Prince George's County Department of the Environment and the Chesapeake Bay Trust announce the recipients of 23 grants for environment-friendly stormwater management and citizen engagement projects. Prince George's County neighborhood groups, faith-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and schools received support for projects that ranged from \$11,791 to \$500,000.

"The Trust is proud to be a partner with Prince George's County to distribute resources that engage residents and make a difference for our communities and the environment," said Dr. Jana Davis, Executive Director of the Chesapeake Bay Trust. "We know that greener neighborhoods, cleaner streams, and better natural resources all around are good for us, our businesses, our kids, and our health. These grants offer everyone in Prince George's the chance to take action and do something to improve their own communities."

"The Department of the Environment congratulates the recipients of these stormwater management and citizen engagement grants. We're proud of the environmental steward-

ship displayed by these organizations, communities and educational institutions in Prince George's County, and their commitment to responsible programs that reinforce best environmental practices, educate and engage residents, and reduce pollution and litter.

Grants totaling \$2.05 million were awarded, supporting on-the ground restoration projects that treat and control stormwater, support municipalities in the County to meet pollution and education goals for cleaner water, support and use County-based businesses, and provide citizen awareness and engagement to protect the County's natural resources. These projects include diverse communities and residents and strongly support County goals for environmental education. Established in 2014, the Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program focuses on water quality programs that achieve nutrient and/or sediment reduction from stormwater, citizen engagement projects that aim to involve residents and businesses in efforts to improve local watersheds, removing trash from streams, reducing pet waste, planting trees, engaging youth, and supporting faith-

See GRANTS Page A3

Update: PG County Board of Education Approves 2017–2018 School Calendar

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Prince George's County Public Schools will begin the 2017–2018 school year September 6 and end June 13.

The school system's request to begin prior to Labor Day was denied Tuesday by the State Board of Education. Last week,

the Prince George's County Board of Education approved a school calendar with August 22 as the first day of school for students and June 6 as the last day of school along with a post-Labor Day calendar.

Last August, Gov. Hogan issued an executive order mandating local education agencies

See CALENDAR Page A3

Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III Announces The Creation of More Than 15,000 New Jobs in Last 36 Months

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Recently released data from the State of Maryland's Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) shows that Prince George's County 3Q 2016 jobs numbers reached a new high for the Baker Administration at

313,192. Measured from the corresponding 3Q 2013 data, this is an addition of 15,070 jobs over a 36 month period. This is the highest level of 3Q jobs reported in Prince George's County since 2007, before the beginning of the impacts of the Great Recession.

See JOBS Page A7

Over 100 County Residents Compete For Coveted High-Wage Jobs at EDC Hiring Event for Dave & Buster's

By LORI C. VALENTINE
PGCEDC

LARGO, MD—Today, more than 100 candidates crowded the One Stop Career Center in at the Economic Development Corporation headquarters in Largo, Maryland with high expectations of securing gainful employment at the Capitol Heights Dave & Buster's. This popular restaurant and entertainment venue that consistently hosts capacity crowds Thursday through Sunday partnered with the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC) to fill more than 50 high-wage positions, many paying upwards of \$250 per night. EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman along with EDC Chief Operating Officer Paul Rowe welcomed the candidates and wished them the best of luck in becoming a part of a great international company like Dave & Buster's.

"Prince George's County has an outstanding talent pool, ready and willing to grow in a company like Dave & Buster's," said Coleman. "This is what the EDC is all about.



PHOTO COURTESY LORI C. VALENTINE

EDC President and CEO Jim Coleman and Pierre McCown, Talent Coordinator, Dave & Buster's welcome candidates at the EDC Hiring Event.

Helping County residents move from a job to a career and become wealthy in a company with great benefits and the opportunity to grow into management builds strong communities in Prince George's County. I'm excited about today's partnering event with Dave & Buster's."

Pierre McCown, Talent Coordinator for the Capitol Heights Dave & Buster's was delighted by the large turnout of candidates at the hiring event today. He explained that successful candidate will progress quickly at Dave & Buster's if they are team

players, open to new opportunities, and take their training seriously. Dave & Buster's prides itself on providing \$2,000 per employee on training before that em-

See HIRING Page A6

INSIDE

Maryland Students Continue Strong Showing on Advanced Placement

Both participation and success improved throughout the nation, according to the report, with 36.2 percent of public high school graduates now taking at least one AP course and 21.9 percent receiving a 3 or better.

Community, Page A3

Viola Davis: A Historic Talent Earns a Historic Distinction

When she was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame earlier this year, Davis marveled, "I can't believe my life." Indeed, her own story is worthy of the Hollywood treatment. She was raised in poverty by a mother who was maid and factory worker.

Commentary, Page A4

PG County Rushern L. Baker, III's Data Dazzles Technology Conference

"As a result of County Executive Baker's use of data, crime has been reduced by 50%, home values have increased by 14%, high school graduation rates have increased to 81% and our household median income has increased to nearly \$77,000" said Coleman.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review:

The LEGO Batman Movie

Once again computer-animated to look like everything was built out of Legos, the new film casts Batman (voiced by Will Arnett) as a self-centered, beatboxing egotist who sings songs about how awesome he is while saving Gotham but goes home every night to an empty mansion.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

I would like to know what good the EPA has done for the environment?

—Mary W.,
via e-mail

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

In search of Sunday School picture, Easter 1962

William "Billy" Hammett showed up at my door several days ago with a plea: Could I help him locate a photo taken in April of 1962, outside Bells United Methodist Church in Camp Springs.

Billy grew up on Robin Lane, the son of Joseph and Peggy Hammett. He attended Camp Springs Elementary, Surrattsville Junior High and graduated in 1971 from Suitland High School. He retired when he turned 60 and now lives in Indian Head.

But when he was nine, he attended Sunday School at Bells. On Easter Sunday, April 22, 1962, he had his class picture taken. He has seen that picture but cannot find it and it's important to him. The black-and-white photo features one teacher with ten children. He has visited Bells and other possible sources without luck.

Now he thinks someone will see this story and call him at 301-906-3695 if they have the picture or know where he can get it.

People

Prayers please: The Sisters who have a convent nearby, told me that eight Sisters of their order, the Daughters of St. Anne, were in a serious auto accident in Ethiopia last week. Four of the Sisters died. Two others are in critical condition.

County Executive Baker toured the new Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center, in Church Creek, Md., on March 17.

My daughter Kathleen Shearer came from West Chester, Ohio, to spend a week with me. Among other special events during her visit: she made her signature chicken & dumplings.

Applause

The 89th Aerial Port Squadron at Joint Base Andrews has won the Air Mobility Command's Large Terminal of the Year award for operations from Oct. 1, 2015 to Sept. 30, 2016. During that period it processed 75,000 passengers, 19 tons of equipment and more than 8,000 other SAMs.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

UNION UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S DAY

The Women of Union United Methodist Church invite everyone to join us at our United Methodist Women's Day 10:00 AM Worship Service Sunday, April 23, 2017. Our guest speaker will be Lay Minister Pearl E. Chase. The address is 14418 Old Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Rev. Dr. KD Weaver, Pastor.

CAMP SPRING FLING

Join us for a week of fun from April 18-21, 2017 at District Heights Elementary School from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. Paid staff is needed. Staff will have an opportunity to work with girls in Kindergarten through 5th grades as unit leaders and get paid having fun. Unit Leaders will participate in crafts, games, and traditional Girl Scout activities.

Camp Spring Fling is a community outreach camp designed as an introductory program for girls who are not currently Girl Scouts. The camp will be held at District Heights Elementary School, District Heights, Mary-

Coming up

Community Outreach at Suitland Road Baptist Church, 6412 Suitland Road. Free food and clothing will be available to the community, Saturday, April 1, 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Dr. Kelvin M. McCune, Pastor.

The Dr. Samuel A. Mudd House Museum, in Waldorf, opens for the 2017 season on March 25. The house is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sundays, noon to 4 p.m. For information, call 301-274-9358.

Morningside Election Day will be May 1, when voters elect two Council members.

Skyline's annual Flea Market will probably be on May 20 at the Morningside Firehouse. More information to follow.

Changing landscape

County Exec Baker wrote a powerful letter (which was published in The Washington Post) about why the FBI building belongs in Prince George's County. Landover and Greenbelt are the two possible locations. (The other is Springfield, Va.) However, the move is now on hold, due to the current government cutback.

The SunTrust Bank (once, Citizens Bank), on Branch Avenue at Beech Road, has closed.

Paisano's Pizza, at the intersection St. Barnabas, Temple Hill and Raleigh Roads, has opened in the former Jerry's.

Sardi's Peruvian Chicken, 3443 Branch Avenue, has opened in the former Tender Rib next to McDonald's.

Branch Avenue in Bloom has lost its funding. The office is closed and former director Jennifer Funn reassigned to a project in Baltimore County, effective March 1.

Thank you to John Scroggins for this information on the new and the gone in our greater area.

Morningside Memories

Boy Scouts of Troop 282 went on a weekend camping trip. With their packs, they hiked from Bells Church to Camp Shreve, the Clinton Troop's campsite. They were welcomed by the Clinton Troop, set up their equipment, and the two Troops had an enjoyable camping experience in

the snow, with the temperature about 20°. Boys from the Apache Patrol who made the trip were Leo Abernethy, Martin Miller, Jan Smith, Jay Smith, Robert Whipple and David Wilhelm. (Morning-Side-Lines, Jan. 1957)

Norris Pyles, owner of auto and truck dealerships, dies at 80

Norris C. Pyles, 80, a longtime resident of Temple Hills and Mechanicsville and a prominent Prince George's businessman, died March 2 in Bradenton, Fla. He was the son of Carlton and Mildred Pyles and an Oxon Hill High School graduate.

Norris was a residential real estate developer and homebuilder in Prince George's, St. Mary's, Charles and Kent County. He also owned two automobile dealerships in Maryland, a Pontiac and a GMC truck dealership in Waldorf and a Ford-Mercury dealership in Chestertown.

He was active in building and renovating churches in Maryland and Florida, served as a deacon in many churches and was a member of the Gideon Association and of the Southgate Lions Club.

One of his great joys in life was sharing with his sons their interest in skeet shooting, hunting and fishing.

He was preceded in death by his parents, twin sisters Marilyn and Martha Lee, and in 1983 by his son Richard C. Pyles, Sr. Survivors include Mary, his wife of 42 years, sister Janice Lucca, brother David Pyles, sons Alan Pyles and Steven Pyles, Sr., seven grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral services were in Bradenton.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Lewis Woods, March 24; Ken Kyser and Jay Rollins, March 25; Gina Foster, March 26; Walter Dimes, March 27; Robert Hay, Jr. and David Righter, March 28; Kimberly Smith, March 29; Akwete Bedewi, March 30; Sylvia Barbour and Mark Cummings, March 31.

Happy anniversary to Terry and Gina Foster on March 26; and Antoinette and Charles Matison, March 29.

GOSPEL MUSIC PROGRAM

You are invited to come enjoy an evening of Downhome Gospel Music Saturday, March 25, 2017, 3:00 PM at New Hope Fellowship Cooperative Parish Family Life Center. The program will feature The Mighty Wonders, The Briscoe Brothers, Liturgical Dancers and many more performers. There will be a free will offering (proceeds will go towards the Family Life Center Building Fund). For more information, contact the church at 301-888-2171 or e-mail: NewHope014@gmail.com. The address is 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

SOUTHERN AREA ASSESSMENT FESTIVAL

Join us at Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School for our Southern Area Assessment Festival Saturday, March 25, 2017 from 9:00 AM-4:00 PM. The school is located at 12650 Brooke Lane, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. To obtain more information, please call Lionel Harrell at 301-333-0963 or e-mail him at lionel.harrell@pgcps.org.

Neighborhoods

Maryland Day Celebration Offers Lots of Fun for the Entire Family

ANNAPOLIS, MD—For the tenth year in a row, the Four Rivers Heritage Area is sponsoring Maryland Day, a Friday-Sunday, March 24-26 event to commemorate the March 25, 1634 landing of the *Ark* and the *Dove* by English settlers at St. Clement's Island, in what is now St. Mary's County, Maryland.

This year, more than 20 historic and cultural sites in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County will offer more than 40 family-friendly events at no cost or \$1 per person. Participating sites and organizations include: Annapolis Maritime Museum, William Paca House and Garden, Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, Charles Carroll House, Watermark Tours, Maryland State House, Chesapeake Children's Museum, Maryland Theatre for the Performing Arts' Stage One, Maryland State Archives, Naval Academy Museum at Preble Hall, Galesville Heritage Society, Galesville Community Center, Historic London Town and Gardens and Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center.

Attendees are invited to stop by the Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Visitors Center at 26 West Street or the Information Booth at City Dock to pick up a complimentary Maryland Day program. A complimentary Maryland Day shuttle to select events in downtown Annapolis will depart from the 26 West Street Visitors Center from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, courtesy of Towne Transport.

For a complete listing of Maryland Day Weekend events, festivities and shopping discounts, Visit <http://www.visitannapolis.org/events/annual/maryland-day>.

Maryland Day is funded by the Four Rivers Heritage Area and participating venues to highlight the area's historic, natural and cultural sites. The event is managed by the Chesapeake Children's Museum and marketed by Evans Management LLC.

Maryland Casinos Generate \$128.7 Million in Revenue During February

Maryland Live Leads the Way for the Month at Nearly \$46.3 Million

BALTIMORE, MD—Lottery and Gaming today announced February 2017 revenue numbers for the state's six casinos: Hollywood Casino Perryville in Cecil County, Horseshoe Casino Baltimore in Baltimore City, Casino at Ocean Downs in Worcester County, Maryland Live Casino in Anne Arundel County, Rocky Gap Casino Resort in Allegany County, and MGM National Harbor in Prince George's County. Maryland's casinos totaled \$128,713,443 in revenue during February 2017—an increase of \$35,440,368, or 38.0%, compared to the February 2016 figure of \$93,273,076.

In a year-to-year comparison not including MGM National Harbor, which opened on Dec. 8, 2016, statewide casino revenue in February 2017 decreased by \$10,328,702, or 11.1%.

Maryland Live Casino led the way in February, totaling \$46,291,292 from both slot machines and table games. Maryland Live's gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$264.21 for slot machines, \$3,532.57 for banked table games and \$1,076.29 for non-banked table games. February 2017 revenue at Maryland Live decreased by \$7,719,352, or 14.3%, from February 2016. Maryland Live Casino operates 3,941 slot machines and 209 (157 banked and 52 non-banked) table games.

MGM National Harbor generated \$45,769,070 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day in February at MGM National Harbor was: \$263.27 for slot machines, \$5,802.68 for banked table games and \$1,483.00 for non-banked table games. MGM National Harbor operates 3,212 slot machines and 165 (126 banked and 39 non-banked) table games.

Horseshoe Casino Baltimore generated \$22,031,143 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$212.56 for slot machines, \$1,995.95 for banked table games and \$574.04 for non-banked table games. Horseshoe Casino's February 2017 revenue decreased by \$2,981,332, or 11.9%, from February 2016. Horseshoe Casino Baltimore operates 2,186 slot machines and 179 (154 banked and 25 non-banked) table games.

Hollywood Casino Perryville generated \$6,210,824 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$221.36 for slot machines, \$2,510.46 for banked table games and \$424.81 for non-banked table games. Hollywood Casino's February 2017 revenue decreased by \$297,693, or 4.6%, from February 2016. Hollywood Casino Perryville operates 850 slot machines and 20 (12 banked and 8 non-banked) table games.

Rocky Gap Casino Resort generated \$4,364,925 from both slot machines and table games in February. Gross gaming revenue per unit per day was: \$205.73 for slot machines and \$1,142.31 for banked table games. This facility does not have non-banked table games. Rocky Gap Casino Resort's February 2017 revenue increased by \$531,337, or 13.9%, from February 2016. Rocky Gap Casino Resort operates 662 slot machines and 17 table games.

Casino at Ocean Downs generated \$4,046,190 from slot machines in February, and its gross gaming revenue per unit per day was \$180.30. Casino at Ocean Downs' February 2017 revenue increased by \$138,339, or 3.5%, from February 2016. Casino at Ocean Downs operates 800 slot machines and does not have table games.

Under Maryland law, casino revenue supports the Maryland Education Trust Fund as well as small-, minority- and women-owned busi-

nesses, local impact grants and the state's horse racing industry. February 2017 contributions to the state from all six Maryland casinos and fiscal year-to-date totals are documented in the attached spreadsheets and available online.

Maryland Lottery and Gaming is responsible for oversight of the state's casinos. In this role, the agency provides direction and guidance to its casino partners on financial, security, regulatory and licensing procedures for the facilities. To keep Marylanders informed and to maintain transparency of casino operations, monthly financial reports are posted on gaming.mdlottery.com. Maryland Lottery and Gaming reminds players to play responsibly and within their budget; resources are available at mdgamblinghelp.org or by calling 1-800-GAMBLER.

America's First Gourmet Biscuit Co. Expands Headquarters

FREDERICK, MD—Mama Biscuit's Gourmet Biscuit Co. (MBGB), America's first gourmet biscuit baking company, founded by Lesley Riley, has grown by leaps and bounds. From the first online sale in May 2015, MBGB quickly became the biscuit darling to local wineries, wholesalers, and supermarkets like Wegmans and Whole Foods. Other food markets have retained the gourmet biscuit leader to make private label goods. Like well-proofed dough, Mama Biscuit has expanded out of an incubator shared the kitchen at Clustered Spires Bakery located in Frederick, Maryland. Beginning March 2017, MBGB is relocating to 7,500 square foot warehouse and office space at 7309 D Grove Road, Frederick, MD. In 2017, Mama Biscuit will more than double their staff to 20 employees and with projections to double that number by 2018.

No stranger to the kitchen, Riley owned and operated her own successful, Southern-style restaurant in North Carolina. Mama Riley's mission is to "bring a Northern flair to a Southern classic" and quality is baked into every item she allows out the door. Mama Riley and her team, have created over 50 signature heart-shaped, biscuit recipes. The top sellers include both sweet and savory offerings, like her famous Chicken Pot Pie and Bananas Foster with salted Pecan Praline, Kahlua stuffed Brie with brown sugared pecans, Spiced Mango with Tequila-Lime glaze. Gluten-free versions are available.

"The unique flavor combinations of our gourmet biscuits transport your taste buds back to your childhood. Some of our biscuit flavor profiles, are familiar, reminding you of family recipes. We bake love and nostalgia into every heart-shaped biscuit," states, Riley.

Biscuit baking classes and parties for adults and kids will be available. The new facility will allow local companies to order online and pickup at the facility. Go online and create a variety dozen or half dozen to savor at home. www.mamabiscuit.com

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Nathaniel Sillin

What Can We Learn from the Tiny House Phenomenon?

You may not have seen one in your neighborhood yet, but the tiny house phenomenon has spread across the country. For some, the move is driven by a desire to downsize and live a minimalist lifestyle. Others see it as a way to decrease their impact on the environment.

Economics are often a large part of the equation. Buying and maintaining a tiny home is relatively inexpensive, and the savings can help many people on their path towards financial freedom.

Tiny-home living (often shortened to tiny living) isn't for everyone. However, tiny living requires ingenuity and resourcefulness and we can all learn something from those who choose tiny.

Freedom from debt is priceless. Living within one's means is a foundational belief to many within the tiny living community. Between labor and materials, a tiny home could cost about \$20,000 to \$60,000 to build. By contrast, the U.S. Census Bureau found the median sale price for a new home in December 2016 was \$322,500.

The relatively low price gives you a chance to own a tiny home without having a mortgage that'll take three decades to pay off. The ongoing savings in the form of lower utility, tax and maintenance bills also make it easier to pay off non-housing debts, such as student loans, and live a debt-free life.

That being said, you can live in a larger home and still look for ways to lower your monthly expenses and fight lifestyle inflation (spending more as you make more money). A common tip is to allocate half of your next raise or bonus to your savings or use it to pay down debts. But why not challenge yourself and use your entire raise or bonus to build your net worth?

Make room for things that are important. Moving into a tiny home can require major downsizing, but some view that as a feature rather than a disadvantage. It's not about getting rid of things that aren't absolutely necessary, after all sometimes "unnecessary" decorations turn a house into a home. Rather, from furniture to clothing, you have to decide what's important to you and leave the rest behind.

It's easy to fill a large home with clutter and then attempt to clean every spring. Perhaps a better approach would be to take a tiny-home mindset to the store with you. Don't get bogged down by asking yourself if you can live without something—you can live without many things—instead, try to only spend money on things that add meaning and joy to your life.

You have more space than meets the eye. Watch a tour of a tiny home, and you'll see that great organization skills and original storage ideas are a must. Tables turn into benches and chairs double as shelves—everything seems to have at least two purposes.

How could a little imagination transform your home? Might a new shelving system and selling items that aren't important to you anymore give you more room? Inventiveness and thinking outside the box are keys to making the most of what you have.

High-quality products are worth the investment. Many tiny-home owners are keenly aware of the waste they're putting back into the world. Some even choose to live in a tiny home because it'll reduce their ecological footprint. The savings that come from tiny living and this approach to life often lead to investments in long-lasting products rather than cheaper alternatives.

Quality over quantity is certainly a worthwhile mentality to adopt. Put it into practice by looking for companies that offer lifetime warranties on their products. You might be surprised to find that from socks to power tools there are dozens of manufacturers that uphold this promise.

How will you make use of these lessons? Simple living and conscious buying aren't exclusive traits of tiny-home owners. Regardless of the size of your home, you may find that incorporating these principles and practices save you time and money. Two valuable resources that should never be wasted.



Maryland Students Continue Strong Showing on Advanced Placement

By PRESS OFFICER MDE

BALTIMORE, MD—Maryland student success on the Advanced Placement (AP) test remained strong in 2016 as participation rose to a new record.

The percentage of Maryland seniors who earned a score of 3 or higher on one or more AP exams exceeded 30 percent for the third consecutive year—30.4 percent in 2016. That placed second to Massachusetts, which edged out Maryland with 31.0 percent of its students earning a score of 3 or better.

A score of 3 or better is the threshold at which many higher education institutions award college credit to high school students on an AP assessment. The percentage of Maryland graduates taking an AP test while in high school increased to 49.3 percent, behind only Florida (53 percent) and the District of Columbia (52.2 percent). In Massachusetts, 44.1 percent of graduates completed an AP test. Maryland also has the second highest test count per student. Of

the test takers, Maryland students averaged 3.87 tests per student second to Virginia at 3.9 tests per student. Massachusetts averaged 3.1 tests per student.

"The AP program gives students important options while still in high school as they consider career and college," said Dr. Karen Salmon, State Superintendent of Schools. "The latest data from the College Board indicates continued growth in the program and a high rate of success for Maryland students. All students should have the opportunity to succeed in rigorous educational programs."

These new statistics are included in AP cohort data just released today by the College Board for the class of 2016. Both participation and success improved throughout the nation, according to the report, with 36.2 percent of public high school graduates now taking at least one AP course and 21.9 percent receiving a 3 or better.

The College Board's new analysis of the college-level assessment program provides a variety of information on efforts

taking place in Maryland schools. For example:

- The percentage of Maryland graduating seniors scoring a 3 or better on an AP test has increased from 21.8 in 2006 to 30.4 this year—a leap of 8.6 percentage points.

- Nearly half of all Maryland high school graduates take at least one AP exam while in high school, and that tally has increased dramatically over the past decade. In 2006, 32.7 percent of Maryland graduates had taken at least one AP exam during their high school career. By 2016, 49.3 percent of seniors were taking at least one of the high-level exams.

- The number of Maryland high school seniors who scored a 3 or better on an AP exam increased from 12,081 in 2006 to 17,095 in 2016.

- In Maryland, as in the rest of the nation, there are gaps in AP participation and success between student groups. For example, while students eligible for Free and Reduced Price Meals account for 44.2 percent of the student population, they repre-

sented 21.2 percent of Maryland students taking an AP test.

- Equity gaps also exist between racial subgroups. While Asian students make up just 6 percent of the 11th and 12th grade student body, they account for 15 percent of the AP test takers. Maryland's 11th and 12th graders are 44 percent White, but represent 54 percent of students taking an AP test. African American students are 35 percent of the 11th and 12th grade population, but 14 percent of students tested on AP. Maryland's 11th and 12th graders are 11 percent Hispanic, and are 9 percent of students taking an AP test.

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program, which began in 1955, allows students to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Students of different interests and backgrounds can choose from more than 30 courses to demonstrate their knowledge of rigorous academic curriculum. More information about the AP program is available at <https://apstudent.collegeboard.org/home>.

Prince George's County Executive Announces \$5.1 Million Investment in Housing Trust Fund

By PRESS OFFICER PG County Government

LARGO, MD—In his budget announcement today, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III will invest \$5.1 million in the County's Housing Trust Fund (HTF). HTF will support two new programs—the Workforce Housing Gap Financing Program and the Pathway to Purchase Program.

This budget allocates \$2.6 million for the Workforce Hous-

ing Gap Financing Program and will enable the County to support the development of viable, mixed income communities by providing gap financing for the development of decent and quality workforce housing. The budget allocates \$2.5 million for the Pathway to Purchase Program which will provide down payment and closing cost assistance to approximately 150 eligible first-time home buyers to purchase owner occupied or vacant residential properties in the

County. The Housing Trust Fund is an affordable housing production program that will complement existing Federal and State efforts to increase and preserve the supply of decent, safe, and affordable housing. Mr. Baker's proposed investment will extend Prince George's County's residential market's recovery and expand the stock of workforce housing.

"We are very happy about this announcement today," said Eric C. Brown, Director of the Prince

George's County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). "The Housing Trust Fund will enable the Department to expand our work with affordable housing developers and meet our goals of increasing the housing stock available for working families in Prince George's County."

After County Council budget approval, money from the Hous-

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Grants from A1

based organizations throughout the County.

Honorees of the Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program include:

Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake; \$51,010: To develop and implement faith-based "train the trainer" sessions for ten congregations and provide technical assistance for twenty congregations to implement the Alternative Compliance Program options two and three.

Neighborhood Design Center; \$27,363: Provide technical assistance services for future applicants in year four (FY18) of the Prince George's Stormwater Stewardship grant program.

Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin; \$60,189: To implement the Score Four Students, Schools, Streams and the Bay program that will engage 209 Northwest High School (Hyattsville) students and 540 Accokeek Academy (Accokeek) students in watershed investigations and action projects.

Greenbelt Homes, Inc.; \$101,935: To implement stormwater management practices in the neighborhood and engage the City of Greenbelt residents in watershed restoration.

Anacostia Riverkeeper; \$200,000: To implement the first "trash trap" in Prince George's County. This device will collect and remove trash from the stream, educate the community about the trash trap and its instal-

lation in the Arundel Canal, and provide one year of maintenance.

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, Inc.; \$33,322: To lay the groundwork for a future Prince George's County River-Wise program.

REAL School Gardens; \$100,000: To train and support students and teachers at three elementary schools in Prince George's County to use outdoor classrooms, engage students, and provide meaningful watershed educational experiences (MWEES).

Town of Cheverly; \$121,833: To design, engineer, and construct four micro-biore-tention practices and plant trees at Boyd Park in the Town of Cheverly, Maryland.

End Time Harvest Ministries; \$16,415: Provide citizen engagement using a rain garden planting event for the Wellness Ambassadors, students, and citizens that will learn how local actions can improve the community health and clean local streams.

Maryland League of Conservation Voters Education Fund; \$11,791: To provide citizen engagement, outreach to the Latino community, and to implement the Latino River Festival.

Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission; \$250,000: To implement stormwater management practices, plant trees, remove invasive species, and engage citizens at up to seven parks and community centers in the Anacostia watershed.

Clean Water Fund; \$42,402: To provide a social marketing campaign for homeowner stormwater management and Rain Check Rebate outreach in the Town of Capitol Heights, Maryland.

People for Change Coalition; \$44,151: To provide outreach that will increase the homeowner association engagement in the Rain Check Rebate program.

The Low Impact Development Center, Inc.; \$60,000: To develop a master plan in the Port Towns area that outlines the stormwater solutions in a concept plan that will be used to implement the projects.

DuVal High School; \$26,207: To implement a high visibility rain garden at DuVal High School in Lanham, Maryland.

University of Maryland College Park; \$135,000: To develop a Prince George's County Pet Waste Education Campaign that will provide outreach, citizen engagement, pet waste station installations, and develop an assessment management tool.

People for Change Coalition; \$68,432: To implement a pet waste campaign that includes education and outreach for the citizens, pet waste station installations, and maintenance and monitoring.

Anacostia Watershed Society; \$500,000: To launch the Prince George's County Conservation Green Earth program—an innovative pilot program, which combines stormwater management projects with meaningful watershed

educational experiences (MWEES), teacher professional development, integration of environmental material into curriculum, provides training for teachers and maintenance staff, and implements small practices on school grounds.

Maryland League of Conservation Voters Education Fund; \$29,497: To provide citizen engagement for the Latino community and Latino-serving organizations in the Anacostia watershed through workshops, demonstration projects, and an outdoor activity.

CENTRO DE APOYO FAMILIAR; \$30,333: To provide citizen engagement to the Latino community and faith-based community organizations through workshops and training seminars. This project will support the Alternative Compliance Program options two and three.

People for Change Coalition; \$41,130: Provide technical assistance for four faith-based organizations. This project will support the Alternative Compliance Program options two and three.

Central Kenilworth Avenue Revitalization Community Development Corporation, Inc.; \$50,000: To develop a pilot tree planting program for residential properties and neighborhoods.

Prince George's Green; \$50,000: To increase tree canopy in the County through partnerships with municipalities, citizens, and businesses, and test innovative outreach efforts to enhance tree plantings on private residential properties.

Calendar from A1

to develop a school calendar that starts after Labor Day and ends no later than June 15. To date, the primary rationale given for the executive order is the boost of tax revenue for Ocean City and the popularity of the proposal with the general public.

"Under the Governor's mandate, local Boards of Education can no longer implement a school calendar that reflects the unique needs of their school districts," said Dr. Segun C. Eubanks, Board of Education Chair. "I strongly believe a pre-Labor Day school

calendar is best for Prince George's County."

"As Chief Executive Officer of the second-largest school district in the state, I am concerned about summer learning loss and our ability to schedule professional development and planning opportunities for teachers," said Prince George's County Public Schools CEO Dr. Maxwell. "More importantly, I am concerned about the basic needs that many families struggle to meet, such as regular nutritious meals and child care. We do not believe this mandate prioritizes children and families."

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COMMENTARY

Cong. Steny H. Hoyer
House Democratic Minority Whip



Hoyer: Stripping Away the Rights of VA Employees Will Not Improve the Care That Our Veterans and Their Families Deserve

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05) gave remarks on the House Floor today in opposition to House Republicans' bill that would strip the rights of Department of Veterans Affairs employees who serve veterans and their families. A video of his remarks and a transcript are available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f47gtXKG-tAk&feature=youtu.be>

"I rise in opposition to this bill and adopt many of the premises that my friend, Mr. Walz, adopted. I also adopt the premise of Dr. Roe, who is a really dear friend of mine, that Tim Walz is the kind of guy you wouldn't mind riding across the country with. That's because he's honest, he's knowledgeable, and he's sincere. And frankly, I attribute all those same characteristics to Dr. Roe.

"But, Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this bill. Everybody on this Floor agrees that our veterans deserve the best care possible. There's no debate about that. All of us in this House are focused on that goal. But this bill does nothing to meet this goal, in my view.

"This bill is part of, and I do not ascribe it to Dr. Roe, but a significantly long history of a partisan effort to scapegoat federal civil servants. It has been going on for decades, long before Dr. Roe got in it or Mr. Walz got in it.

"It is a follow-on to the dangerous hiring freeze, frankly, the Trump Administration imposed in January, and the repeated attempts over the last several years to extract more and more cuts from federal employees' pay and benefits, which contributed

over 150 billion dollars in cuts in pay and benefits over the last six years.

"Stripping away the rights of VA employees to work in a nonpartisan professional environment will not improve the care of our veterans and their families deserve and expect from the VA medical system.

"This bill, in my view, would undermine the collective bargaining rights—I am a very strong supporter of collective bargaining rights—of employees serving as doctors, nurses, physical therapists, and others in critical jobs, and it will disrupt the collaborative relationship between VA managers and employees that is essential to a successful workplace environment."

"Many years ago, almost 100 years ago, we adopted a civil service system. The premise of that system is we ought to have professional employees—not political employees, not political appointees, not subject to change because of the political winds that may be blowing one way or the other. This bill risks demoralizing those who have tirelessly been working to help our veterans reintegrate into civilian life across this country.

"Let me make it clear and I'm sure Dr. Roe is not surprised when I say this that I agree with Mr. Walz. If there's an employee not performing well, that employee ought not to be kept on. But this bill removes the process that was negotiated or could be negotiated in a collective bargaining way

See **VETERANS RIGHTS** Page A5



Riversdale House Museum

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: PG PARKS & RECREATION

RIVERSDALE HOUSE MUSEUM

Riversdale was one of the most distinctive homes in the region during the early Federal period. Today, the central portion of the house serves as a museum interpreting the lifestyle of an affluent family. The rental areas include a large carpeted ballroom in late 19th century decor as well as a smaller meeting/banquet room and catering kitchen. Riversdale House Museum and the Museum Shop are open to the public Fridays and Sundays from 12 noon - 3:30 pm year round. Riversdale is available for weddings, receptions, and meetings. For fees and availability, and to view contracts, please call 301-864-0420 for more information.

Child Watch
by Marion Wright Edelman



A Time for Courage and Truth

After the new administration's first Black History Month event included a general reference to 19th century lion Frederick Douglass as "somebody who's done an amazing job and is being recognized more and more," Frederick Douglass's descendants jumped in with their own clarification:

"The President's comments from the Roosevelt Room of the White House, about Frederick Douglass, were noted and appreciated by us, the Douglass family. In fact, we believe, if he had more time to elaborate, the President would have mentioned the following:

"Frederick Douglass has done an amazing job ...

- Enduring the inhumanity of slavery after being born heir to anguish and exploitation but still managing to become a force for solace and liberty when America needed it most,

- Recognizing that knowledge was his pathway to freedom at such a tender age,

- Teaching himself to read and write and becoming one of the country's most eloquent spokespersons,

- Standing up to his overseer to say that 'I am a man!'

- Risking life and limb by escaping the abhorrent institution,

- Composing the Narrative of his life and helping to expose slavery for the crime against humankind that it is,

- Persuading the American public and Abraham Lincoln that we are all equal and deserving of the right to live free,

- Establishing the *North Star* newspaper when there was very little in the way of navigation or hope for the millions of enslaved persons,

- Supporting the rights of women when few men of such importance endeavored to do so,

- Arguing against unfair U.S. immigration restrictions,

- Understanding that racism in America is part of our 'diseased imagination,'

- Recruiting his sons—who were born free—to fight in the war to end the enslavement of other African Americans,

- Being appointed the first black U.S. Marshal by President Rutherford B. Hayes,

- Being appointed U.S. Minister to Haiti by President Benjamin Harrison,

• Serving as a compelling role model for all Americans for nearly two centuries."

They concluded: "Like the President, we use the present tense when referencing Douglass's accomplishments because his spirit and legacy are still very much alive, not just during Black History Month, but every month."

A similar response could have been prepared just a few days later when the Department of Education shared a quote by Dr. W.E.B. DuBois that misspelled his name. We may not be able to react to every mistake or omission made about Black or Latino or Asian American or Native American or immigrant or women's history. But we can certainly make sure our children know the correct and full truth. We can make sure they know W.E.B. DuBois was one of the first great Black Civil Rights and intellectual leaders. He was the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University and a founding leader of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and founding editor of its journal *The Crisis*. He wrote many influential books and articles, including the classic *The Souls of Black Folk*, and remained a tireless crusader for the rights of Black people around the world until his death in Ghana at

age 95 on August 28, 1963, the same day as the March on Washington. We can also make sure we know and teach our children not just who Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois are, but some of the lessons they taught us.

In a time when lies about non-existent widespread voter fraud threaten to reinforce and escalate a new era of targeted and pernicious voter suppression, we can reread this warning from *The Souls of Black Folk*: "Away with the black man's ballot, by force or fraud,—and behold the suicide of a race! ... The power of the ballot we need in sheer self-defense,—else what shall save us from a second slavery?"

In a time where fears about unprecedented abuses of power are being matched by record-setting mass displays of nonviolent resistance, we can remember what Frederick Douglass said in 1857: "The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her august claims, have been born of earnest struggle. The conflict has been exciting, agitating, all-absorbing, and for the time being, putting all other tumults to silence. It must do this or it does nothing. If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who

See **WATCH**, Page A8

Marc Morial, President and CEO
National Urban League



Viola Davis: A Historic Talent Earns a Historic Distinction

"In my mind I see a line, and over that line, I see green fields and lovely flowers and beautiful white women with their arms stretched out to me over that line, but I can't seem to get there no how. I can't seem to get over that line."

—Harriet Tubman, quoted by Viola Davis in her 2015 Emmy acceptance speech.

Acting's triple crown—Oscar, Emmy and Tony—has been won by only 23 people in history. Now, the first African American has achieved that feat: Viola Davis.

It seems fitting that Davis' history-making honor occurred directly at the crossroads of Black History Month and Women's History Month, for she made history as a Black woman in more than one way: she also is the most-nominated Black actress in Oscar history, with three nominations. In addition to her role in *Fences*, for which she won, she earned nominations for *The Help* in 2012 and *Doubt* in 2009. She was nominated twice for an Emmy, winning in 2015 for her role in *How To Get Away With Murder*. She earned three Tony nominations, winning for *King Hedley II* in 2001 and *Fences* in 2010. She's the first Black actress to win five Screen Actors Guild awards. She had also won three Drama Desk Awards, a BAFTA Award, a Golden Globe, and three Critics' Choice Awards, among others.

When she was honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame earlier this year, Davis marveled, "I can't believe my life." Indeed, her own story is worthy of the Hollywood treatment. She was raised in poverty by a mother who was maid and factory worker. She told the *New York Times* she stole food from the grocery store and garbage cans and wore the plastic clips from bread bags in her braids.

Davis credits a federal anti-poverty program, Upward Bound, with saving her life. She told *Essence* magazine, "They kind of picked up

where public school left off because I had such enormous needs as a child of abject poverty. Coming from a background where I was first generation going to school, I had enormous challenges that needed to be met that were much deeper than academia."

Upward Bound, a summer program where high school students take college prep classes and earn work experience at a college campus for six weeks, opened doors that eventually led to the Juilliard School, one of the nation's leading performing arts programs.

Her success has not shielded her from challenges that she has said result from being "a woman of color, of a certain age, and a certain hue."

Her 2015 Emmy win established her as a role model when she used her acceptance speech to make a welcome statement about diversity in the entertainment industry: "The only thing that separates women of color from anyone else is opportunity," she said. "You cannot win an Emmy for roles that are simply not there." She was the first Black woman to win the award for Best Lead Actress in a Drama. Only one other black actress has won an acting Emmy: Isabel Sanford, who won for Best Lead Actress in a Comedy in 1981.

Davis' exemplarity extends beyond her stellar talent and bold outspokenness. She's a benefactor for the Rhode Island city where she was raised, Central Falls. Her philanthropic projects include the city's Adams Memorial Library, the Central Falls High School chess team and drama club, and the Segue Institute for Learning, a charter school. She's also the spokeswoman for the Hunger Is campaign, to eradicate childhood hunger.

We at the National Urban League consider Viola Davis a true woman of power; we congratulate her on her historic achievements and her epic journey and are grateful for her generous spirit and sense of community.

The Prince George's Post

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Contents © 2017, 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

Are Today's Kids Suffering From "Activity Overload"?

Most of us remember our childhood days as happy, fun times. Sure, there was school work, but also lots of free time, friends to hang with, and none of the stress we adults face.

But is childhood today all that carefree? Examine your child's schedule and you may find it's much busier than you realized ... sports practice ... soccer games ... gymnastic classes ... scout meetings ... church groups and much more. Then there's school, homework, chores and just finding time to eat dinner.

Kids today lead busy lives, and sometimes those lives are just too busy.

Often, kids themselves drive the schedule, not wanting to feel left out or less involved than their friends. Teens may feel obligated to boost extracurricular activities in order to get into the "right" college. Peer pressure and adult expectations can make a child feel he or she has to stay super busy.

Sometimes it's parents doing the pushing, wanting their children to have a full range of opportunities, or worried that left to their own resources, kids will just get in trouble, play video games and eat junk food.

Try evaluating your child's schedule to see if it's negatively affecting your child's life or family relationships. Is there never time for a family meal or a game or movie night? Are your children frequently tired, anxious or depressed? Are they falling behind in school work and suffering lower grades? Are there stress-related health complaints, like frequent headaches and stomach aches?

When you see problems, it's time to limit activities. Start by filling in a calendar with all the current activities. You may be surprised just how busy your children are.

Accept that sometimes you just have to draw the line and say no. If an activity doesn't really match your child's interests, age, temperament and ability, why schedule it?

Discuss with your children not just what they want to do, but why they want to do it and how realistic it is. If doing an activity is just because friends are doing it, it might not be the right choice.

Discuss with an over-scheduled child what's happening and how it might be possible to cut back. Kids need free time away from organized activities just to be able to relax, to socialize with friends, to be part of the family, and to blow off steam. Give your kids the free time they need just to be kids.

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

Veterans Rights from A4

and if, by the way, it takes 300-plus days, then perhaps this legislation could deal with that to shorten it. There are ways that this could be dealt with that, in my view, will not undermine the civil service protections that are important not only for the employees but for the system itself.

"I have no doubt that there are measures that can be adopted to improve VA performance and effectively and fairly discipline employees who are engage in misconduct. We ought not to tolerate that. But this bill does not include them. I have not read Senator Isakson's bill, but perhaps that is closer, and I look forward to reviewing it with both the Chairman and the Ranking Member.

"This bill goes too far, shreds basic due process rights, in my view, and punishes even model employees. And let me say as an aside, when I say undermines basic due process rights, part of those rights are to have some time to get representation, to thoughtfully respond, to have some discovery as to what is going on here, what is being alleged, why is it being alleged, who is alleging it. This bill eviscerates that in some respects.

"I am proud to represent 62,000 federal employees in Maryland's Fifth District, including many who work at the VA's clinics in Charlotte Hall and in Camp Springs in the neighboring Fourth District.

"We ought to remember, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chairman, that when we undermine our federal workforce and our ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest, we undermine our government's ability to serve the American people. So this is just not about present employees, it's about those who might consider employment in the future.

"Mr. Chairman, I hope we don't make the mistake of, in effect, throwing the baby out with the bath water. Let's not take away the rights and protections of those who serve us so ably. But, yes, I agree with Dr. Roe and Ranking Member Walz. If there are those who are not serving us well, yes there ought to be a process, we ought to be fair, we ought to have time in which to respond. Not interminable time, so we can have an agency of which we can be proud and does what we all want, serve our veterans in a way that we would expect, demand, and that we are morally inclined to do. And I yield back the balance of my time."

PG County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III's Data Dazzles Technology Conference

Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative Proves Data Can Transform Lives

By LORI C. VALENTINE
PGCEDC

OXON HILL, MD—On March 6, County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III was one of the key panelists that participated in the Socrata Connect 2017 Conference at the Gaylord Hotel at National Harbor. Economic Development Corporation President Jim Coleman was also on hand at the Conference and served as the moderator for a lively discussion on how the use of data can make government initiatives work more effectively and create life-changing results for residents during the "Lead with Performance Data" panel at the conference. County Executive Baker highlighted how the County's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI) used data to focus government resources to help improve conditions in some of the County's most challenged neighborhoods.

"Our Transforming Neighborhood Initiative has relied heavily on data from the very beginning," said County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "In addition, using our senior level management team to interact and respond in real-time to community concerns on a variety of issues helped to ensure that the program was treated as a top priority for all departments in the government. This structure showed that this Administration



PHOTO COURTESY LORI C. VALENTINE

Left to right: Jim Coleman, President and CEO, PGCEDC; Carla Truitt, CEO, Be Clean Cleaning Services; County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, Prince George's County; Charles Brown, Community Liaison

was fully committed to making Prince George's County better for every community."

Mr. Coleman kicked off the panel by sharing an overview of Prince George's County with the Socrata audience. Attendees seemed impressed that the County is one of the wealthiest counties in the country, the wealthiest majority-minority county in the United States, is home to NASA Goddard, Joint Base Andrews and MGM National Harbor, and recently increased its household income to nearly \$77,000 with a highly educated population.

"As a result of County Executive Baker's use of data, crime has been reduced by 50%, home

values have increased by 14%, high school graduation rates have increased to 81% and our household median income has increased to nearly \$77,000" said Coleman. "In the economic development world, we have seen consistent and significant growth through business attraction and expand and more than 7,000 jobs being created within the last year. Not only are our neighborhoods being transformed, but so are the lives of our hardworking residents. It's morning again in Prince George's County!"

Coleman then led the panelists through a series of questions that emphasized how the

data driven policies of the Baker Administration have transformed the County over the last seven year. Panelists included local community liaison Charles Brown, and the CEO of Be Clean Cleaning Services, Carla Truitt.

Socrata is a cloud-based data software company based in Seattle, Washington that provides a software-as-a service data platform and cloud applications exclusively for city, county, state and federal government organizations. This allows government data to be more discoverable, usable and actionable for government knowledge workers and the citizens they serve.

Energy from A1

"The whole system is fully automated," O'Sullivan said. "It is controlled by our remote operations team in Ireland."

The farm houses more than 160,000 chickens—a large number, no question—but a fraction of the 300 million "broilers," or chickens bred specifically for meat production, that the USDA says the state produces annually.

O'Sullivan says the chickens on Murphy's farm can produce as much as 10 tons of manure a day. When left on the ground, the manure finds its way into local waterways and eventually the Chesapeake Bay.

The phosphorus and nitrogen in livestock manure are essential to healthy ecosystems, according to a 2004 report released by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. In excess, however, these natural plant nutrients cause "explosive" growth in algae and other underwater plants, which stifle other forms of life in the bay.

BHSL utilizes a process called fluidized bed combustion, which works by heating a bed of sand inside a fuel combustion chamber until bubbling at 600 degrees Fahrenheit. Once this level is reached, manure is fed into the chamber and the temperature is raised to 1,600 degrees Fahrenheit. This process produces hot gases, which in turn are used to boil water that ultimately heats the chicken houses.

Not only does the process heat the chicken houses with clean, renewable energy, it keeps the manure off the ground and out of the waterways.

Livestock manure has long been one of the sources of bay pollution that the state Department of Agriculture seeks to diminish, but implementing environmentally friendly policies while preserving industries vital to local economies has been difficult.

"We can't lose poultry on the Eastern Shore," Murphy said.



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JACK CHAVEZ

Double Trouble Farms on the Eastern Shore on Jan. 27, 2017. The farm houses 160,000 chickens in four chicken houses. As large as that number appears, it is less than 0.1 percent of the "broilers" Maryland produces annually.

"People are looking for ways to save it, and that's my goal."

Murphy sees this technology, which his farm and BHSL began working on three years ago, as a means to clean the bay while preserving a vital economy.

"Right now we're transporting manure (to other nearby farms for fertilizer)," Murphy said. "But eventually those fields, which didn't have manure before, will get caught up and experience the same problem."

"Somewhere along the line, we have to get rid of this manure," Murphy added. "If you can burn eight to 10 (tons) a day, that's manure that doesn't go on the fields."

Murphy says he hasn't heard any opposition to the project locally, and others in the poultry industry have met the project with approval.

"The economy around here is driven by chicken farms," said Bruce Boney, a former IT contractor for Perdue Farms. "If they're trying to make an effort towards cleaner water, I think it's positive work."

O'Sullivan is quick to note that BHSL is not bringing technology to the United States that doesn't have a track record. In fact, the company first imple-

mented their fluidized bed combustion chamber units in the United Kingdom in 2003, and today run eight different units on six different farms there.

One of the main byproducts of the process is fly ash, and O'Sullivan says BHSL is determining a market for it. Specifically, BHSL is in talks with composting and phosphorus leaching companies, he said. Fly ash's value comes from its phosphorus, potassium and carbon content.

If the project goes well, O'Sullivan said, there are plans to bring the technology to nearby Bellview Farms, another poultry farm Murphy owns. Bellview houses twice as many chickens as Double Trouble Farms.

Manure-to-energy technology has the potential to reshape how farms handle excess manure not only in Maryland, but the rest of the country, especially the other bay-watershed states.

"Maryland is literally creating the blueprint (for dealing with excess manure in waterways)," Maryland Secretary of Agriculture Joe Bartenfelder said last month.

Maryland's commitment toward the project, \$970,000, comes from the Department of Agriculture's Animal Waste

Technology Fund. Grants from the fund are awarded based on an applicant's ability to meet a variety of requirements, according to the department's Office of Resource Conservation program manager Louise Lawrence.

"(We run) a competitive (application process) annually. Proposals are evaluated based on responses to requirements," Lawrence said. "We have approved funding for six projects to date. These projects vary in cost from \$300,000 to \$1.4 million."

Other projects include:

- \$150,790 to Green Mountain Technologies Inc. to repurpose horse manure at Days End Farm in Woodbine.
- \$237,520 to Green Mountain Technologies Inc. to repurpose dairy cow manure at Lager Farms in Frederick County.
- \$350,302 to Veteran Compost and O₂ Compost to repurpose horse manure in Davidsonville.
- \$676,144 to Planet Found Energy Development to repurpose poultry manure in Berlin.
- \$1.4 million to CleanBay Renewables to construct and operate an energy-to-manure plant that will benefit farms in Somerset County.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review

The LEGO® Batman Movie

The LEGO Batman Movie
Grade: B
Rated PG, mild rude humor
and action violence?
1 hr., 44 min



ROTTENTOMATOES

In the irreverent spirit of fun that made *The LEGO Movie* a worldwide phenomenon, the self-described leading man of that ensemble—Lego Batman—stars in his own big-screen adventure: *The LEGO Batman Movie*. But there are big changes brewing in Gotham, and if he wants to save the city from the Joker's hostile takeover, Batman may have to drop the lone vigilante thing, try to work with others and maybe, just maybe, learn to lighten up.

Three years ago, *The LEGO Movie* surprised everyone by being very good despite having the flimsy premise of "What if we made a movie based on a toy?" What we feared would be a cynical feature-length commercial turned out to be a joyful, self-aware comedy about teamwork and imagination in which the word "Lego" was never spoken. The spinoff, *The LEGO Batman Movie*, continues in that vein—spoofy, zany, self-referential—without sustaining the same dizzying level of energy (which is kind of a relief, actually).

Once again computer-animated to look like everything was built out of Legos, the new film casts Batman (voiced by Will Arnett) as a self-centered, beatboxing egotist who sings songs about how awesome he is while saving Gotham but goes home every night to an empty mansion. His faithful butler, Alfred (Ralph Fiennes), is his only friend, and he's more like a father figure (albeit one Batman doesn't listen to). Batman says he doesn't need anyone else, but secretly he's afraid of being part of a family again.

His lone wolf, "I don't need anyone" attitude upsets the Joker (Zach Galifianakis), whose feelings are hurt when he realizes

Batman doesn't consider him his greatest enemy. ("Whoa, whoa, I don't have a bad guy, I'm fighting several bad guys right now.") Then there's the new police commissioner, Barbara Gordon (Rosario Dawson), who says Gotham needs active, involved citizens, not an unaccountable vigilante who has destructive battles with supervillains but never seems to catch them.

In the middle of this, almost accidentally, Bruce Wayne adopts an eager orphaned teen named Richard Grayson (Michael Cera) who becomes Batman's sidekick without realizing Batman and Bruce Wayne are the same person. (The film gets a lot of mileage out of that.) This conflicts with

Batman's "I work alone" policy ... but so does belonging to the Justice League, which the film is keen to overlook.

The story isn't exactly flawless, and there's a stretch in the middle where the laughs and energy are diminished as the plot chugs along. The promising idea of using Superman's Phantom Zone as a depository for villains from all universes fizzles, as it turns out Lego doesn't have the rights to as many interesting bad guys as we thought (save for Batman's innumerable nemeses). Call me crazy, but maybe a cartoon about superheroes doesn't need five screenwriters?

But when it's on, it's on, directed by Chris McKay (a vet-

eran of Cartoon Network's Adult Swim) with affectionate enthusiasm. On one level, there are clever meta-jokes about the superhero genre and previous incarnations of Batman. On a more basic level, there are wonderful details, like the fact that Barbara Gordon went to "Harvard for police," suggesting that this could all be the product of a kid's imagination. The handful of belly laughs and consistent cheerfulness are more than enough to compensate for the added, overstuffed story. And how bizarre that the semi-parodic Batman is the first of all the movie Batmans to make us feel an emotional connection to the character. Legos—is there anything they can't do?

Fun Ways to Keep Your Children Busy

For Kids' Sake: Make Time to Play Every Day



PHOTO COURTESY NAPSI

Families today have busy lives but they should still try to put some play into every day.

(NAPSI)—If life for your family sometimes seems to be all work and no play, The Genius of Play wants to remind you why it is so important to make time to play every day—and how to achieve it!

Did you know there is a direct correlation between play and stress reduction? Or that elementary students who have more than 15 minutes of recess are better behaved in school than those who have less?

According to experts at the Genius of Play, a movement whose mission is to raise awareness about the benefits of play and bring more play into kids lives, playtime is a powerful tool to help you unwind, while bringing the whole family closer together. What's more, through play kids build physical skills, improve cognitive abilities, learn communication and social skills, process and express emotions, and increase creativity.

How Families Can Play Every Day

Here are some fun ideas from Genius of Play ambassador, parenting expert and author Meredith Sinclair, M.Ed. on how to incorporate play into your busy every day routine:

- Leave space for the spontaneous: Intentionally mark off small chunks of time on the calendar throughout the week for "spontaneous" playtime. Sometimes, spontaneity takes planning.
- Turn everyday occasions into playful moments. Make household chores fun by putting on some favorite music and having the kids dance as they put the toys away, make the bed or help with the dishes.
- Collect easy-to-play instruments like harmonicas, bongos or toy ukuleles for impromptu after-dinner family jam sessions.
- Keep playthings like hula hoops, crafts and playground chalk on hand for quick 10-minute play breaks during the day. It only takes a moment to create a chalk "picture frame" in the driveway and get the kids to draw something creative inside it.
- For a fun evening, try shutting down all screens after dinner once in a while and gathering the whole family around a board game.

It's Child's Play: Great Ideas and Resources

Parents, teachers and play lovers can get expert advice, play ideas for all ages, and information on the benefits of play at www.thegeniusofplay.org. Created with the mission to help raise happier, healthier and more successful generations through the power of play, the Genius of Play website and social media channels show how to help kids build confidence, creativity, critical thinking and other skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

Trust Fund from A3

ing Trust Fund will be made available at the beginning of the new fiscal year. DHCD would be able to offer up to \$15,000 in down payment and closing costs for the Pathway to Purchase Program. DHCD would also issue an announcement informing real estate developers that it has \$2.6 million available for gap financing for workforce housing construction and rehabilitation.

Over the past 5 years, DHCD has successfully co-financed 6 new construction projects and helped preserve 13 affordable

housing projects through renovation and rehabilitation. These include multi-family and senior communities. DHCD has awarded over \$10 million in HOME Loan funds to real estate developers building new construction and rehabilitating and preserving affordable homes in Prince George's County. This translates into 100 new rental townhouse units and 620 rental apartment units. DHCD was able to leverage its \$10 million in gap financing to over \$153 million in affordable housing development for Prince George's County.

Hiring from A1

ployee goes on the floor alone. Successful candidates, both part-time and full-time, are also eligible for an impressive benefits package that includes basic medical, dental and vision insurance. Roughly half

of the candidates were invited back for second interviews.

For more information on job opportunities with Dave & Buster's or other employers in the County, contact Ron Hopkins, EDC Business Consultant at (rhopkins@co.pg.md.us) or 301-618-8400.



Prince George's Arts & Humanities Council
in partnership with
Prince George's County Public Schools
present

2017

ARTS gala

A CULTURAL TAPESTRY: Renaissance Through the Arts

Saturday, April 8, 2017
6 - 9:30 p.m.

A benefit dinner showcasing
the artistic talents of students in the
PGCPS Arts Program.

College Park Marriott Hotel &
Conference Center
3501 University Blvd. E,
Hyattsville, Maryland

Proceeds will go to the Prince George's
Arts & Humanities Council
in support of PGCPS Arts Education.

Black Tie Optional

ADMISSION	
Early Bird Admission, ends March 24	\$80
General Admission	\$95
Early Bird + VIP Reception (6 - 7 p.m.)	\$105
General Admission + VIP Reception	\$120

To purchase tickets, click <http://trnyul.com/artsgala2017>

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.PGCPS.ORG
Contact Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council Executive Director Rhonda Dallas
at 301.772.8943 or rdallas@pgahc.org
John Ceschini, Arts Integration Officer, Department of Arts Integration for Prince George's County Public Schools
at 301.808.8256 or john.ceschini@pgcps.org

Calendar of Events

March 23 — March 29, 2017

Platinum Live: Little Margie Clark and Friends

Date and Time: Friday, March 24, 2017, 11 am
 Description: Margie Clark, also known as Little Margie, is a powerhouse blues, soul, and R&B vocalist. She is one of the original Jewels, a group that has been performing and recording since the late 1950s and whose hit "Opportunity" stayed on the national charts for 11 weeks. Little Margie performs at the Playhouse with her blues band, so don't miss this morning of pure blues entertainment.
 Cost: \$10/person
 Ages: For seniors 60 and better.
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Rd, Cheverly, MD
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

Miss Gorgeous Prince George's County Teen Pageant

Date and Time: Friday, March 24, 2017 7-9:30 pm
 Description: Calling all young ladies! You can now register for our 2017 Teen Pageant Competition. Classes will be held on Fridays from 7-9:30 pm and Sundays from 12:30-3:30 pm for 8 weeks.
 Cost: \$50 Resident; \$65 non Resident
 Ages: 14-17
 Location: Good Luck Community Center
 8601 Good Luck Rd, Lanham, MD
 Contact: 301-552-1093

Xtreme Teens: G.E.A.R. Cookies!

Date and Time: Friday, March 24, 2017, 7-10 pm
 Description: Learn to bake fresh cookies from scratch! These simple recipes will leave you wanting more!
 Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10-17
 Location: Prince George's Plaza Community Center
 6600 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD
 Contact: 301-864-1611; TTY 301-699-2544

Trap and Skeet: Youth Sporting Clays Clinic

Date and Time: Saturday, March 25, 2017, 10 am-12 pm
 Description: The Prince George's County Trap and Skeet Center and Shooting Star Shotgun Sports, LLC will offer a series of Saturday Morning Youth Shotgun Shooting Clinics for ages 13-17 years old. These reduced fee clinics are made possible by funding from the Ray Pages Sr. Foundation. The goal of these clinics is to introduce youth shooters to the shotgun sports and to teach and reinforce safety and shooting etiquette. The clinics will advance participants into the sports of Trap, Skeet and Sporting Clays. Reservations are encouraged to secure a spot, payment is due at time of reservation and can be made by credit card. Call 301-577-7178 or register in person at our the Prince George's County Trap and Skeet Center Clubhouse. Reservations can be made in any or all of the clinics.
 Cost: Resident: \$10; Non-Resident: \$10
 Ages: 13-17
 Location: 10400 Good Luck Road
 Glenn Dale, MD
 Contact: 301-577-7178; TTY 301-699-2544

Arts Drop-In: Kinetic Sculpture

Date and Time: Saturday, March 25, 2017, 10 am-12 noon
 Description: Arts Drop-In with Aaron Springer is a fun time for kids and parents to get creative with a variety of craft materials and an imaginative facilitator.
 Cost: FREE
 Ages: 2-10 years old
 Location: College Park Community Center
 5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park, MD
 Contact: 301-441-2647; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: New Game Night

Date and Time: Saturday, March 25, 2017, 7-10 pm
 Description: This new game called, "Snakes" is a game all teens should try! Teams will compete to capture all scattered balls while blindfolded. The team that gathers all the balls first, WINS!!
 Cost: Free with M-NCPPC ID
 Ages: 10-17
 Location: Good Luck Community Center
 8601 Good Luck Road, Lanham, MD
 Contact: 301-552-1093; TTY 301-699-2544

Ceramics: Beginners Workshop

Date and Time: Saturday, March 25, 2017, noon-1:30 p.m.
 Description: Interested in making your own ceramics? Come get an introduction to the wonderful world of pottery! You might end up molding your future!
 Cost: Resident: \$3 Non-resident: \$5
 Ages: 6 and older
 Location: Langley Park Community Center
 1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville, MD
 Contact: 301-445-4508; TTY 301-445-4512

Women in Jazz: From Classrooms to Careers

Date and Time: Sunday, March 26, 2017, 2 pm
 Description: In celebration of Women's History Month, this talk explores the unique path of girls and women who aspire to attain careers in jazz music. Candy Shannon, host and producer of WPFW's "The Morning Brew-Friday Edition," will moderate the panel.
 Cost: Free
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Montpelier Arts Center
 9652 Muirkirk Rd., Laurel, MD
 Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

Puppet Show

Date and Time: Monday, March 27, 2017, 2-3 pm
 Description: Enjoy a nature-themed puppet show & meet an animal.
 Cost: Resident: \$3; Non-Resident: \$4
 Ages: Ages 2-10
 Location: Watkins Nature Center
 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD
 Contact: 301-218-6702; TTY: 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... What Good Has EPA Ever Done for the Environment Anyway?

Dear EarthTalk:

I would like to know what good the EPA has done for the environment?

—Mary W.,
via e-mail

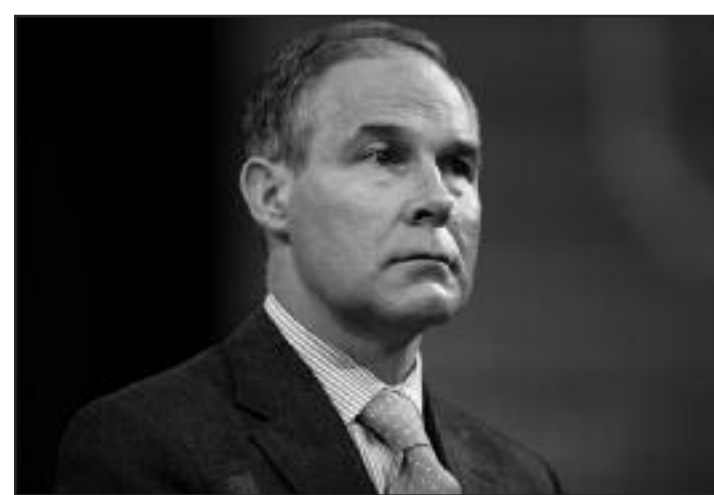
Without the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Americans would breathe dirtier air, drink more polluted water and live and grow food on contaminated soils. Polluters wouldn't be held accountable for their irresponsible behavior, wildlife would have a more difficult time finding suitable habitat to raise their young, and greater and greater concentrations of greenhouse gases would jeopardize the ability of our own atmosphere to protect us from the heat of the sun. In short, the United States and the rest of the world would be a nasty place to live, resulting in shorter life expectancy for humans and a decrease in biodiversity overall.

The EPA was created via Executive Order by Republican President Richard Nixon in December 1970 in response to rising concerns about pollution in an increasingly industrialized United States. Its purpose, then and still now, is to ensure that all Americans are protected from significant risks to their health and the environment where they live, learn and work. To accomplish this, the EPA develops and enforces environmental regulations based on laws passed by Congress; monitors environmental quality across the country;

funds states, non-profits and educational institutions to address local and regional problems; and educates the public about how to avoid and mitigate environmental risks. Laws implemented and enforced by the EPA to protect our land, air and water save hundreds of thousands of Americans from premature death every year and keep our ecosystems healthy in the face of innumerable threats.

The EPA's very first major accomplishment back in the early 1970s was setting standards on common air pollutants plaguing urbanized and industrial areas across the U.S. Other highlights from the EPA's first decade include: banning the pesticide DDT and requiring extensive environmental reviews of all pesticides; establishing the first fuel economy standards for cars and trucks on American roads; overseeing the phase-out of PCBs, chlorofluorocarbons and leaded gasoline; and setting nationwide benchmarks for drinking water quality.

Some of the EPA's notable achievements since then include: implementing "Superfund" (Congress' billion dollar plan to remediate the most hazardous of industrial waste sites across the country); establishing protections of endangered wetlands as a top agency priority; cleaning up Chesapeake Bay, the Hudson River and other major waterways; launching the Toxic Release Inventory program to inform the public about the discharge of specific pollutants from industrial facilities in their



CREDIT: GAGE SKIDMORE, FLICKRCC

Scott Pruitt, Donald Trump's pick to run the EPA, says he isn't convinced that carbon dioxide emissions from human industrial activity is to blame for global warming, and would like to see significant cuts to EPA funding if not the dismantling of the agency altogether.

communities; creating the Energy Star program to force appliance makers to tow the line regarding energy efficiency; forging a market-based system to reduce acid rain pollution; prioritizing environmental justice to protect low-income and minority communities from disproportionate exposure to pollutants; and setting new standards to clean up emissions from diesel fuel. More recently, the EPA has started the process of regulating the emissions of greenhouse gases contributing to global warming.

Beyond the agency's direct actions on behalf of the environment here at home, its very existence serves as an important model for other countries to follow, and indeed most nations of the world now have their own environmental oversight author-

ities to keep tabs on pollution and set standards for the safe use, handling and disposal of pollutants. As more and more of our lands are paved over, our natural resources extracted and our air and atmosphere compromised, we can all be thankful for the foresight of Richard Nixon in establishing the world's first government agency devoted to environmental protection.

CONTACTS: EPA History, www.epa.gov/history; Energy Star, www.energystar.gov.

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(www.emagazine.com).
Send questions to:
earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Jobs from A1

"Six years ago, I stated that Prince George's County would become the economic engine of this region and state," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "The reactions I generally received to that declaration was that I was being very optimistic and hopeful, or they were patronizing, assuming that I was naive. But I knew that we had the location, the resources, and, most importantly, the residents and a business base to make this happen. We all needed to start rowing in the same direction, and we have."

Prince George's County led the state in 3Q job growth over the past 12 month reporting period with 7,850 new jobs, or 22% of the State's total job growth: when the MGM National Harbor's 3,600 new jobs are added, Prince George's County will be able to claim job growth of over 18,000 new jobs. These jobs are a result of the more than \$9 billion in various projects in recently built, under construction, and pipeline economic development in the County. In addition, it is a reflection of the hard work and dedication of our private sector partners. Prince George's

County unemployment has dropped to 3.9% currently from 7.8% in 2010.

Under the Baker Administration, the County created the new Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement that eliminated red tape and redundancy resulting in a more business friendly regulatory environment. County Executive Baker also created the \$50 million Economic Development Incentive Fund (EDI Fund) that has been utilized to attract, retain, and expand businesses located in the County, with \$32 million in EDI Funds leveraging almost \$750 million in private capital and investments. The County Executive has made five international economic development missions garnering economic interest and investment in the County from around the world. Finally, the County Executive passed sweeping ethics and oversight reforms that quickly changed the perception throughout the business world and announced that Prince George's County is open and serious about attracting the biggest and best industries and companies.

"We have achieved a litany of achievements from property values increasing to graduation rates hitting record highs to massive reductions in crime. But

one of the best feelings comes from talking to a County resident whose job was saved or created as a result of the County's efforts," said Baker. "And with each job comes a career, an education and, often, an identity and purpose in life. For far too long, Prince George's County was a place where people lived, but did not work. We have begun to change that trend, which is going to be better for our quality of life, the environment, our budget, and the limitless possibilities that lie in the future for this County."

On the horizon is a groundbreaking for the future Regional Medical Center in Largo. Additionally, Prince George's County is currently leading the race to become home to the new consolidated Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Headquarters—a 11,000 jobs, \$2.5 billion dollar project that will further rebrand and re-invent the County's economy.

Prince George's County's economic success is also includes noticeable increases in retail options including attracting the County's first Whole Foods, two Harris Teeters, the Tanger Outlets, Dave & Buster's, and the transition of the Laurel Mall to the new Laurel Town Centre.

Most recently, the \$1.4 billion MGM National Harbor resort opened to critical acclaim. Furthermore, established malls such as the Mall at Prince George's and Iverson Mall are anticipating multiple-million dollar renovations. In 2014, County Executive Baker was named a top "Retail Friendly Public Official" by the trade magazine *Shopping Centers Today*.

These successful employment and economic development numbers are due to the support of many individuals and organizations in the County. The County Executive acknowledges these partnerships and the innovative ideas and resources provided by them: these partners include the County Executive's senior staff, in coordination with the Prince George's County Council, the Prince George's Senate and House Delegations, the Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, the Prince George's Business Roundtable, the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC), FSC First, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Revenue Authority, Department of Permitting, Inspections, and Enforcement (DPIE), Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), and the Redevelopment Authority.

PUPPY LOVE

Do something green and give the gift of pet adoption this Valentine's Day.

Visit the Prince George's County Animal Services Facility in Upper Marlboro to see the many healthy pets ready to give a lifetime of unconditional love. Throughout the month of February, adoption fees are reduced for dogs hit with Cupid's arrow and selected as "Staff Favorites." There are so many great dogs - big and small - waiting for a loving and caring home. Many of the dogs waiting for adoption have been observed for behavior issues, spayed/neutered, are up-to-date on vaccinations and micro-chipped. For more information, visit www.princegeorgespets4us.com.

Prince George's County Second Nature is an initiative of the Department of the Environment, Redevelopment Authority, and Office of Central Services to promote cost savings and sustainability in our everyday behavior.