

# The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 90, No. 22 June 2 — June 8, 2022

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

**Bowie State University students at Rocky Mountain National Park during a ten day 1,500 mile camping trip to five National Parks to experience the outdoors, explore the physical geography, history, and cultural landscape in the western United States.**

## BSU Students Embark on 10-Day Exploration of National Parks

*American Association of Geographers Funds National Parks Excursion*

By DAVID LEE THOMPSON  
Bowie State University

BOWIE, Md. (May 23, 2022)—Classes are over and most college students are preparing for their summer break or graduation, except for 10 students at Bowie State University (BSU) who are concluding a ten day 1,500 mile camping trip to five National Parks to experience the outdoors, explore the physical geography, history, and cultural landscape in the western United States. Through experiential learning, students will acquire knowledge about geography, na-

tional park sites, preparation for outdoor travel, and camping.

"Bowie State received a grant from the American Association of Geographers that will be used to enable students to explore our National Parks," said Dr. Sumanth Reddy, a geography professor at BSU. "The university is one of the first HBCUs to embark on a trip to some of our nations' most coveted and pristine locations to enable students to discover history and explore habitat in nature's classroom," he said.

The students are visiting five parks: Great Sand Dunes National Park, Mesa

Verde National Park, Grand Canyon National Park, Arches National Park, and Rocky Mountain National Park. They will also visit the Four Corners Monument, which marks the point in the Southwestern United States where the states of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, and Utah meet. It is the only point in the nation shared by four states and is maintained by the Navajo Nation.

"What a great adventure for these stu-

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## Future Ready: PGCPS Class of 2022 Shines Bright

*More than 7,000 graduates, approximately \$200 million in scholarships*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Prince George's County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (May 23, 2022)—Graduation celebrations [began] Monday, May 23 in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) as more than 7,000 seniors prepare to walk across the stage.

The Class of 2022 boasts approximately \$200 million in scholarship awards and acceptances to hundreds of colleges and universities nationwide. Ceremonies will be held over the next two weeks, starting with Largo and Oxon Hill high schools on Monday, May 23 and ending with Bladensburg High School on Tuesday, June 7.

"During one of the most challenging times in our nation's history, the Class of 2022 pivoted to virtual learning while keeping their focus on academic excellence," said Dr. Monica Goldson, Chief Executive Officer. "Our hope and charge for the Class of 2022 is continued strength and resilience along the journey to higher education and the workplace."

This year's highlights include the first graduates from the Online Campus and College Track at the Durant Center. The Online Campus launched in the fall as

a new specialty program for seventh through 12th graders who thrived in the virtual learning environment. College Track at the Durant Center, which bears the name of NBA player Kevin Durant, provides scholarships, after-school tutoring and emotional and financial support to Suitland High School students all the way through college.

Additional points of pride:

- **Charles Herbert Flowers High School** reported more than \$45 million in scholarships, the highest total in the school system.
- **Eleanor Roosevelt High School** senior **Cora L. Jackson** is a National Merit Scholarship finalist, receiving \$2,500 in scholarship funds.
- **Twins Imrane Oumarou Ba and Mounira Oumarou Ba** are valedictorian and salutatorian at **Central High School**. Their GPAs differed by just .04 (Imrane 4.53 and Mounira 4.49). Both will attend Louisiana State University.
- **Eleanor Roosevelt High**

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## Bowie Native Spends Memorial Day Honoring Fallen Military Members While Serving in the Elite Ceremonial Guard

By ALVIN PLEXICO  
Navy Office of Community Outreach

WASHINGTON—As the nation pauses this Memorial Day to remember fallen service members, a native of Bowie, Maryland, has special responsibilities honoring fallen comrades in the nation's capital with the U.S. Navy Ceremonial Guard.

"I'm a member of the firing team, so we are one of the last set of honors rendered to a deceased service member," said Seaman Michael Akinlabi, who joined the Navy two years ago. "Before Taps is played and the flag is presented to the next of kin, we fire our rifles in a salute."

Established in 1931, the United States Navy Ceremonial Guard is the

official Ceremonial Unit of the U.S. Navy and is based at Naval District Washington Anacostia Annex in Washington, D.C.

According to Navy officials, the Ceremonial Guard's primary mission is to represent the Navy in Presidential, Joint Armed Forces, Navy and public ceremonies under the scrutiny of the highest-ranking officials of the United States and foreign nations, including royalty.

Sailors of the Ceremonial Guard are hand selected while they are attending boot camp at Recruit Training Command in Great Lakes, Illinois. Strict military order and discipline, combined with teamwork, allow the Ceremonial Guard to fulfill their responsibilities with pride and determination. They are experts in the art of close order drill,

coordination and timing.

The Ceremonial Guard is comprised of the drill team, color guard, casket bearers and firing party.

Casket bearers carry the Navy's past service members to their resting ground. Whether it is in Arlington National Cemetery, or another veteran's cemetery. The firing party renders the 21 Gun Salute, the signature honor of military funerals, during every Navy Funeral at Arlington National Cemetery.

Serving in the Navy means Akinlabi is part of a team that is taking on new importance in America's focus on rebuilding military readiness, strengthening alliances and reforming business practices in support of the National Defense Strategy.

"The U.S. Navy trains and works

hard to defend our way of life from any and all adversaries, no matter where they may be," said Akinlabi.

With more than 90 percent of all trade traveling by sea, and 95 percent of the world's international phone and internet traffic carried through fiber optic cables lying on the ocean floor, Navy officials continue to emphasize that the prosperity and security of the United States is directly linked to a strong and ready Navy.

Akinlabi and the sailors they serve with have many opportunities to achieve accomplishments during their military service.

"My proudest accomplishment so far is becoming a fully qualified Guardsman," said Akinlabi.

As Akinlabi and other sailors continue to train and perform the missions they are tasked with, they take pride in serving their country in the United States Navy.

"The U.S. Navy is the greatest Navy in the world, serving in it is the opportunity of a lifetime," added Akinlabi. "It is a chance to serve and help defend



PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS AMBER A. WEINGART, NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**Seaman Michael Akinlabi**

the Nation from all enemies, foreign and domestic. I don't take being part of the Navy for granted, it is a great responsibility and a great honor."

## Library Leads Countywide LGBTQ+ Pride Celebration

By SILVANA QUIROZ  
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (May 27, 2022)—The Library's commitment to the local LGBTQ+ community is in focus for LGBTQ+ Pride Month 2022, which features 24+ events ranging from storytimes to educational and social events for adults. Author Vishwas Pethe kicks off the celebration with a visit to the Greenbelt Branch Library to discuss his book "Gay Crow: A Memoir" (May 31, 6:30 p.m.). Beginning in June and running through June 29, the Bowie Library will host the "Black and Proud +" art exhibit (June 1-29), which features

art by DMV-area Black and LGBTQ+ artists. PGCMLS is proud to include the whole family in its LGBTQ+ Pride events, with the inaugural "Rainbow Festival" at the New Carrollton Branch Library (June 4, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.) featuring fun activities for all ages. Renowned drag performer Emerald Star launches PGCMLS' inaugural Book Crawl series for adults with Drag Bingo at Denizen's Brewing Company in Riverdale Park (June 29, 7 p.m.).

"The Library has an important responsibility to ensure that LGBTQ+ Prince Georgians have a welcoming environment to access resources, services, and collection materials that will help them

thrive," said Nicholas A. Brown, Chief Operating Officer for Communication and Outreach. "We appreciate the work of the Library's award-winning LGBTQ+ Team, our branch staff, and partner organizations who have curated this year's lineup of special events for pride month." All Library events are free, but some require or recommend registration. Visit [pgcmls.info/pride](http://pgcmls.info/pride) for a complete list of LGBTQ+ Pride events. Below is a list of featured events:

### Events, Dates and Locations

**Black and Proud+ Exhibit:** All ages, June 1-June 29, Bowie Branch Library

**Rainbow Festival:** All ages, Saturday, June 4 at 11 a.m.-2 p.m., New Carrollton Branch Library

**Butterfly Project Luncheon:** Adults, Thursday,

June 9 at 12:30 p.m., Fairmount Heights Branch Library

**Story Explorers: Black is a Rainbow Color:** Ages 5-12, Thursday, June 16 at 4 p.m., Oxon Hill Branch Library

**Manga and Anime Club:** Teens, Tuesday, June 21 at 4:30 p.m., Virtual Event

**STEM-tastic:** Tuesday, June 21 at 6 p.m., Greenbelt Branch Library

**Rainbow Science:** Ages 5-12, Monday, June 27 at 4:30 p.m., The SPACE Pop-up Library

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Jackson will be entering his sixth season on the staff of his alma mater.

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"Just days after a shooter walked into a grocery store to gun down African American patrons, we have another Sandy Hook on our hands. What are we doing?"

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# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

### Gregg Stephens, of Morningside, served in Vietnam

Gregory Anthony "Gregg" Stephens died suddenly at his home in Morningside on May 14.

He was born at the old Gallingers Hospital in Washington, the youngest of the five children of Marian and Kermit Stephens. His father died before he was born; his mother stayed on in the city but moved often.

While attending high school, he received an Army draft notice to join the fight in the Vietnam War, but he enlisted, instead, in the Marine Corps December 19, 1970. He chose the Marines because Marines "never leave a man behind," and should he die, he knew his remains would at least return to his mother.

He served as a Motor-Transport Marine and was honorably discharged in 1972. In 1975 he married Cheryl Nesbitt. Eventually they settled in Morningside, possibly in the 1990s.

Gregg pursued his high school equivalency in Corpus Christi, Texas, received his trades certification through Lincoln Technical Institute, took college classes at Northern Virginia Community College and eventually became a master mechanic.

He is survived by his wife Cheryl, children Joseph and Lillian, and three grandchildren, QuenTravious Anderson Heath, Octavin Stephens, and AvaTiana Heath.

Services were held May 28 at Bethel Free Methodist Church in Fort Washington.

### Town of Morningside: celebrating parents

The Mad Hatter's Celebration of Parents' Dinner will be held June 17, 6-9 p.m., in honor of Father's Day (June 19) and Mother's Day (May 8). (Mother's day dinner was cancelled.) An Italian-style meal will be served. Fee is \$5 per person, tickets available at the Town Hall.

The Town had a successful Spring Cleanup, with many taking advantage of the Shred Truck, available from 9 to noon. Also, 30 animals got their annual shots.

Two meetings are coming up: the Work Session, June 7, and Town Meeting, June 21. Both meetings are in the Town Hall, beginning at 7 p.m.

The large Morningside meeting room is available for private functions. For information, availability and pricing, call 301-736-2300 Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Neighbors & other good people

A very Happy Birthday to Donald Young, longtime Camp Springs resident, who turned 100 on May 5. A Drive-By of friends and family helped him celebrate the occasion.

Julie Koch-Michael, former resident, emailed that she would be flying into to BWI on June 8 for a stay with her brother Robert and his wife for three days before they all drive to Maine and ferry out to an island for a week on the water.

Larry Glaubitz, son of the Mayor Jerry and Jean Glaubitz, called me this week for a chat. He and Bonnie now live in a waterfront home down in Hollywood, Md. He keeps in touch with other Morningsiders, such as Paul Chase who crabs with him. Paul's wife Susan is also a Morningsider; she was an Embrey. Larry retired from the Capitol Heights Fire Department, the last of the many departments he served with. One of them was #27, Morningside. VFD.

Larry asked me about the Hathaways who used to live on Ridgecrest. Do any of you, Dear Readers, have information about them? Call me.

Butch Kent, longtime manager at Tommy's Auto Care on Suitland Road, has retired.

### Graduates

Kow Simpson, a graduating senior at

Bishop McNamara High school in Forestville, will be attending Harvard University this fall, where he plans to pursue a degree in biomedical engineering. He turned down a full-ride offer from Northwestern University, as well as acceptances from Brown, Duke and Emory University/Oxford College. He is the first student from McNamara to be accepted into Harvard since 2008.

Call or email (muddmm@aol.com) with news of your graduate.

### Changing landscape

The Sky Bridge at Town Center, in Upper Marlboro, is open for reservations. It features "stunning residences for active 55+ adults and will soon offer new residences with life-enriching opportunities in Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care." For information call 240-509-3912.

A home at 4513 Reamy Drive in Skyline, just sold for \$435,000.

### Wildlife

The annual Baywide Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey estimates that the blue crab population is the "lowest abundance observed since the survey began in 1990." It has dropped to 227 million—a record low.

I saw a notice that a flock of wild turkeys were spotted May 2 at the So. Capitol (Frederick Douglass) Bridge. Some were "flexing." (I had to look that up. It's a courtship display of the wild turkey.)

A baby skink was spotted on my front porch this week. I have a family of them living in the nearby ivy.

### Book notes

Maryland Humanities recently announced Naima Coster's "What's Mine and Yours" as its 2022 One Maryland

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## Around the County

### MidAmerica Nazarene University Announces Spring 2022 Honors

OLATHE, Kan. (May 20, 2022)—MidAmerica Nazarene University recently announced its President's, Dean's List and Honor Roll for the spring 2022 semester. A total of 388 students qualified for one of the honors.

Following are MNU students named to the President's List, Dean's List and Honor Roll:

Bowie, MD: **Benjamin Ballah**, Honor Roll

All students in traditional programs carrying 12 semester hours or more with a term GPA from 3.2 to 4.0 may qualify for one of these academic honors. Neutral credit hours are excluded from the calculation and reduce the course load used to figure the honor. The President's List is a 4.0 grade point average for the semester; Dean's List ranges from 3.5 to 3.99; and the Honor Roll is 3.2 to 3.49.

MidAmerica Nazarene University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university of more than 2,000 students. Offering 60 plus traditional undergraduate areas of study, the university is also known for its accelerated professional and graduate programs. The campus is located on 105 acres in Olathe, Kansas. More information may be found at [www.mnu.edu](http://www.mnu.edu).

—Carol Best, MidAmerica Nazarene University

### Bowie Resident Receives Academic Honor; Benedictine College Announces Honor Rolls

ATCHISON, Kan. (May 20, 2022)—Benedictine College has recognized those students who have distinguished themselves academically during the last semester. **Annalucia Duggan** of Bowie, MD, was recently named to the President's List for the spring semester, which ended May 10, 2022.

Any full-time student carrying a minimum of 12 hours and a perfect 4.0 grade point average through the spring term is named to the President's list. Full time students with 12 hours and a grade point average of 3.5 are named to the Dean's List. Of the 2,059 students on campus for 2021–2022 academic year, 151 made the President's List and 667 made the Dean's List.

Founded in 1858, Benedictine College is a Catholic, Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college located on the bluffs above the Missouri River in Atchison, Kansas. The school is proud to have been named one of America's Best Colleges by U.S. News & World Report as well as one of the top Catholic colleges in the nation by First Things magazine and the Newman Guide. It prides itself on outstanding academics, extraordinary faith life, strong athletic programs, and an exceptional sense of community and belonging. It has a mission to educate men and women within a community of faith and scholarship.

—Steve Johnson, Benedictine College

### Abigail Abikoye Receives Wood Award From Community-Engaged Alliance

Abigail Abikoye, a senior biological sciences major with a minor in poverty studies, has been named the recipient of the Richard J. Wood Student Community Commitment Award from Community-Engaged Alliance. She is Notre Dame's 13th Wood Award recipient.

The Wood Award, established in 1996, honors Indiana students who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to community engagement.

Abikoye, of Prince George's County, Maryland, started serving as a volunteer tutor at the Robinson Community Learning Center (RCLC) in South Bend during her sophomore year, developing an interest in how lack of access to quality educational opportunities may impact people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

"My time volunteering as a tutor helped me recognize the importance of having this consistent space for kids to be able to do their homework and to get help on a regular basis from people who care about them," she said.

Through a course with an internship component, Abikoye continued to build on her relationships with the RCLC staff and students and learn more about the mission and the history of the center. "I was able to become better connected to the center and the staff and students there in ways that I didn't experience as a tutor."

As an intern, she noticed that there was a need for more STEM programming and used her biological sciences background to develop and host a workshop. "I remember around fifth grade I had exciting experiences in my science class, which made me interested in entering STEM from an early age," she said. "I wanted to expose the students to a fun STEM activity that would give them an opportunity to explore any interests or talents they may have, so I organized a DNA extraction activity and I prepared microscope slides to show them plant cells and cheek cells."

In her senior year, an expanded role with the RCLC through AmeriCorps allowed Abikoye to become more involved in programming. "When I was a tutor I worked with one individual at a time, but through the AmeriCorps appointment I've been able to take greater initiative with planning and leading programming for youth development," Abikoye said. "I've really been able to build relationships with the kids, and that has allowed me to serve the center better too."

Abikoye says her experiences at the RCLC have informed her goals for her future. "I'm actively trying to find ways to integrate my interest in health, medicine, public health and education."

Lulama Moyo, assistant director of the Community-Engaged Learning Program for the Center for Social Concerns, nominated Abikoye for the award.

In addition to her work with the RCLC, in 2020 Abikoye completed an internship with the Shepherd Higher Education Consortium on Poverty, in which she says she gained deeper insight into the complexity of social issues. "Through this internship I learned that we need to really listen to people we seek to help in order to bring about effective, sustainable change."

During her time at Notre Dame, she was a member of the African Students Association, Notre Dame Biology Club, Science Undergraduate Diversity Council, Inclusive Excellence Committee and the Senior Leadership Committee for the Department of Biological Sciences and the Black Biological Science Majors Affinity Group. She was also on the advisory board of the Center for Career Development First Generation Careers Initiative.

Abikoye was recognized at an award ceremony April 8 in French Lick, Indiana. Along with the public recognition, she also received a cash gift.

Abikoye plans to take a gap year, spending the summer interning as a research assistant with Clark Power, professor in the Program of Liberal Studies and executive director of Play Like a Champion. She is also applying to medical schools.

—Office of Media Relations, University of Notre Dame

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### ROOT (WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY)

"White House press secretary Jen Psaki talks about incoming press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre during a press briefing at the White House, Thursday, May 5, 2022, in Washington. Karine Jean-Pierre, who last year became the first Black woman in three decades to address the media from the White House briefing room, will soon take over that role full-time as the Biden Administration's press secretary."

"Jean-Pierre will succeed outgoing press secretary Jen Psaki, who held the job since Biden was inaugurated and is leaving to take an on-air role at MSNBC. Jean-Pierre will be the first openly gay person to hold the position."

"Jean-Pierre is currently Psaki's second-in-command in the press office and has several times handled the daily press briefings in which reporters' question, if not spar with, the administration's spokesperson on a variety of issues. Last May, she became the first Black woman since Judy Smith, who was deputy press secretary for President George H.W. Bush, to host the daily press briefing. That was in 1991; if you track time by the hip-hop eras, it was the same year Tribe Called Quest dropped The Low-End Theory, Public Enemy released Apocalypse "Ice Cube broke up with NWA and rappers still enunciated. In other words, a long time ago." Information by Keith Reed.

### MASKS

Masks should be worn in indoor public places, health officials advise. Masks are still required in congregate health care settings, public schools and libraries in Prince George's County and in any business or organization that chooses to require them.

Maryland COVID-19 cases have been steadily on the rise in Prince George's County and the state during the past six weeks, which health officials attribute to the omicron variant.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to all the graduates of 2022. Good luck in all your future endeavors.

Congratulations to Vincent Woodard, grandson of Daniel & Carolyn Glee, who received a Bachelor of Science Degree from Lincoln University, PA, May 14, 2022. Dustana Nicol Wilson completed all the requirements and became a United States Citizen on Monday, May 9, 2022. Safiya Terry Joseph was inducted into Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Alpha Zeta Chapter, Baltimore, MD on Friday, May 13, 2022.

### CHELTHENHAM UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Cheltenham United Methodist Church (11111 Crain Highway, Cheltenham, Maryland, 20623) is having a yard sale June 4 at 8 a.m.–12 noon. You are welcome to come out and check items that are for sale at the church during that time. We are also opening it up to the community to sell. You can find the information at <https://www.cheltenhamumc.com/community-yard-sale/> Pastor Rachel B. Livingston Cheltenham United Methodist Church 302-230-6141.

### 2022 MISSION NUTRITION

Free fresh seasonal produce-monthly distribution at Gwynn

Park High School, 13800 Brandywine Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613, Dyson Road Parking Lot. Distribution schedule June 21, July 19, August 16, September 20, 3–5 p.m.

### SUMMER READING PROGRAM WITH WASHINGTON NATIONALS

The Prince George's Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) and Washington Nationals are teaming up to celebrate summer in Prince George's County for the third consecutive year. This year's initiative, Summer Prince George's, invites Prince Georgians of all ages to connect with their community by reading, attending library or partner events (in-person or virtually), visiting branch libraries, and engaging with library resources. Between May 16 and August 19, library customers may register for Summer Prince George's at [pgcmls.info/summer](http://pgcmls.info/summer) and start logging reading, event, and online resource activities to earn badges and prizes.

Summer Prince George's is more than a traditional summer reading program, with exciting events for children, teens, and adults alike to discover their passions and get to know their local community.

"We are pleased to once again work with our friends at the Prince George's County Memorial Library System to encourage summer reading among Prince Georgians," said Gregory McCarthy, Washington Nationals Senior Vice President, Community Engagement. "Through this program, we hope to help readers of all ages discover a passion for books while offering exciting incentives to help them meet their goal of reading at least 30 minutes a day, every day."

### ENTERPRISE GOLF COURSE

The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County is proud to announce its upcoming renovation to Enterprise Golf Course in Mitchellville, MD. From Memorial Day weekend to the end of July, the course will undergo an extensive upgrade to continue the Department's commitment to improve playing conditions.

Growing Bermuda Grass and ensuring proper soil adhesion is necessary during the hottest months to enable the grass to spread and grow quickly. Benefits of the renovation include:

- More sustainable, environmentally friendly golf turf
- Less pesticide and fertilizer applications
- Latest and greatest golfing turf in the Mid-Atlantic region
- Improved course conditions and playing surface during peak times
- Fewer resources such as water, gas, electricity needed to maintain the course

Enterprise Golf Course and all short game practice facilities will be closed for renovation starting Friday, May 27. However, the driving range and golf shop will be open every day during renovation from 9 a.m.–7 p.m. The tentative Grand Reopening for the course is Saturday, July 30. For more information and updates, visit <https://pgparks.com/5197/Course-Renovation-Updates>.

*Hope that everyone had a good and safe Memorial Day.*

# COMMUNITY

## Major Step Forward for Accessibility on Metro and Public Transportation in DC Area Through Waymap Navigation and Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind

*Multiple organizations for visually impaired people launch navigation app to increase travel accessibility at Braddock Road, Brookland, and Silver Spring Metro stations and will be rolled out in phases across Metro's system*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Waymap

WASHINGTON (May 24, 2022)—Waymap, the world's most accurate and inclusive navigation app that guides users indoors and outdoors, today debuted at Metro's Brookland railstation. The groundbreaking tool, in partnership with Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind, will significantly expand travel and community convenience for blind and visually impaired people in the Washington, DC metropolitan area. Plans are in place to continue to expand the app for those with hearing and other impairments.

Waymap, which is free to all users and does not use GPS, is accurate up to three feet of a destination and can operate regardless of cellphone signal strength. The step-by-step audio directions direct users from their front door to their office, to the theater, or any location with independence. The app's directions are specific, instructing the user exactly how many steps to take and how many degrees to turn to face a train door, for instance, while also providing valuable contextual information.

"Today marks an important milestone for the blind and visually impaired community that live and travel in the DC Metro area," said Waymap CEO and Founder Tom Pey. "Mobility is not a luxury. It is, in fact, a human right. As a blind person myself, we created Waymap because current mass market navigation systems are not accurate or detailed enough to direct people to their precise destination, and none of them consider the importance of indoor navigation. Waymap completely changes the navigation landscape for people who need audio directions that allow for them to arrive within mere feet of their destination. We are grateful to have Washington, DC as a partner for this important moment in progressing equity and accessibility."

"This is the type of exciting investment we have come to expect in Washington, DC: an innovative technology that enhances equity and accessibility, made possible by a public-private partnership," said former DC Mayor Anthony Williams. "As Washingtonians and tourists come back to city life, Waymap's technology will help more people experience all that Washington DC has to offer."

Waymap will be rolled out more broadly in phases with the goal of deploying the app at up to 30 Metro train stations and nearly 1,000 bus stops by September of this year. The app is scheduled to be working across the entire Metro system by early 2023.

Waymap was founded by Tom Pey who lost his sight at the age of 39. The app's technology is accurate up to 3 feet throughout one's journey. After a recent trial by Arriva Rail London and Waymap in the UK between two different stations, 100 percent of participants said they would be somewhat or much more likely to use public transportation if Waymap was available. It is a constant travel companion for all people in an unfamiliar location.

According to Perkins School for the Blind, more than 7 million Americans have vision impairments—a significant population that traditional navigation apps do not fully engage. The app will HELP give back the freedom of movement to the 3.6 million Americans with travel-limiting disabilities that the U.S. Department of Transportation reports do not leave their homes. Waymap, the preferred choice of navigation for people with visual impairments and other disabilities, makes it easy for people to come together and build community.

"It's part of our mission to make Metro accessible to all people at every walk of life," said Metro Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Dennis Anosike. "Our ability to share data that strengthens projects like these is important to our role of creating equity in transit for our customers."

"We are proud to serve as a partner alongside Waymap and Metro," said Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind President and CEO Tony Cancelosi. "Our Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind team validates the usefulness of Waymap's routes for people with vision loss. This technology allows our community of people with vision loss to navigate safely on the Metro system and beyond."

The current phase of the app is intended specifically for blind and visually impaired people, but future iterations will address the needs of those with other reduced mobility challenges.

"Under the leadership of Mayor Muriel Bowser, DDOT has made a long-term commitment to safety and equity as we continue to improve our multimodal transportation network," said Everett Lott, Director of the District Department of Transportation (DDOT).

Waymap is the gold standard in navigation for metropolitans that prioritize inclusivity and access for all residents and visitors.

Waymap is a precision navigation system that gets you exactly where you want to be without a need for GPS, mobile signals, or any fixed infrastructure. That means it can operate underground or in buildings as well as outdoors. It works by loading detailed mapping data onto your smartphone and combining that with 'dead reckoning' technology that's already there, turning a phone into a very reliable, precision wayfinding device. It will be of particular value to blind people and those with some other disabilities, but there are potential benefits for everyone. Users who have tried it often describe it as potentially life-changing.

## BSU Students from A1

valuable national treasures. Recent studies estimate that only 1.2–6% of visitors to national parks in the United States are African American, which is considerably lower than the 13% of the U.S. population that is African American.

"African Americans have made major contributions in the Rocky Mountain and desert Southwest regions of the United States," said Professor Reddy. "My goal is to take students to various areas where African Americans are a part of the cultural landscape such as The Black American West Museum

and the Five Points Neighborhood in Denver, and the Fort Garland Museum and Cultural Center (Buffalo Soldier exhibit) in Fort Garland, Colorado."

"This has been such a great experience," said Zoey Days a junior biology major at BSU. "Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve is just breath taking," she said. "I was also impressed with the stone arches formed over millions of years that I saw at Arches National Park. The trip has given me hope and made me believe that the world is not as bad as many people think," said Days.

"I met people from around the world who came to visit our national parks," said Kwari Jackson, a BSU sophomore history major. "Visiting the parks was a treat. Camping outside in a tent, nature, Grand Canyon, the Arches, and the other sites were much more than I ever imagined. I'll definitely come back," he said.

In addition to Days and Jackson, the eight other BSU students participating on the 10 day National Parks camping trip are Kevon Allen, a sophomore and elementary education major; Alma Bangura, a junior majoring

in government; Malaika Dixon, a senior computer science major; Kalil Greenfield Jr., a sophomore history major; Ayen Kuol, a computer science graduate student; Rodah Ngorem, a sophomore majoring in nursing; Bridget Oppong, a junior computer technology major; and Mark Sims Jr., a freshman majoring in communication.

"In the future, students will be required to create a video, write a paper, blog, or publish on a topic of their choice that is related to what they saw, experienced, and learned on the trip. They will also be eligible to receive 3–6 independent study credits in geography," said Professor Reddy.

Bowie State University (BSU) is an important higher education access portal for qualified persons from diverse academic and socioeconomic backgrounds, seeking a high-quality and affordable public comprehensive university. The university places special emphasis on the science, technology, cybersecurity, teacher education, business, and nursing disciplines within the context of a liberal arts education. Visit [bowiestate.edu](http://bowiestate.edu).

State University. Jackson is a proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics and its 13 varsity sports teams, please visit [www.bsbulldogs.com](http://www.bsbulldogs.com).

## Marietta House Museum and the Voices of Woodlawn present: "Walk of Witness: Recalling the Enslaved Community"

By STACEY HAWKINS  
Marietta House Museum

In commemoration of Juneteenth, please join Marietta House Museum and the Voices of Woodlawn for "Walk of Witness: Recalling the Enslaved Community" at Marietta House, on Saturday, June 11, 1–3pm.

In partnership with The Voices of Woodlawn, this presentation will give voice to the long silenced enslaved community at historic plantations. Maryland Poets Diane Wilbon Parks, Patrick Wash-

ington, Sylvia Dianne "Ladi Di" Beverly and Hiram Larew confront the sadness, anger, and injustice of the past and its haunting legacy. They are joined by poet and harmonica player, Cliff Bernier, and by Native American poet, Edgar Silex.

Poems will be read as visitors walk the hallowed grounds and stop at various places around the historic house to hear the history of the enslaved and the poems by the Voices of Woodlawn poets. Guests are invited to share their thoughts, write, and journal as they hear the stories and poetry. Paintings by Diane Wilbon Parks

will be on display.

This is a FREE event. Light refreshments will be served during a meet-the-poets following the program. For more information and to register, please email [Stacey.Hawkins@pgparks.com](mailto:Stacey.Hawkins@pgparks.com) or call 301-464-5291. Recommended for ages 8 & up. Please leave pets at home.

The L.H. Farmer's Market will also be at Marietta from 9 a.m.–1p.m.

Marietta is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

## Wilson Accepts Head Coaching Position at Morgan State, Kyle Jackson Named Interim Head Football Coach for the BSU Bulldogs

By JOLISA WILLIAMS  
Bowie State University Athletics

BOWIE, Md. (May 26, 2022)—Bowie State head football coach Damon Wilson announced [last] Thursday morning that he will be taken the head coaching job at Division I and Football Championship Subdivision (FCS) member Morgan State University in Baltimore, Md.

"I want to express my sincere appreciation to the administration, students, alumni, coaches, supporters, and the young men that allowed me to serve as their head football coach," said Wilson. "We have had the opportunity to build a special program that allows young men to thrive on and off the football field. Bowie State University has been great to me in my personal and professional development and I am forever grateful for the 13 years that I was granted the opportunity to serve at the helm."

Wilson led the Bulldogs for 13 seasons where he achieved three straight Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) conference championships, in 2021, 2019 and 2018; five NCAA playoff berths; and three CIAA Coach of the Year honors. With the programs first ever appearance in the NCAA football quarterfinals in 2021, Wilson became the program's first CIAA coach and second minority since 2011 to win the prestigious American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) National Division II Coach of the Year back on Jan. 10 at the national convention.

Kyle Jackson will take over the Bowie State football program as interim head coach for the 2022 season. Previously, Jackson was promoted to Defensive Coordinator after spending the past five seasons as the recruiting coordinator and linebackers coach.

"I enthusiastically support the appointment of Coach Jackson as my successor. Under his leadership, Bowie State University Football will continue to soar," said Wilson. "I've had the opportunity to coach and develop him as a key member of my staff over the years. We have been able to build a solid coaching family at BSU, one that has the ability to lead young men, and I look forward to Coach Jackson building on the foundation that has been established."

Clyde Doughty, Vice President for Athletics and Recreation, said Kyle Jackson is the right person to take on leader-

ship of the Bulldogs at this time. "Damon Wilson has left his mark providing sound leadership for the football program while being very intentional in developing young men academically and athletically," said Doughty. "As a former student-athlete and BSU graduate, who has tutored under Coach Wilson for the last six years, Jackson is prepared for this opportunity. His transition into the interim head football coach position will provide continuity for the program and enable our student-athletes to continue their race to excellence in the classroom and on the field of competition."

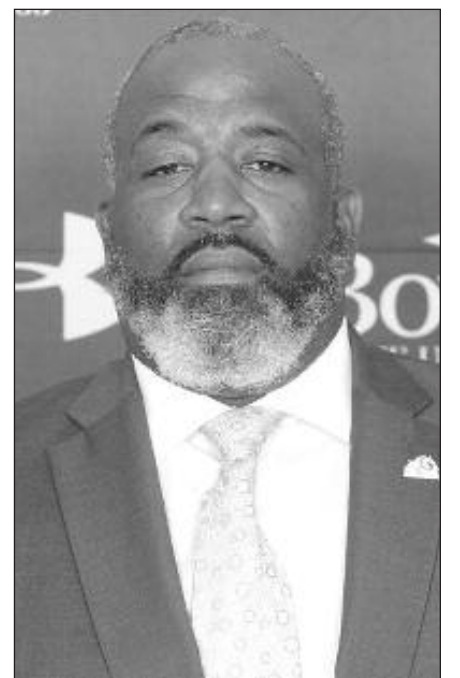
"Bowie State has been home to me since 2007! I've had the opportunity to play for and coach alongside Coach Wilson during his tenure here at Bowie State University," said Jackson. "Winning is important but so is building character and developing young men, which is something Coach Wilson always emphasized. I look forward to leading this program and continuing the tradition of winning on and off of the football field."

Jackson will be entering his sixth season on the staff of his alma mater. The Baltimore, Md., native has been instrumental in the Bulldogs success since returning for his second stint. Prior to his return to BSU, Jackson spent the 2015 season at Division II Emporia State University as a Defensive Graduate Assistant. Jackson worked specifically with the defensive ends. He helped coach a defensive unit who increased their sack total from 18 in 2014 to 41.5 in 2015. The Hornets finished #7 in the nation after losing in the Quarterfinals of the Division II NCAA Playoffs.

Before Emporia State, Jackson spent the 2014 season as an assistant to the Director of Football Operations at Georgia State University (GSU) where he gained a lot of knowledge of the game both on-and-off the field working closely with the recruiting coordinator and coaching staff.

A four-year starter (2007–2010) at the linebacker position for the Bulldogs, Jackson was known for his strong leadership and knowledge of the game, Jackson was named team captain in both the 2009 and 2010 seasons. Jackson was an influential leader on the 2009 defense that finished ranked No. 1 in the nation in total defense.

Jackson received his Bachelors of Science in Sport Management from Bowie



PHOTOS COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS

**Damon Wilson will be taken the head coaching job at Morgan State University in Baltimore.**



**Kyle Jackson is interim head coach for the 2022 season.**

State University. Jackson is a proud member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated.

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics and its 13 varsity sports teams, please visit [www.bsbulldogs.com](http://www.bsbulldogs.com).

# COMMUNITY

## Laurel Elementary School Seeks Donations for Kindergarten Biking Program

Every kindergartner would have the chance to learn to ride a bike in school

By PRESS OFFICER  
Strider Education Foundation, Inc.

LAUREL, Md. (May 26, 2022)—Kindergartners at Laurel Elementary School may soon be riding bikes in their PE classes.

All Kids Bike® is a national program on a mission to teach every child in America how to ride a bike. They are currently working to bring the All Kids Bike Kindergarten PE Program to Laurel Elementary School. The program equips schools with everything they need to teach children how to ride; teacher training and certification, a structured 8-lesson curriculum, a fleet of Strider® 14x Bikes, Pedal Conversion Kits, fully-adjustable helmets, and

a five-year support plan. Launched in March 2018, there are already 590 schools in 50 states with All Kids Bike Kindergarten PE Programs.

Community School Coordinator, Ashley Good, who applied for the program said: "We work diligently each year to provide these for our students through clubs, assemblies, and extended learning programs, but due to budget constraints, we are not always successful to reach all students to the extent we would like. Laurel has wanted to implement a bike program as part of the physical education program for several years and we strongly believe that in doing so, it will give students the chance to build confidence and trust

alongside learning a new skill." The Kindergarten PE Program is designed for children of all abilities and hopes to instill healthy habits at a young age. "One of the best ways to get kids active is to get them excited about bicycles," says All Kids Bike board member Ryan McFarland, "It's a skill that is going to serve them in life."

To learn more about the program or make a donation, please visit: <https://stridereducationfoundation-bloom.kindful.com/laurel-elementary-school-2022/laurel-elementary-school>

Strider Education Foundation and All Kids Bike: All Kids Bike is a national movement led by the Strider® Education Foundation to place Kindergarten PE



PHOTO COURTESY OF STRIDER EDUCATION FOUNDATION

Learn-To-Ride Programs into public schools for free, using donations from individuals, businesses, and organizations. The Strider Education Foundation, a 501(c)(3) organization, was formed in 2017. The Strider Education Foundation believes that learning to ride can help

everyone lead a happier and healthier life. Through the development of a proven Learn-To-Ride curriculum and donations of the world's most advanced training bikes, the nonprofit organization makes riding available, safe, easy, and fun for everyone.

## The PEPSICO Foundation and Prince George's Community College Support Black and Hispanic Student Success Through the Uplift Scholarship Program

A \$400,000 check funds Scholarships, coaching, and job placements

By SONJI JOYNER  
PGCC

LARGO, Md. (May 26, 2022)—A recent \$400,000 check presented by the PepsiCo Foundation funds the Uplift Scholarship Program at Prince George's

Community College (PGCC) for Black and Hispanic students. The program also provides coaching, job placements, and access to high-demand career fields. Removing barriers to student success is also included.

The check presentation cere-

mony on April 26 was attended by Prince George's Community College President Falecia D. Williams, Ed.D.; Prince George's Community College Foundation Board of Directors Chair Larry R. Spriggs; Prince George's Community College Foundation

Executive Director Brenda Mitchell; PepsiCo Foundation Director of U.S. State & Local Government Affairs, Mid-Atlantic, Deriece K. Harrington; and PGCC students, faculty, and staff.

"Student success is one of the

highest priorities of this College," said PGCC President Williams. "The Uplift Scholarship Program is life-changing for many of our students. We are very grateful to the PepsiCo Foundation for providing the kind of support that gives our students the ability to achieve their dreams."

"Life is full of challenges that can derail the best-laid plans," said Brenda Mitchell, executive director, Prince George's Community College Foundation.

"Many of our eligible Black and Hispanic students are first-generation college students or are facing issues that make the assistance provided by the PepsiCo Uplift Scholarship Program essential to achieving their goals."

Student Lum Aweh Fuh Bridget will graduate from Prince George's Community College on May 26. She credits the PepsiCo Uplift Scholarship for her suc-

See UPLIFT Page A5

# COMMENTARY

## Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,  
Children's Defense Fund



### ChildWatch:

## "What Are We Doing?"

The funerals for the ten Black community members who were murdered while grocery shopping in Buffalo on May 14 are not even over—but it happened again.

This time, children. Thursday should have been the last day of school and the start of summer vacation for teachers and students at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. Instead, on Tuesday, 19 fourth graders and two of their beloved teachers were shot to death in their classroom. They were murdered by a shooter who had legally purchased two AR-style rifles and 375 rounds of ammunition starting on May 17, the day after his 18th birthday. As our colleagues at the Children's Defense Fund-Texas put it, "The only thing extraordinary about yesterday's tragedy in Uvalde is how ordinary it is." What a shameful indictment of our nation's failure to act and protect children.

Senator Chris Murphy (D-CT) struck a chord with millions of Americans as he spoke passionately on the Senate floor hours after the shooting. Senator Murphy was the Congressman representing Newtown,

Connecticut when 20 first graders and six adults were shot to death at Newtown's Sandy Hook Elementary School in December 2012, so he is no stranger to responding to indescribable tragedies. He is also no stranger to watching many of his colleagues respond to gun tragedies by defiantly refusing to take action to protect children, not guns. On Tuesday, Senator Murphy asked all of them: "What are we doing?"

"Just days after a shooter walked into a grocery store to gun down African American patrons, we have another Sandy Hook on our hands. What are we doing? There were more mass shootings than days in the year. Our kids are living in fear every single time they set foot in the classroom because they think they're going to be next. What are we doing? Why do you spend all this time running for the United States Senate? Why do you go through all the hassle of getting this job, of putting yourself in a position of authority, if your answer is that as the slaughter increases, as our kids run for their lives, we do nothing. What are we doing? Why are you here if not to solve a problem as existential as this? This isn't inevitable.

These kids weren't unlucky. This only happens in this country. And nowhere else. Nowhere else do little kids go to school, thinking that they might be shot that day. Nowhere else do parents have to talk to their kids as I have had to do about why they got locked into a bathroom and told to be quiet for five minutes just in case a bad man entered that building. Nowhere else does that happen except here in the United States of America. And it is a choice. It is our choice to let it continue . . .

"What are we doing? Why are we here? What are we doing?"

What are we doing? Politicians who immediately say things like "now is not the time to politicize this" almost inevitably actually mean "it will never be the time." Too many of these leaders have no intention of taking any steps to prevent this. They do not want to act. They are not going to stand up to the gun lobby. They are not willing to protect children instead of guns.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott and Texas Senator Ted Cruz had both been scheduled to join former President Donald Trump among the featured speakers for the National Rifle Association (NRA)'s national convention in Houston on May 27. In 2015, Governor Abbott said on Twitter: "I'm EMBARRASSED: Texas #2 in nation for new gun purchases, behind CALIFORNIA. Let's pick up the pace Texans." Following the mass shootings at a Texas church in 2017, a Texas high school in 2018, and the back-to-back mass shootings in El Paso and the Midland-Odessa area in August 2019, Texas lawmakers responded by making it easier rather than harder to buy

and carry guns in their state. Texas has now been the site of four of the nation's ten deadliest mass shootings, including the deadliest mass shooting at a place of worship, the deadliest mass shooting at a military institution, and, after the murders of these 19 children and their teachers, the second deadliest school shooting. Does this make Governor Abbott proud? Or will this shooting finally be enough to lead some of our elected politicians to new choices?

Gun violence is now the leading cause of death for children and teens in our nation. A child or teen is killed with a gun every two hours in America. More preschoolers under 5 are killed with guns than police officers in the line of duty each year. In a nation where nearly all voters support common sense gun safety legislation like universal background checks and two-thirds of voters support a nationwide ban on the sale of assault weapons, it doesn't have to be this way.

What are we doing?

\*\*\*

O God, forgive our rich nation where toddlers and school children die from guns sold quite legally.

O God, help us never to confuse what is quite legal with what is just and right in Your sight.

## Joint Statement of Senate President Ferguson, Speaker Jones on Suspending Maryland's Wholesale Gas Tax Adjustment

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (May 25, 2022)—We are all feeling the effects of surging gas prices, which have become a global problem and result from big oil taking advantage of global uncertainty to make record-shattering profits.

The suggested elimination of the six-cent per gallon inflation adjustment on wholesale gas purchases would not result in Marylanders seeing a price reduction at the pump but would be a loss of over \$200 million in funding dedicated to ensuring the safety of our State's roads and bridges.

Furthermore, temporary tax holidays have long-term consequences. As fuel prices rise, so too do the costs of maintenance and construction in our transportation sector. Ensuring the safety

and integrity of Maryland's roadways, bridges, and transit systems is critical. We cannot have a reliable transportation network that regularly experiences failing conditions due to insufficient funding and deferred maintenance.

We have a duty to Marylanders to protect their health, safety, and economic security, and will continue to work with others to ease the burden Marylanders are facing due to rising prices. The problem is not the marginal impact of \$0.06 inflation adjustment to the wholesale gas tax. The problem is big oil companies exploiting global uncertainty to drive the price of gas to more than \$4 a gallon.

## The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post  
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Contents © 2022, 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 AND FINANCE

## Social Security Matters

### Ask Rusty:

## Must I Pay Income Tax on Social Security Benefits?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,  
National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation,  
the non-profit arm of the Association of Mature American Citizens

**Dear Rusty:** I do not recall the rules on my income tax obligation for Social Security benefits. Can you please explain these rules to me? *Signed: Senior Taxpayer*

**Dear Senior Taxpayer:** I'll be happy to review the rules about income tax on Social Security benefits for you. If your combined income from all sources is low enough, your Social Security benefits aren't subject to being taxed by the IRS. But some of your Social Security benefits will become taxable if your combined income from all sources exceeds certain thresholds, and the thresholds are dependent on your tax filing status (single or married).

If you file your income tax as "married-filing jointly" and your combined income from all sources (both taxable and non-taxable income) is less than \$32,000, then your Social Security benefits aren't taxable. But if your combined income as a married couple is between \$32,001 and \$44,000, then half of the SS benefits you received during the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. And if your combined income as a married couple exceeds \$44,000 then up to 85% of the SS benefits you received during the tax year becomes part of your taxable income. Those SS benefits will simply be included as part of your taxable income and taxed at whatever your normal IRS tax rate is.

If you file your income tax as a "single" the thresholds at which Social Security benefits become taxable are different. Single filers with a combined income of \$25,000 or less pay no income tax on their benefits. But single filers with combined income between \$25,001 and \$34,000 will have half of their SS benefits received during the tax year become taxable, and single filers whose combined income exceeds \$34,000 will see up to 85% of their Social Security benefits become taxable. These single filer thresholds apply also to those filing as Single Head of Household or Qualifying Widow(er), and to those filing as "married-filing separately" if they lived apart for the entire tax year. But the threshold is zero dollars for married couples who file separately but lived together at any time during the tax year.

To clarify what "combined income" is—the IRS uses something called your Modified Adjusted Gross Income, or "MAGI," to determine if your Social Security benefits should be taxed. Your MAGI is your normal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) from your tax return, plus any non-taxable income you may have had, plus 50% of the Social Security benefits you received during the tax year. If your MAGI is over the thresholds described above, a portion of the SS benefits you received during the tax year will be included in your taxable income. If it is not, you pay no income tax on your benefits.

To be sure you're aware, when you file as "married/jointly" income from both partners counts when determining your MAGI for income tax purposes.

*The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] [www.amac.us](http://www.amac.us) is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation ([www.AmacFoundation.org](http://www.AmacFoundation.org)) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at [www.amac.us/join-amac](http://www.amac.us/join-amac).*

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA), NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website ([amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org).*

## Class of 2022 from A1

**School salutatorian Osvaldo Hernandez** once had limited English language proficiency. He now speaks five languages including French, Spanish, Russian and American Sign Language. He will study chemical engineering at Cornell University.

- **Gwynn Park High School valedictorian DaMarr Savoy** always competed with his siblings to see who could get the highest grade point average. He earned a 4.24 GPA and will attend the University of Maryland and major in computer science with a minor in business.
- **DuVal High School senior Lester Paz** will be the first in his family to attend college. Paz, a student in the school's Aerospace Engineering and Aviation Technology Program, will major in bio-engineering at the University of Maryland (UMD). Paz is one of seven seniors who received the C.D. Mote Jr. Incentive Award, a full four-year scholarship to UMD.
- **Tall Oaks High School valedictorian Angel Taylor** corrected her poor attendance to become student government president. Her leadership skills will be put to the test as she hopes to become a Navy SEAL.
- **Twelve seniors** will receive four-year, full-tuition college scholarships from colleges and universities who partner with The Posse Foundation.

For more student success stories, photo galleries and a list of upcoming ceremony dates, visit the all-things-graduation hub Future Ready: <https://www.pgcps.org/future-ready>.

## FREE Webinar: Virtual Financial Freedom Fair!

Are you totally confused about where to start at building a financial plan that includes budgeting and debt management; investment; retirement; educational and estate planning?

Do you need a roadmap to help you to take control of your finances?

Are you tired of being denied for lines of credit?

Are you ready to boost your credit score? If you answered "Yes" to any of these

questions, then it's time to take control!

Calling all County residents, including middle and high school students, to attend this informative event. Join Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in partnership with Pearl Elegance Foundation, Inc. for a 2-hour virtual fair, "How to Gain Financial Freedom", on **June 12, 2022 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.** featuring keynote speakers Mr. Russell Robinson, Vice

President and Financial Advisor of PNC Bank, and Ms. Shante Nicole Harris, Certified Credit Consultant of Financial Common Cents.

EVENT REGISTRATION:  
<https://bit.ly/3K6ceBn>

More information: [programs@aka-peo.org](mailto:programs@aka-peo.org)

—Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

## Statement by Lydia Pope, President National Association of Real Estate Brokers

## NAREB Applauds Confirmation of Sandra Thompson as Director of FHFA Washington

WASHINGTON (May 26, 2022)—"The National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) applauds the Senate confirmation of Sandra Thompson as director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), which supervises the GSE-giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, and other mortgage market entities. Thompson, who had been the supervision chief at the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, has been the acting FHFA director for nearly a year.

"Thompson takes over at a critical time for African American families and individuals across the country who want to become homeowners. Black homeownership has plummeted nearly 20% since 2008. Last year, the gap between Black (44.6%) and White (74.2%) homeownership was the largest spread since 1890. There is an urgent need for new policies and practices to address the legacy of housing discrimination that continues to diminish the hopes and dreams of families vying to become homeowners.

"As acting director, Thompson took some important steps. She negotiated a data sharing agreement with HUD, allowed positive rental payment histories to be a part of Fannie Mae's mortgage evaluation process and set affordability goals for Fannie and Freddie. But more is needed. Thompson must become a strong champion for expanding homeownership and improving the lending environment so more families of color can benefit from the American Dream of homeownership.

"Her leadership is proud that Congress and the Administration to:

- Enact a down payment assistance program, such as the one passed by the House.
- Lift the disproportionate burden of student loan debt on minorities.
- Create a uniformed, consumer-friendly method of calculating student loan debt for mortgage applicants.
- End appraisal bias in communities of color.

• Address loan level price adjustments (LLPAs) that disproportionately add fees to mortgages and Private Mortgage Insurance premiums after loans have been approved.

"NAREB looks forward to working with Director Thompson to assure that people of color have fair access to mortgages and can build intergenerational wealth that will boost future generations."

The National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) was formed in 1947 to secure the right to equal housing opportunities regardless of race, creed or color. NAREB has advocated for legislation and supported or instigated legal challenges that ensure fair housing, sustainable homeownership, and access to credit for Black Americans. Simultaneously, NAREB advocates for and promotes access to business opportunities for Black real estate professionals in each of the real estate disciplines.

## Cardin Lauds Creation of Fourth Women's Business Center in Maryland

*New WBC is Most Recent Addition in Broad Expansion of Maryland's Entrepreneurial Development Programs Spearheaded by Cardin*

WASHINGTON (May 25, 2022)—U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & Entrepreneurship Chair Ben Cardin (D-Md.) today lauded the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA's) announcement that it has awarded a grant to Rockville Economic Development, Inc. (REDI) to operate a new Women's Business Center (WBC) at Bowie State University (BSU), the oldest Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Maryland. The new center is the fourth WBC in Maryland, joining a WBC in Rockville that is also operated by REDI, as well as a WBC in Baltimore operated by Morgan State University and a WBC in Salisbury operated by Maryland Capital Enterprises.

The new WBC is an expansion of a satellite program that REDI has been operating at BSU, and it will focus on supporting student entrepreneurs, increasing federal contracting opportunities, and expanding pathways to the Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer Programs. BSU also hosts the Bowie Business Innovation Center (Bowie BIC)—a first-of-its-kind, award-winning business accelerator that helps federal contractors enrolled in the SBA's 8(a) Business Development program secure federal contracts.

"I applaud Bowie State University and President Breaux for supporting entrepreneurs and innovators in Prince George's County and Southern Maryland," Cardin said. "I am especially proud that the WBC will focus on empowering BSU students, federal contractors, and innovators, which will pay dividends to our community for years to come. BSU continues to demonstrate that by partnering with HBCUs, the SBA can better deliver services and capital to entrepreneurs in underserved and underbanked communities."

"REDI is thrilled to expand its impactful relationship with BSU and the Bowie Business Innovation Center. The Maryland Women's Business Center has been helping women entrepreneurs launch, grow, and sustain businesses that create jobs and strengthen economic development for over 10 years," said Susan Prince, REDI Board Chair. "We are honored to support more students and business owners through this grant and partnership."

"We are very pleased to have an integral role in providing more opportunities for entrepreneurs in Maryland," said Dr. Aminta Breaux, President of Bowie State University. "The Bowie Women's Business Center at BSU will be operated by the Bowie BIC, the only business incubator on an HBCU

campus in Maryland, expanding support and guidance to our student entrepreneurs. We thank Senator Cardin for his ongoing efforts to bring additional resources in support of aspiring entrepreneurs here at Bowie State University and throughout the region."

The WBC at BSU is the most recent addition in a broad expansion of Maryland's entrepreneurial development and innovation resources spearheaded by Cardin. In May 2020, Cardin secured funding for the WBCs in Baltimore and Salisbury. Cardin also championed the opening of Maryland's first Veterans Business Outreach Center at the University of Maryland last November.

On May 9, Cardin and Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) announced \$4 million in congressionally directed spending to support innovation programs at BSU. The senators secured \$3 million for the Bowie BIC and \$1 million for the university to develop a new laboratory for hydroponics research.

The Bowie BIC served as the model for Cardin's UPLIFT Act, which would create an Innovation Centers Program within the SBA to award competitive cooperative agreements worth as much as \$400,000 annually to HBCUs, minority serving institutions (MSIs), and community colleges to establish and expand incubators and accelerators.

## Uplift from A4

cess. "I am so grateful for it. Programs like this make a difference in students graduating rather than dropping out of college."

Bridget describes her educational journey as "like a roller coaster, but one I would do all over again if I had to make the choice." She first registered at the College in 2011 as an international student.

"I had to juggle schoolwork with being a parent to my 3-year-old son, living in a foreign country without a driving permit. At the end of that semester, I lost a loved one and went through some tough moments that made me take a break from school."

When she returned to PGCC in the spring of 2020, Bridget was the mother of three, and she soon faced the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, which included transitioning from in-person classes to virtual and helping her young children with their online schooling. "Showing them how to access their work and submit completed

tasks led me to the decision to go for a change in career from early childhood development to information technology. I also became a U.S. citizen in the process. I am happy to be graduating."

To be eligible for the scholarship program, a student must identify as African American, Black, Hispanic, or Latino and have an unmet financial need, as demonstrated by a completed Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Maryland State Financial Aid Application (MS-FAA).

Students selected to participate in the Uplift Scholarship Program must maintain an overall GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale (if enrolled in a credit program) and must complete at least two classes during the academic year (credit or continuing education).

More information about the Uplift Scholarship Program, including eligibility requirements and the application, is available online.

## Library from A1

**Drag Bingo-Book Crawl:** Adults, Wednesday, June 29 at 7 p.m., Denizens Brewing Company (Riverdale, Md.)

In addition to these events, the Library invites the community to celebrate Pride month at Annapolis Pride and Capital Pride. PGCMLS staff will be proudly representing Prince George's County with the Library's "Curiosity Cube" outreach vehicle in the Annapolis Pride Parade and Festival on June 4 and Capital Pride Parade on June 11. During the month of June, PGCMLS has prepared Pride, Rainbow, and Love Family Ready 2 Read Storytime for children ages 3–5 years old.

Prince Georgians can learn about the contributions of the LGBTQ+ community with a range of Library resources, including books, streaming movies and documentaries, research databases, and more. Visit [pgcmls.info/pride](http://pgcmls.info/pride) to access curated content.

# ENVIRONMENT

## Chesapeake Bay Crabs Hit Population Low

By JEREMY COX  
Bay Journal News Service

The blue crab, the Chesapeake Bay's most valuable catch and a closely watched proxy for the health of its underwater ecosystem, is less abundant now than at any time since scientists began regularly tracking the species in 1990.

The new winter dredge survey conducted by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Virginia Institute of Marine Science and released May 19 found an estimated 227 million crabs in the Bay. The previous low was 270 million crabs in 2004.

Year-to-year population fluctuations, even dramatic ones, are common for the species. Fishery managers say the plunge wouldn't be so concerning except that it has been accompanied by a three-year streak of below-average reproduction.

And they aren't sure what's behind the decline.

"It's shocking in that we've had enough females over the last couple years to produce a good year class, and it hasn't happened," said Genine McClair, blue crab program manager for the Maryland DNR. "The question everyone has is: 'Why do we have this low recruitment?'"

Meanwhile, one of the Bay's leading advocacy groups described the survey results as worrying and called on regulators to take immediate actions to protect crabs, especially adult females.

"Fisheries regulators and scientists must work quickly to identify the key ecosystem factors influencing blue crab recruitment and survival so that they can be mitigated to ensure a healthy blue crab population in the future," said Chris Moore, a Chesapeake Bay Foundation scientist.

The juvenile downturn has gone on so long that crabbers can expect to find lighter loads in their crab traps, McClair said.

The overall adult population had been buoyed by a strong 2019 juvenile recruitment class. But now that their three-year life cycle is almost certainly over, only smaller classes remain.

"We were living off that big recruitment we had in 2019, so it would have been nice to have another big recruitment to keep the



PHOTO BY WILL PARSON/CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

A male blue crab rests on the deck of a Virginia Institute of Marine Science research vessel in 2016 after being caught near the mouth of the York River during the annual blue crab winter dredge survey.

population at that higher level," McClair added.

Crabs have proved a difficult species to manage. In 2008, the U.S. Department of Commerce declared the Chesapeake commercial crab fishery to be a disaster, and both Maryland and Virginia responded with significant catch restrictions, mostly aimed at ensuring the survival of adult females.

By 2019, fishery managers, crabbers and scientists were celebrating signs that the blue crab's recovery in the Chesapeake Bay was about to kick into a higher gear.

"You've had more crabs come ashore this year than any year in 54 years," an exuberant Terry Vincent, owner of Lindy's Seafood in Dorchester County, MD, told the Bay Journal in 2019, a year in which total abundance was more than twice as high as the current number. "Nobody's seen this."

Both states began easing some of their curbs. But since then, the crab's trajectory has veered downward, baffling experts.

To be successful, scientists say, blue crabs rely on a several overlapping dynamics: plenty of underwater grasses to live in; the right ocean currents to nudge larvae back into the Bay; enough clams and oysters to feed on; and a little luck with avoiding pred-

ators, most notably the invasive blue catfish.

One factor is generally well accepted: Broad swaths of underwater grasses have been lost as wet weather is flushing more nutrients and sediment into the estuary.

"But that's not the only thing driving [the lower crab numbers]," said Adam Kenyon, deputy chief of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission's fisheries division. "To put your finger on one thing, that's where it's difficult."

Crabs don't appear to be overfished, regulators say. In 2021, commercial and recreational boats harvested crabs at a rate well below the adult female threshold established a decade earlier.

Still, the three jurisdictions that regulate the Chesapeake region's crab catch—the Maryland DNR, Virginia MRC and Potomac River Fisheries Commission—are likely to consider new harvest limits in the coming weeks.

*Jeremy Cox is a Bay Journal staff writer based in Maryland. You can reach him at jcox@bayjournal.com. This article first appeared on May 19, 2022, on BayJournal.com and was distributed by the Bay Journal News Service.*

## Maryland State Parks Invite Public to Support Our Pollinators

'Project Butterfly & Bumblebee' Includes Activities and Donation Opportunities

(May 24, 2022)—This spring, the Maryland Park Service has launched Project Butterfly & Bumblebee, an ongoing slate of programs and activities to educate the general public about the role pollinators play in maintaining diverse ecosystems and the nation's food supply.

Pollinators are any insect or animal that transfers pollen from one plant to another in order to facilitate the fertilization to form fruits or seeds. They include a number of species of bees, butterflies, beetles, moths, wasps, flies, ants, and even birds. Maryland State Parks are committed to the protection of these vital creatures.

Individuals can donate ([https://www.shopdnr.com/MPS\\_Donations.aspx](https://www.shopdnr.com/MPS_Donations.aspx)) to support butterfly and bumblebee habitat and education in state parks. Projects supported by these donations include planting and restoring native gardens, field edges, and meadows that benefit a wide variety of species and connect park visitors to the beauty and wonder of nature.

Park visitors are invited to participate in ongoing educational programs and visit existing gardens, fields, and meadows at parks that support thriving pollinator populations. "Parks for Pollinators" is also the theme of the 15th annual Park Quest (<https://dnr.maryland.gov/parkquest/pages/home.aspx>) family activity series happening now throughout Maryland State Parks.

—Maryland Department of Natural Resources

## Van Hollen, Cardin Announce \$1 Million to Support Conservation Efforts

Funding will help conserve or restore hundreds of acres of wetland across Maryland

WASHINGTON (May 25, 2022)—Today, U.S. Senators Chris Van Hollen and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) announced \$1,000,000 to help preserve and restore hundreds of acres of declining wetland habitats across Maryland's Eastern Shore, as well as in Delaware and Virginia. This Department of the Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding for the Delmarva Oasis project is administered through the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission and was authorized by the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA). The funds will be directed to Ducks Unlimited in partnership with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and Lower Shore Land Trust in Maryland, among others in Delaware and Virginia. The Delmarva Oasis project funding will help conserve bird populations and wetland habitats while supporting local economies and outdoor recreational opportunities, such as hunting, fishing, and birdwatching.

"Our wetlands are at great risk of erosion. That's why I've fought to secure federal investments through the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to help save our wetlands and conserve our wildlife populations through collaborative conservation efforts with key on-the-ground partners. This investment will not only support the health of our environment but also our local economy, recreation, and tourism," said Senator Van Hollen.

"Maryland's wetlands on the Eastern Shore provide vital shelter and habitat for various species of wildlife, especially migratory birds. As we grapple with sea level rise and the other harmful effects of climate change, this new funding will sustain healthy populations of iconic birds and preserve biodiversity, in turn, contributing to our local recreation and tourism industries," said Senator Cardin.

Wetlands provide many economic, ecological, and social benefits to species and the surrounding communities. They are also important protections from the effects of climate change such as flooding and rising seas. Partners in NAWCA projects include private landowners, states, local governments, conservation organizations, sportsmen's groups, Tribes, land trusts, and corporations. As of 2021, Maryland had 26 NAWCA state projects either completed or underway. These projects have conserved 58,371 acres of wildlife habitat. In addition, Maryland has four NAWCA multi-state projects to restore habitat throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These projects have conserved 45,934 acres of wildlife habitat.

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

### Big Tobacco and the Microplastics Problem

(NAPSI)—It's likely you see one of the most common sources of plastic pollution everyday—on the ground, in parking lots, in gutters or at the beach—cigarette butts. This is not trash but toxic garbage and plastic pollution poisoning marine life and humans.

Since cigarette filters are made of plastic, they can take years to decompose, leaving behind toxic microplastics that pollute our environment—and could make their way inside of us. In fact, every smoked cigarette filter contains 15,000 strands of microplastic fibers. Though often invisible to the human eye, microplastics are nearly everywhere—polluting the food we eat, the water we drink, and even the air we breathe.

So, what exactly are microplastics? Microplastics are tiny pieces of plastic measuring less than 5 millimeters long, or about the size of a sesame seed or smaller.

Due to their tiny size, microplastics are nearly impossible to remove from our food and water sources. As a result, they can cause great harm not only to our environment, but also to our health. It might come as a surprise to learn that Americans ingest an estimated tens of thousands of microplastic particles a year.

Adding to the problem, cigarette butts are the most littered item on Earth. They're also the most discarded item found on California beaches and waterways.

"Though microplastics are small, the microplastic fibers produced from smoked cigarette filters can cause massive damage to our environment and our bodies. Microplastics pollute our oceans and leach into our soil, and as a result, can harm our wildlife, our food sources, and consequently our health. Putting an end to tobacco product waste isn't just best practice

but a necessity for the health of our environment and our communities," said Eben Schwartz, Marine Debris Program Manager at the California Coastal Commission.

The tobacco industry is a top global plastic polluter, producing six trillion cigarettes every single year. More than 4.5 trillion cigarette butts are dumped into the environment globally, each year, and the microplastic remnants can make their way into our communities, our food, and ultimately our own bodies. Microplastics have been found in apples, pears, lettuce, broccoli and carrots, as well as in seafood commonly consumed by humans.

Holding the tobacco industry accountable starts with exposing their lies and unmasking the damage they've caused.

Learn more about the tobacco industry's impact on the environment at <https://www.undo.org>.

## Earth TALK™ Greener Trains, Greener Planes Coming Our Way

Dear EarthTalk:  
You hear a lot about electric cars and trucks these days, but has there been any carbon-saving innovation lately in trains and even planes?  
—Michael C., Summit, NJ

Many environmentalists consider travel an environmental "sin" given the carbon emissions generated by the cars, buses, trains and planes we use to get from Point A to B, but it's up to each of us to determine how much travel is enough. In the meantime, airplane and train manufacturers and the industries that serve them are doing a lot to green their operations and products.

As for airplanes, manufactur-

ers are working hard to replace toxic materials with greener ones. One example is chrome, a carcinogen heavy metal that is used extensively within passenger cabins and elsewhere in many airplanes. Manufacturers have developed 3D printing using carbon fiber compounds to replace chrome and many other metals used throughout a plane's body. This also cuts down significantly on weight, which in turn saves fuel and emissions.

Fuel substitution is another sustainability fix that airlines are starting to take seriously. One particularly green substitute fuel comes from Fulcrum BioEnergy, which converts garbage into jet fuel that can augment regular car-

bon-intensive jet fuel and thus save on emissions. The company's technology utilizes chemical breakdowns of waste to produce fuels that mix with normal jet fuel, cutting emissions by as much as 20 percent.

Not surprisingly, electric drive planes are also on the horizon. Israel's Eviation has a zero-emission prototype plane that can fly up to an hour after charging for

30 minutes.

Rail companies are pursuing similar strategies, such as electric powered trains. Gravity powered trains use gravitational force—generated by braking (like hybrid electric cars)—to power their batteries. Train builders are also starting to embrace electric drive systems to save on fossil fuel consumption. These newer hybrid systems can cut emissions and



Eviation's all-electric Alice airplane Israel's Eviation can fly for an hour on a battery charge with zero emissions. IMAGE COURTESY EARTHTALK

fuel usage by up to 11 percent, which amounts to an average fuel savings of some 6,000 gallons of diesel per trip.

Of course, it is important to understand that travel is often a luxury. And while it can be an essential—such as seeing far-flung relatives or participating in work trips—it can often be minimized. To minimize your carbon footprint and—more important—minimize damage to our imperiled planet, consider reducing your plane travel. While both forms of transit are problematic, trains are a better choice for the planet.

The growth of the transit industry and a globalized economy mean that travel is inevitable as a habit, necessity and pastime. Nevertheless, it's important not to take plane and train travel for granted. The less you travel, the lower your carbon footprint will remain, so it's up to you to find the right bal-

ance between maintaining your quality of life and helping fight global warming. Maybe in the future we can travel great distances without any environmental guilt. But until then, it's better to think twice about taking any trips that aren't absolutely necessary.

**CONTACTS:** Five Rail Sustainability Trends for 2021, [freightwaves.com/news/5-rail-sustainability-trends-for-2021](https://freightwaves.com/news/5-rail-sustainability-trends-for-2021); Airlines want to make flight more sustainable. How will they do it? [cen.acs.org/environment/sustainability/Airlines-want-to-make-flight-sustainable/99/i32/the-search-for-greener-airplane-materials](https://cen.acs.org/environment/sustainability/Airlines-want-to-make-flight-sustainable/99/i32/the-search-for-greener-airplane-materials).

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: [questions@earthtalk.org](mailto:questions@earthtalk.org)

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**Morningside from A2**

One Book. Check it out. I will.

When I recently took out a book at Spauldings Branch Library in Suitland, I noticed this message on the receipt: "You just saved \$25.95 by using your library. You have saved \$25.95 this past year and \$5,011.26 since you began using the library!"

**Milestones**

Happy birthday to Mary Desmarais, May 17; Chris Desmarais, May 26; Gary Lewis, Sr. and Steven Busky, May 27; Teddy Burke and Kevin Nichols, May 30; Ruth Garner, Aiyana Poe and my granddaughter Sarah McHale, May 31; Kathleen Stahl, June 1; Paul Elborne and Jacob Cook, June 2; and Darius Nalley-Stoddard, June 3; Fay Norton-Cummings and Malik Reed, June 6; Trisha Reamy, June 7; Ryan Fowler and John Nichols, June 8; Robin Murphy and Rev. Frank Ways, June 9; Laura Smith Jenkins, June 10; Fannie Dimes, Meghan (Trexler) Decker and Jennifer Jenkins McClelland, June 11.

Happy anniversary to Tyonda Simms-Taylor and Michael Taylor who were wed June 1, 1995. Happy 38th anniversary to former Morningside Councilwoman Carol (Kline) and Dr. Tom DeGraba on June 4; and Happy 46th anniversary to Bucky and Debbie Tretler, on June 5.

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