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Visiting a Maryland Union Hall, Biden Touts Economic Initiatives

By IAN DECKER and YESENIA MONTENEGRO
Capital News Service

LANHAM, Md. (Feb. 15, 2023)—President Joe Biden on Wednesday (Feb. 15) highlighted several key points of his economic plan—improving infrastructure, funding accessible health care, emphasizing American manufacturing and lowering the deficit—during a speech to friendly union workers.

“We got more work to do,” Biden said at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 26 here. “But it’s never been a good idea to bet against America, and I can honestly say as I stand here today that I’ve never been more optimistic about America’s future.”

It was a familiar line in a 30-minute speech that echoed his State of the Union Address on Feb. 7. Biden also reiterated his pledge to protect Social Security and Medicare and tax Fortune 500 companies, part of what he is calling a “blue collar blueprint.”

Accompanied by notable state and congressional leaders, including Maryland Gov. Wes Moore, Sen. Ben Cardin and Rep. Glenn Ivey, Biden also touted his efforts to reduce carbon emissions by building charging stations, improve transportation infrastructure—including replacing an aging railroad tunnel in Baltimore—and reduce the costs of prescription drugs such as insulin.

By contrast, “our Republican friends are doubling down on the same failed politics of the past: top-down, trickle-down economics. There is not much trickle-down...at most kitchen tables in America,” the president said.

Ivey said he endorsed the president’s message, saying there is a lot of positive news to spread, especially

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YESENIA MONTENEGRO/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

LANHAM, Md.—President Joe Biden speaks Wednesday (Feb. 15) about his economic initiatives before members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 26.

BSU Receives \$1.5 Million Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Grant

Black Male Educators Project Supported by U.S. Department of Education Funding

By DAVID LEE THOMPSON
Bowie State University

BOWIE, Md. (Feb. 16, 2023)—Bowie State University has received funding from the U. S. Department of Education’s Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Program that will exceed \$1.5 million over four

years to support The Bowie Black Male Educators Project. The university is one of only twelve institutions, and the only HBCU to be awarded a grant from the new program.

The Black Male Educators Project works to increase the number of Black male teachers who are prepared to work with

students in early childhood, elementary, secondary, and special education with the knowledge, understanding and skills in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Ultimately, the university’s ability to bring more focus on Black male teachers will be bolstered through curriculum program redesign and faculty development.

“It’s no secret that Black male teachers are in short supply,” said Dr. Julius L. Davis, founding director of Bowie State’s Black Male Educators Project and College of Education professor. “Blacks comprise 6 percent of all teachers and black men are less than 2 percent. This grant will enable us to recruit and prepare 50 Black Male educators in early childhood/special education, elementary or secondary education who can provide culturally relevant instruction and work

with students and families. Through our program redesign, we’ll create a pathway for Black male teachers to become certified in ESOL to meet the changing demographics in our schools,” said Dr. Davis.

A redesigned curriculum will encompass all teacher education programs at BSU and reflect up-to-date research in the areas of race, ethnicity, culture, language, disability, technology, and other experiential learning modes. The university will also develop five ESOL courses that will be used to prepare teacher candidates to become certified in ESOL.

“We’re at a tipping point in education and the need for Black male teachers has never been greater,” said Dr. Davis. “The Augustus F. Hawkins Centers of Excellence Grant along

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PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Dr. Julius Davis, second from left, founding director of BSU’s Black Male Educators Project poses with a group of middle school students who participate in the program.

Pilot Project Labor Agreement Legislation Passes

Following Public Comment and Council Debate, CB-004-2023 is Enacted

By ANGELA J. ROUSON

Prince George’s County Council Media

The Prince George’s County Council, during session on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, voted 9-1 to support CB-4-2023, legislation establishing a Pilot Project Labor Agreement (PLA) targeting Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) Curb and Road Rehabilitation 2 construction projects that create entry-level positions for residents that are both necessary and desirable.

District 8 Council Member Edward P. Burroughs III, proposer of the CB-4-2023, noted the critical need to hire and train local construction workers, providing opportunities for residents to acquire lifelong skills and earn family supporting wages.

“I am so honored to be a part of The People’s Council. One of

our top pillars is supporting working families and this bill perfectly aligns with that purpose. The Council has a responsibility to use its legislative powers to guarantee that a significant share of taxpayer dollars spent on local construction projects are reinvested back into our communities to uplift County residents, and that’s what this pilot will do. Project Labor Agreements have a proven track record of fostering positive benefits, ensuring compliance with workplace safety and health standards and wage protections and equal opportunity. It is a common phenomenon in our County to pull up to construction projects and see license plates

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Gov. Moore Testifies in Support of Bill Giving a Larger Tax Break to Military Retirees

By KARA THOMPSON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 16, 2023)—Gov. Wes Moore testified Thursday (Feb. 16) in support of a bill that would give military retirees a larger tax break, one of the pieces of legislation his administration requested the Speaker of the House to submit for this session.

“What this would allow us to do is stay consistent, and keep pace with our neighbors,” Moore said in his testimony. “It can become Maryland’s decade because our veterans can do what they’ve historically done, which is help to lead the way.”

The law applies to individuals who receive retirement income—including death

benefits—as a result of being inducted into or a member of the U.S. armed forces, a member of the Maryland National Guard or serving in active duty in the corps of the Public Health Service, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or the Coast and Geodetic Survey.

“The talented staff of the Department of Veterans Affairs and I are solely focused on serving those who have served all of us,” said Anthony Woods, acting secretary of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs, who testified favorably. “This bill will help us to carry out this mission while diminishing the financial factors that cause veterans to leave the state they call home.”

Currently, those eligible retirees over age of 55 must pay taxes on income above

\$15,000, while those under 55 have to pay tax on income above \$5,000. The proposed bill would make the subtraction modification the same for everyone, regardless of age.

HB554, which is cross-filed in the Senate as SB553, increases the amount of money individuals can subtract from their income tax to \$25,000 for tax year 2023, and raises it again for tax years 2024 and beyond to \$40,000.

“This bill will save veteran families an estimated \$30 million annually,” said Moore. “The true benefit of this bill cannot be reflected in the dollars and cents,

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KARA THOMPSON/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Gov. Wes Moore enters the House Ways and Means Committee, where he shared testimony in a bill hearing, something a governor has not done in 8+ years.

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ChildWatch: “You Either Care About Protecting Kids or You Don’t”

Why do we continue to allow this to happen to our children? We are now seeing young Americans who’ve gone through the same trauma more than once, including several of the students at Michigan State

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Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County Announces First Date of Job Fair Series

Four-day Work Week Bill Aims to Give Workers and Businesses More Flexibility

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Town of Morningside: two housefires

The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department has been busy with two local houses afire in recent weeks, on Boxwood and on Pickett Court.

Former Morningsider Kathy Elborne emailed me word that there had been a serious fire at the house once next door to her, 6714 Boxwood. She said that the current resident and her son were not injured, having arrived on the scene in the late afternoon as smoke was coming out the windows. She later drove past the house, saw the boarded-up windows and burned belongings on the porch.

She gave me a little history of the house: "My dear sweet neighbor Kathrine Colleli lived there when we moved to Morningside and used to say that the house was originally a farmhouse, probably one of the first buildings in Morningside."

A few weeks later, a second fire occurred at 9400 Pickett Court. I went by it and found it boarded up and the site cleaned up. No one was injured. A woman who lived there has moved away. The furnace was found to be the culprit.

Karen Rooker, Morningside's Clerk/Treasurer, shared information with me about these two Morningside fires and then added another, though not in Morningside. On Feb. 13, a man died in a house-fire doors down from Karen's former home in the 8400 block of Schultz Road in Clinton. Two other residents were hospitalized with non-threatening injuries. The cause of the fire is under investigation.

Alberta Magnani, Census retiree, played rummy with the grandkids

Alberta Magnani was born in Tuscany, Italy, to Angelo and Eva Pinocci, and immigrated to the United States when she was five years old. She was 92 when she died February 20.

She graduated from Washington-Lee High School and Benjamin Franklin University, where she earned a bachelor's in accounting, and went to work for the Department of Defense at the Pentagon.

After her marriage to Joseph Magnani on May 24, 1954, she quit her job to raise four daughters. She then worked at the Census Bureau, finally retiring in 1994. After retirement, Alberta and Joseph traveled back to Italy several times, enjoying family and friends there.

She was an active member of the Luchesi nel Mondo Italian Club of Washington and the Sodality of St. Philip's Church. In

her spare time, she loved to cook, knit and sew, and play rummy with her grandchildren.

Her husband of 56 years, Joseph, died in 2011. Survivors include daughters, JoAnne (David), Christina, Sandra (Ralph), Gina (Robert), and seven grandchildren. Mass of Christian Burial was at St. Philip's Feb. 20. Private entombment will be at Mount Olivet Cemetery.

Neighbors & other good people

My next-door neighbor Stacie Smith joined me last week to read to the children at the Daughters of Saint Anne's daycare at the convent just around the corner from us. Stacie also presented the six tots with child-size quilts especially made for them.

Judy (Waby) Hansel, formerly of Skyline, has sent out about a hundred emails regarding a credit union in Dublin Park, Calif., which she says stole more than \$57,600 from her. She has reported it to all the usual authorities, including the White House. I hope she gets it settled.

Rosemary (Doheny) Weller, 85, of Ft. Washington, died Feb. 11. She had a graduate degree from St. Mary's College Notre Dame (my alma mater), master's from Catholic U., Ph.D. from Maryland U., and she taught at Gallaudet. She was active in the Tantallon Citizens Assn. and editor of their newsletter. Survivors include son Michael Weller, a granddaughter, and two brothers. Mass was at St. Mary's Piscataway, with burial at Resurrection.

John Russell Linthicum, 88, died Jan. 13 in Pompano Beach. He had graduated from Eastern High in D.C., was a star basketball and baseball player, and served in the Navy before becoming co-owner of Gus & John's Italian Villa Restaurant in Camp Springs. He is survived by his wife Dorothy, two daughters and grandkids.

This time in February I always think of Gerry Jolliffe. I knew him years ago when he was a teenager in District Heights, son of Agnes "Jean" Jolliffe. He is the only person I've ever known who was born on leap-day, Feb. 29, and had a birthday only every four years. He died Feb. 21, 2014 (not a leap year).

Suitland Road Baptist Church: correction

Last week I wrote about Suitland Road Baptist Church, but had a mistake. To correct: The church is only open for the Sunday service, which is at 11 a.m. To participate in the Friday Morning Bible Study with Paster Dr. Kelvin McCune, 10:30 to 11:30

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

a.m., call 617-769-8377. They will be discussing The Book of Romans. Thanks to Carolyn Pruitt for keeping me informed about activities at SRBC.

Places to go and things to do

The Maryland Choral Society (MSC) will perform Mozart's Requiem at Mount Calvary Church on Sunday, March 12. The Requiem is considered one of the world's most beloved masterworks, with full orchestra, professional soloists. MSC will also perform the Miserere by Marianna von Martines. Mt. Calvary Church is at 6700 Marlboro Pike in Forestville. Purchase tickets at <https://marylandchoralsociety.org>. Use code MCS2023 at checkout. Face masks required.

The Surratt Visitors' Center & Gift Shop opened in 1988. Though the building is not historic, it stands on acreage owned by the Surratt family. Housed at the shop are artifacts and photographs relative to the Surratt story. Prominently displayed is a large electric map highlighting the John Wilkes Booth escape route. The shop features a wide array of books on the Civil War, Lincoln and the Lincoln assassination, and a variety of gifts and collectibles. The Shop is at 9118 Brandywine Rd. in Clinton. For hours, call 301-868-1121.

2023: The Year of the Rabbit

The Chinese zodiac designates 2023 as the Year of the Rabbit. In Chinese culture, the rabbit represents hope and life and is a signal of peace and prosperity. For more information about The Year of the Rabbit, go to <https://chinesenewyear.net/zodiac/rabbit>.

People born in the Year of the Rabbit are calm and peaceful. They avoid fighting and arguing at all times but are artistic and have good taste in life. This is why they pay close attention to small details and make sure everything is done correctly.

If you happen to have a pet rabbit, enjoy it even more in 2023.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Angela Hutchinson and Thomas "TJ" Flaherty, Feb. 27; Terrence Flaherty, Feb. 28; Winifred Lanehart, March 1; Karen (Elborne) Stern and Harold Titus, March 2; Jennifer Vilky, March 3; Amy (Schlor) Foster and Matthew Flaherty, March 4.

Happy Anniversary to Clifford and Nancy Lantz, Feb. 26; Freda and Michael McDonald, their 43rd on Feb. 28; and Tom and Sarah Shipman, their 64th on March 4.

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

26, 2023, in the Bulldog Stadium. More details to follow. Graduation from Bowie State University is a major milestone in life.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University's College of Business and Rhodes University School of Business in South Africa developed a new course module to equip business students at both universities with a global entrepreneurial perspectives and technology skills to guide the development and growth of small ventures. The Entrepreneurial and Technological Empowerment Program (ETEP) introduced students to digital and financial technologies, project management, and business development skills and empowered them to assist rural and emerging businesses and cooperatives in marginalized communities.

"The beauty of the program is that it pairs teams of BSU and Rhodes students to provide technology-based solutions to business and socio-economic issues facing rural cooperatives in the Makhanda region of South Africa," said Professor Kavita Kapur, assistant professor of Marketing, Management and Public Administration and a lead organizer of the initiative at BSU. "Student will not only gain knowledge of emerging technologies but also understanding of the connections of applying them to help businesses grow to have greater impact in their communities."

The curriculum, jointly developed by faculty from BSU and Rhodes, focused on technology and global competencies that can be directly applied to real life business situations to improve business performance, access to markets and economic growth. Students will gain knowledge in a variety of blockchain technologies including cross-border payments and programmable digital currency. Agile project management and software development as well as lean startup business practices will be taught.

The ETEP course module will be incorporated into the senior level e-commerce course in business information systems at Bowie State and into the Postgraduate Diploma in Enterprise Management at Rhodes. BSU will offer a 16-week course in the spring of 2022 with the last eight weeks devoted to the collaborative ETEP module with Rhodes. Students will be joined in a virtual classroom and work in teams to support an assigned cooperative business in South Africa. The program included a two-week exchange visit to the U.S. for selected Rhodes students in 2022. Selected Bowie State students will travel to South Africa in 2023. MEDIA CONTACT: Cassandra Robinson 301-860-4336. crobinson@bowiestate.edu.

Around the County

Maryland's Largest Water Utility Earns National Environmental Achievement Award for Wastewater Treatment Virtual Unit

LAUREL, Md. (Feb. 15, 2023)—The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) presented WSSC Water with the 2023 National Environmental Achievement Award in the Public Information & Education Program at a ceremony last night for its Introduction to Wastewater Treatment Virtual Unit. The prestigious award recognizes inventive water and sewer utilities' efforts to educate the public on the effects of wastewater treatment and pollution control.

WSSC Water's educational outreach program reaches an average of 2,000 students each year throughout two of the nation's largest school districts. To meet growing demand for environmental curriculum and build more online programming due to COVID-19, staff created virtual tours of the utility's Seneca and Piscataway Water Resource Recovery Facilities (WRRF), formerly known as wastewater treatment plants. The innovative virtual tour uses 360-degree photos and Google's satellite technology to provide educators and students a step-by-step tour of how wastewater is expertly treated to protect the Chesapeake Bay by returning clean water back to Maryland waterways. The unit includes a complete curriculum and teacher's guide. Since its launch in the fall of 2021, approximately 800 students have experienced the virtual program.

"It is inspiring to see our employees finding new and innovative ways to reach more students and teachers who may not be able to visit our plants in person," said Commission Chair Fausto R. Bayonet. "It is even more inspiring that this virtual environmental education program has been recognized by NACWA."

"We are honored to receive this notable environmental award from NACWA as it reinforces our commitment to educate tomorrow's leaders on our clean-water mission," said WSSC Water General Manager and CEO Kishia L. Powell. "We hope our extensive educational efforts will pique young, curious minds and instill in them a desire to join our mission to protect the environment."

WSSC Water's STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) education programs introduce engineering and environmental science topics and careers to elementary through high school-age students. Educators and students can request the Wastewater Treatment Virtual Unit by visiting wsscwater.com/educationoutreach and clicking on the "request resources or a program" button.

WSSC Water operates and maintains six WRRFs across Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The facilities treat, on average, about 70 million gallons of wastewater each day and help protect the Chesapeake Bay by returning clean water back to Maryland waterways—cleaner than the water in the receiving streams and rivers.

In addition to its NACWA recognition, WSSC Water was recently inducted to Leading Utilities of the World Network by the Global Water Leaders Group. By demonstrating excellence in water resource recovery, network operations and emergency management, WSSC Water is now part of a network of 65 of the world's most successful and innovative water and wastewater utilities from across the world. Considering there is approximately 50,000 utilities in this country alone, the induction is a major accomplishment.

—Luis Maya, WSSC Water

Local Resident Named to William & Mary Dean's List

WILLIAMSBURG, Va. (Feb. 16, 2023)—The following local residents were recently named to the Dean's List at the College of William & Mary for the fall 2022 semester:

Cheverly, MD: **Sami Popol**

In order to achieve Dean's List status, a full-time degree seeking undergraduate student must take at least 12 credit hours and earn a 3.6 Quality Point Average during the semester.

William & Mary is the second oldest institution of higher learning in the United States.

—Claudette Brooks, College of William & Mary

Local Residents Named to Dean's List for Fall 2022 Semester

MANCHESTER, N.H. (Feb. 13, 2023)—Saint Anselm College has released the Dean's List of high academic achievers for the first semester of the 2022–2023 school year. To be eligible for this honor, a student must have achieved a grade point average of 3.4 or better in the semester with at least 12 credits of study which award a letter grade. A total of 471 students representing 21 states and 6 countries received this honor.

Mark W. Cronin, Dean of the College, announced that the following students have been named to the Dean's List for the fall 2022 semester at Saint Anselm College, Manchester, New Hampshire.

Bowie, MD: **Brandon Potts**, 2025, criminal justice
Hyattsville, MD: **Beatriz Huerta**, 2023, marketing & Spanish double

—Paul Pronovost, Saint Anselm College

Fairfield University Congratulates Fall 2022 Dean's List Honorees

FAIRFIELD, Conn. (Feb. 10, 2023)—The following Fairfield University student received Dean's List Honors for the Fall 2022 semester.

Hyattsville, MD: **June R. Dodson**

In order to be placed on the Dean's List, students must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours in a semester, have no outstanding or incomplete grades for that semester, and have attained a semester grade point average of 3.50 or better.

—Susan Cipollaro, Fairfield University

Brandywine-Aquasco

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH HALL

Good Food, Good Eating Saturday, March 11, 2023. Dinners will be sold at St. Philip's Church Hall, 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland from 12 noon–until sold out. Chicken or Fish Dinners cost \$18.00. Sandwiches will be on sale. (All dinners will be served with String Beans, Sweet Potato, Potato Salad, and Bread). Baked Goods on sale and Vendors on-site.

Vendor tables are available-Call. "Pre Orders must be paid in advance". Shirley Cleaves 302-690-4260, Vivian Rich 804-301-9530, Michele Chase 240-882-3369. "Thank you for your support in advance." Sponsored by: Peter A. Gross, Sr. Scholarship/Memorial Fund Inc.

USHER'S ANNIVERSARY

Sunday, February 26, 2023, Christ United Methodist Church in Aquasco, Maryland will hold a special Usher's Anniversary Celebration at 2 p.m. The guest speaker will be Minister Pearl Chase, Asbury United Methodist Church, Brandywine, Maryland.

The Ushers at Christ United Methodist Church are the warm and welcoming faces that cheerfully greet us each Sunday. They answer questions, offer guidance, and help during service. They often come early and stay late to ensure each worship experience runs smoothly. This month Christ United Methodist Church is excited to celebrate these doorkeepers.

In February 1974, the existing Usher Board was established. During an evening meeting a group of stewards collectively arrived at the motto, "I promised Him I would serve him till I die." The Ushers have been marching proudly and piously ever since. Over the years the church ushers have served during regular worship services, special programs, and funerals. They have also uplifted the youth and sponsored various youth events.

Their commitment and generosity have always been at the forefront of their service. The Usher Board has graciously made several donations, including new hymnals in memory of church members, and pulpit supplies. They have also made donations to the church's General Treasury and Building Fund.

Bro. William Taylor is currently the Chair of the Usher Board and routinely remarks on how selfless the group is with their time and talents. They continue to serve faithfully and are always ready and willing to address congregational needs. February 2023 THE MESSENGER (Nottingham Myers and Christ United Methodist Churches Cooperative Parish Newsletter) Joyce Lee. Rev. Strickland, Pastor.

COMMENCEMENT

Spring Commencement at Bowie State University is Friday, May

COMMUNITY

Tea is Back at Marietta!

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

Please join Marietta House Museum on Sunday, March 5, 1–3 p.m. “Teatime Talk: The Women at Marietta”.

In honor of Women’s History Month, Julie Rose, director of Marietta House Museum, will give a talk featuring the latest research about the women, free and enslaved, who lived and labored at Marietta between 1783 and 1865.

The talk features three generations of enslaved women of the Jackson, Butler, and Duckett families. Learn about the families and the strong matriarchs whose stories intertwine between centuries.

Tea will be served with all the trimmings of a mid-1800s tea, including scones and jam.

Following the tea is an optional guided tour of the historic house and grounds where visitors will see the rooms where Serena Jackson, Martha Duckett and Sarah Butler likely worked, ate, slept, and cared for free and enslaved children.

Recommended for ages 12 & up, (ages under 18 must be accompanied by an adult). \$35/person. **Reservations are required by Tues. Feb. 28.** Please register at this direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/yj833re6> For more information call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com

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

Grant from A1

with our Black Male Teachers College Program, Right to Passage Program for boys at Annapolis Middle School, STEM programs and other initiatives will solidify Bowie State’s position as a national leader in preparing Black males to become teachers.”

Bowie State’s Black Male Educators Project is differentiated from similar programs across the nation because most do not work with middle and high school students; the participation from alumni, undergraduate and graduate students; and the bonds that have been established with organizations such as The Building Our Network of Diversity (BOND) Project, National Association of Black Male Educators, Real Men Teach and others to address the issue.

“Every child in America deserves and needs a teacher who looks like them,” said Curtis Valentine, deputy director of the Progressive Policy Institute’s Reinventing America’s School Project. “Fortunately, Bowie State University may very well be the answer. If their track record is any indication, the U.S. Department of Education’s historic grant to Bowie State and Dr. Julius Davis will invariably increase the number of Black men in education at a time when America’s inequitable education system needs them the most.”

Calendar of Events

Independent Film Series: “Madan Sara” Screening and Discussion

Date and time: Monday, March 13, 2023, 7–8:30 p.m.

REGISTER: <https://pgcmls.info/event/7497418>, or call (240) 455-5451
Description: The screening will be followed by a Q&A session with the film’s creator and executive director, Etant Dupain.

The women known as Madan Sara in Haiti work tirelessly to buy, distribute, and sell food and other essentials in markets throughout the country. Despite the obstacles faced by the women working in a sector that lacks investment, infrastructure, and state assistance, the Madan Sara continue to be one of the most critical parts of the Haitian economy.

The “Madan Sara” documentary tells the stories of these indefatigable women who work at the margins to make Haiti’s economy run. Despite facing intense hardship and social stigma, the hard work of the Madan Sara puts their children through school, houses their families, and helps to ensure a better life for generations to come. This film amplifies the calls of the Madan Sara as they speak directly to society to share their dreams for a more just Haiti.

About the filmmaker

Etant Dupain is a journalist, filmmaker, and community organizer. For over a decade, he has worked as a producer on documentaries and for international news media outlets, including Al Jazeera, TeleSur, BBC, CNN, Netflix, PBS, and Vice. Etant founded an alternative media project in Haiti to enable citizen journalists to provide access to information in Haitian Creole for and about internally-displaced people, aid accountability, and politics. Now, moved by the strength of his mother and the women known as the Madan Sara who make Haiti’s economy run, he’s making his first personal film. To learn more about the film, visit <https://www.madansarafilm.com/>

Ages: Teen (13–18 yrs) | Adults |

Location: Hyattsville Branch Library, Meeting Room 2, 6530 Adelphi Rd., Hyattsville, Md. 20782

National Women’s History Museum Exhibition Opening on DC Black Feminists

Date and time: Thursday, March 30, 2023, 5–8 p.m.

REGISTER: <https://dclibrary.libnet.info/event/8017804>

Description: We Who Believe in Freedom: Black Feminist DC will trace Black feminism in Washington, DC from the turn of the 20th century through the civil rights and Black Power movements to today.

Curated by renowned historians Sherie M. Randolph and Kendra T. Field, the exhibition will focus on the stories and voices of Black feminist organizers and theorists—including Anna Julia Cooper, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Mary Treadwell, and Nkenge Touré—whose expansive work made a difference in the lives of Black women in their Washington, DC communities and for all people throughout the United States. Standing at the intersection of race, class, and gender, Black feminists fought for a definition of freedom and liberation that extended beyond their individual circumstances—work that remains unfinished today.

The exhibit, which will run through September 2024, will be open to the public and free of charge.

Cost: FREE

Ages: Seniors | Adults | 13–19 Years Old (Teens) |

Location: Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library, Great Hall and First Floor, West, 901 G St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

Contact: <https://www.womenshistory.org/black-feminist-dc>

Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George’s County Launches Saturday Enrichment Academy

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (Feb. 16, 2023)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County in partnership with the County Council is proud to announce its new weekend tutoring program, Saturday Enrichment Academy (SEA), to help improve grades and test scores of county youth. In this three-hour weekly program, learning coaches will use creative ways to meet the needs and styles of participants in grades 1–3 to promote academic acceleration. SEA is FREE for Prince

George’s County residents ages 6–9 and will take place at nine Department locations March 4–June 10, 2023, from 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

“The purpose of our Saturday Enrichment Academy is to provide academic support to youth who are having challenges with English Language Arts and STEAM”, states Anica O’Neil, Assistant Division Chief at the Department. “It is our goal to bridge the gap and provide our youth with resources in a comfortable, fun, engaging environment that will assist with mitigating their learning challenges.”

Students will receive small group tutoring that creates a more comfortable

learning environment and allows tutors to meet participants where they are. SEA will take place each Saturday at the following Elementary Schools in Prince George’s County:

- Berwyn Heights
- Columbia Park
- Deerfield Run
- Langley Park
- Perrywood
- Glassmanor
- Fort Washington Forest
- William Hall Academy
- William Beanes

Registration is now open via Parks Direct. To learn more, contact anica.oneil@pgparks.com.

Despite Cleanup Efforts, Chesapeake Bay Remains Pollution Challenge

By HUNTER SAVERY
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Feb. 14, 2023)—Despite decades of conservation efforts, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation gave the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay a D+ in its recently released 2022 State of the Bay report.

In fact, the needle has hardly moved since the Chesapeake Bay Foundation began issuing the annual report in 1998. The original report gave the bay a score of 27 out of 100. Today that score has only improved to 32 out of 100.

CBF’s Interim Maryland Executive Director Erik Fisher told Capital News Service: “We’re a long way from where we need to be, and it’s clear that we have to pick up the pace to get back on track. We are behind. I don’t think anyone’s happy with where we are.”

The bay faces a long road ahead: the goal is to raise the score to at least 70 out of 100, which is a long way from the current 32.

“I think we recognize that in our lifetimes, we’ll never be back to the bay of pre-European settlement,” Fisher said. “But we can have a stable, thriving ecosystem where we can feed ourselves, where we can swim, and fish and meet those standards that we’re all aiming for.”

One issue hindering conservation progress is a dramatic decline in water-related pollution enforcement. Between 2016–2021, Maryland took 67% fewer water-related enforcement actions, according to the 2022 Chesapeake Accountability Project report.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) is significantly understaffed as well. The agency has lost one out of every seven staff members since 2002 and the budget has fallen by more than one-third. In spite of the threats posed by climate change, MDE’s budget only represents one-fifth of one percent of Maryland’s general fund state budget.

Even with more resources, the changing environment presents significant hurdles for conservation efforts. Fisher said that “climate change has moved the goalposts.”

Climate change makes hitting the restoration targets for the bay significantly more challenging. For one thing, there needs to be enough oxygen in the water for fish to breathe, but warmer water holds less oxygen. That means there needs to be even greater reductions in nitrogen and phosphorus pollution to make the bay thrive.

Rising sea levels are a major factor as well. As the seas rise, marshes and wetlands will be lost without plans in place



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM

Microplastics are found in the Chesapeake Bay.

that allow those marshes to move. Luckily, there are spillover benefits to shoreline conservation.

“Climate change is making it even more imperative that we focus on these natural filter solutions,” Fisher said. “And while we’re doing it we’re capturing carbon. And when we do it near communities we’re also cooling the air and mitigating heat island effects.”

Natural filters are more than just a matter of tall grasses and wetlands. Fisher said he hopes to see Gov. Wes Moore’s administration make “a concerted investment in natural filters in Maryland. And that’s everything from our forests to our shorelines to oysters. All three of these things act as natural kidneys for the bay.”

On the campaign trail, Moore pledged to clean up the Chesapeake Bay. In January, Moore announced there would be \$1.1 million in new funding for the Chesapeake Conservation Corps. Additionally, the Moore administration’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2024 includes funding for 67 new MDE employees.

The staffing issues and lax enforcement at MDE have spilled past the Chesapeake Bay. Last September, officials in Baltimore issued a “boil water” advisory after detecting *E. coli* bacteria in the city’s water supply. The advisory lasted for nearly a week and affected more than 1,500 homes and businesses.

Whether or not the Moore administration’s proposals reinvigorate MDE, Fisher remains optimistic about the work CBF is doing.

“One of the exciting things that we’ve seen in the cleanup is that when we help the bay, the bay starts to build enough resilience to help itself,” he said.

National Cherry Blossom Festival Announces Date for 2023 Beloved Blossom Kite Festival, Presented by Hilton

This Year’s Blossom Kite Festival Will Feature Free, Fun Activities, Music, Performances, and More

By PRESS OFFICER
National Cherry Blossom Festival

WASHINGTON (Feb. 8, 2023)—National Kite-Flying Day is the perfect day for the National Cherry Blossom Festival to share all the ways attendees can “spring” on the fun of kite flying, including its signature Blossom Kite Festival, taking place Saturday, March 25, 2023 (10 a.m.–4:30 p.m.) at the Washington Monument Grounds. Presented by Hilton, National Cherry Blossom Festival’s proud Premier Hotel Provider, the Blossom Kite Festival is free, fun, and open to the public and features activities, music, competitions, and performances suitable for all ages.

“We welcome kite enthusiasts, beginners, families, friends, young, and old to join the colorful spectacle on the National Mall, with gorgeous views of the iconic cherry trees,” said Diana Mayhew, president and CEO of National Cherry Blossom Festival. “It’s breathtaking to see the kites soaring high in the sky near the Washington Monument and in neighborhood parks throughout the region during this iconic outdoor celebration of spring. We hope all participants will tag their photos on social media using the

hashtag #BlossomKiteFestival for all to enjoy.”

The Blossom Kite Festival showcases kite performances and competitions, kite-making activities, a Family Field with children’s activities, and more. Special guest, Mr. Mikio Toki, a master of traditional Edo-style kites, has traveled the world showcasing his kites and will travel from Japan to be at this year’s Blossom Kite Festival.

FEATURED PARKS: People of all ages can join Blossom Kite Festival from their homes, favorite neighborhood parks, or anywhere around the world. Participating parks in all eight D.C. wards, Maryland, and Virginia will offer free activities for local residents between April 1 and 2. All interested parties can show off their skills, virtually learn how to make and fly kites, and take to the skies on March 25. Featured parks will be listed on the Blossom Kite Festival event page.

Attendees at the Festival’s kite-flying activities can bring their own kites, purchase kites onsite, or pick up free kite kits they can decorate (while supplies last), courtesy of Hilton. Kite flyers can even purchase the official 2023 Festival kite onsite or online at National Cherry

Blossom Festival Store.

COMMEMORATIVE KITES: Kite flyers can purchase commemorative kites from previous years (while supplies last) at the Festival’s online gift shop. The 2023 commemorative kite, featuring the work of the 2023 National Cherry Blossom Festival’s Official Artist Orlando Quevedo, will be available for purchase in March during the Festival at select events and in the online store.

PLANNING YOUR FESTIVAL EXPERIENCE: The Festival begins March 20 and runs through April 16. Visit the Festival website to add the Blossom Kite Festival to your calendar. When planning your Festival experience, it matters where you stay. As Premier Hotel Provider, Hilton has over 100 properties in the Washington, D.C., area to meet the needs of any kite enthusiast seeking a staycation or vacation throughout the Festival season. Visit the Festival hotel page to learn more about recommended Hilton hotels.

SPONSORS: The Blossom Kite Festival is presented by Hilton and supported by Otsuka America Pharmaceutical, Inc. (OAPI) and Chase. Media sponsors include Washington Parent, Washington Informer, and iHeart Radio.

COMMENTARY

Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

“You Either Care About Protecting Kids or You Don’t”

“As we sat at our desks working on our computers, we began to hear loud pops...I thought I was going to die. As I laid there, I begged God to please make it fast...My classmates pulled me behind a filing cabinet where I called my mom and my dad and said what I thought would be my last goodbyes. I told them how much I loved them, and asked that they please tell my brothers the same. I was so petrified that I began hyperventilating. My classmates had to cover my face so the shooter wouldn't hear my cries and come back. I will never forget that day. What I saw. What I did. What I experienced. What that happened to my classmates.”

“I was sitting and my professor was lecturing, and then I heard either three or four—I could hear gunshots directly behind my head, and I could see the smoke...Immediately, I dropped to the floor with all

my classmates, and someone was yelling that there was a shooter and everybody needed to get down on the ground. And at that moment I thought that I was going to die. I was so scared. I didn't cry, which is surprising for me. I just kind of kept quiet, and I called my mom...My classmates in the back of the classroom started to scream for help, and my other classmates jumped into action, trying to help everyone...I will never forget the screams of my classmates, because they were screaming in pain for help.”

The first quote above is from testimony 17-year-old high school senior Aayah Eastmond gave before Congress as she described how she survived the mass shooting that killed 17 of her classmates, teachers, and friends at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, five years ago on Valentine's Day 2018. The second is from a television in-

terview Michigan State University sophomore Claire Papoulias gave on Tuesday morning, Valentine's Day 2023, as she described the mass shooting that just had happened hours earlier on Michigan State's campus, killing three students and critically injuring five others.

I thought I was going to die...I called my mom... I will never forget.

Why do we continue to allow this to happen to our children? We are now seeing young Americans who've gone through the same trauma more than once, including several of the students at Michigan State. One freshman who lost two friends in a school shooting in Oxford Township, Michigan in November 2021 called her mother as she heard the gunshots and watched people fleeing the student union building Monday night, crying, “Mom, I just want to come home.” At a news conference the morning after the Michigan State shooting, Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-MI), whose former district included Oxford Township, said, “For me, the most haunting picture of last night was watching the cameras pan through the crowds and seeing a young person wearing an ‘Oxford Strong’ sweatshirt, the sweatshirts that were handed out after those kids lived through a school shooting fifteen months ago. We have children in Michigan who are living through their second school shooting in under a year and a half. If this is not a wake-up call to do something, I don't know what is.” Before that Rep. Slotkin said: “I am filled with rage that we have to have another press conference to talk about our children being killed in their schools. And I would say that you either care about protecting

kids or you don't. You either care about having an open, honest conversation about what is going on in our society, or you don't. But please don't tell me you care about the safety of children if you're not willing to have a conversation about keeping them safe in a place that should be a sanctuary.”

At the same news conference, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer said: “We know this is a uniquely American problem. Today is the fifth anniversary of the Parkland shooting. We're mere weeks past the Lunar New Year shooting at a dance hall, and a few months past a shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, and looking back at a year marked by shootings at grocery stores, parades, and so many other ordinary everyday situations. We cannot keep living like this.” She continued: “Our children are scared to go to school. People feel unsafe in their houses of worship or local stores. Too many of us scan rooms for exits when we enter them, and many of us have gone through the grim exercise of figuring out who our last call would be to... As parents, we tell our kids, it's going to be okay. We say that all the time. But the truth is, words are not good enough. We must act and we will.”

We must act. Once again, parents were left grieving this week whose children will never again call on Valentine's Day or any day with the message I love you. Until every adult in this nation who says they love children is willing to protect children instead of guns, no parent will be able to promise their child that they will be safe, and more families will continue to suffer this all-American trauma.

—February 17, 2023

Marc Morial

President and CEO
National Urban League



To Be Equal:

What the Georgia Grand Jury Report on Trump's Election Interference Doesn't Reveal Is Most Revealing

Will Trump Continue to Praise Jurors' “Patriotism & Courage” After Indictments are Announced?

“While we don't know what crimes Trump and his allies will be charged with, the expected indictments will bring desperately needed accountability and demonstrate that no one—not even the former president—is above the law.” —Brie Sparkman, *Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington*

The American people got a brief glimpse this week into the conclusions of a grand jury that spent a year investigating “possible attempts” by Donald Trump and his allies “to disrupt the lawful administration of the 2020 presidential elections in the State of Georgia.”

We learned that the grand jurors recommended perjury charges against “one or more of the witnesses” who testified before them. But it's what that glimpse doesn't reveal that is perhaps most revealing.

The judge who ordered that most of the report be withheld—“for now”—made it clear that his decision was based on protecting the due-process rights of those “who might now be named as indictment worthy.” It is only because the report does not identify those who may have lied to the grand jury that Fulton County Superior Court Judge Robert McBurney allowed that conclusion to be publicly disclosed.

McBurney's decision explicitly refers to “potential future defendants.” Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, who convened the grand jury, also referred to “future defendants,” in her argument against releasing the full report.

Simply put, a grand jury report that recommended no charges against anyone could not possibly be considered a threat to the rights of future defendants. If the grand jury had concluded that no crimes—other than perjury by unnamed witnesses—were committed, we'd all be reading the full report right now.

It's not clear whether those named in the report as potential future defendants were among those who testified—truthfully or untruthfully. McBurney's order alludes both to those “not afforded the opportunity to appear before the grand jury” and to “those who did appear—willingly or not.”

Speculation about the identity of those singled out for indictment, however, should not overshadow the enormity of the misdeeds at the center of the investigation. In his January 2, 2021, call with Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensberger, Trump recited a litany of falsehoods about the presidential election. Trump knew at the time that these were lies. In December 2020, researchers commissioned

to dig up evidence of fraud in six states, including Georgia, told Trump his conspiracy theories were baseless. Emails show Trump knew the claims were untrue even as he swore to their truth under oath.

No matter what indictments result from the grand jury investigation, the facts reveal a breathtaking conspiracy of subversion among Trump and his inner circle, unprecedented in its scope and audacity.

The grand jury confirmed that Trump's claims were baseless after hearing “extensive testimony” from Georgia poll workers, investigators, technical experts, state employees and elected officials—even those who continued to promote conspiracy theories.

Their conclusion establishes for the record that Trump's coercion of Raffensberger to announce a “recalculation” that found exactly one more vote for Trump than his margin of loss was, in fact, an attempt to overturn the results of a lawful, legitimate election.

The investigation also examined false claims of election fraud to state lawmakers, the fake elector scheme, efforts by unauthorized individuals to access voting machines, and threats and harassment against election workers.

Though we don't yet know what indictments the grand jury recommended against whom, we do know Trump is not one of those accused of committing perjury because he didn't testify. At least one member of Trump's inner circle who did appear, his former personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, also is a target of the investigation, along with 16 people involved in the fake elector scheme. Other witnesses include former Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, and Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

Absurdly, Trump called the revelation that one or more of his close associates likely lied under oath a “total exoneration,” somehow missing the implication that indictments are imminent. Will he continue to praise the jurors' “Patriotism & Courage” after those indictments finally are announced?

—February 17, 2023

Military from A1

though. The true benefit of this bill is that it'll keep people—like the ones who are behind me—here inside the state of Maryland.”

The Keep Our Heroes Home Act, as it's also referred to, has 69 sponsors in the House. Keeping with Moore's pledge of bipartisanship, 14 of these delegates are Republicans.

During the hearing on Thursday, eight people testified in favor of the bill, including the governor. There was no in-person unfavorable testimony.

“As we made clear by the members of the panel, their veterans' community continues to serve long after they have taken off the uniform,” the governor said. “These are people who have shown a commitment not just to country, but also a commitment to community, and people who will have a continued opportunity to do so, and our priority should be to make sure they are doing it here.”

The governor's budget allows for \$33 million annually starting in fiscal year 2024 for this bill.

“These are veterans we need. These are veterans we want. These are the neighbors, these are the public servants, these are the community groups and the community group leaders that we want to have in our ranks,” said Moore. “The in-

vestments proposed in this bill are investments in our business community, our workforce and the social fabric of our state.”

Maryland is one of just 14 states that does not have a complete exemption of military retirement income from taxation. West Virginia and Pennsylvania both fully exempt this income from taxation, and Virginia and Delaware's exemptions outperform Maryland's current exemptions, according to legislative analysts.

“These are public servants, and these public servants are starting families, making friends, they're building their lives here in the state of Maryland, and we cannot continue to lose them to other states,” Moore continued. “As I've said before, I refuse to let this state be a farm team for other states.”

Heidi Fleming, a retired Navy captain, agreed in her testimony that this bill will have a direct impact on whether she chooses to retire in Maryland.

“The current tax on military pension is a factor on if I will continue to stay in Maryland upon full retirement,” she said. “The Keep Our Heroes Home Act will be impactful to myself and others making that final decision on where to retire. Invest in the community, both in volunteering and financially supporting the economy.”

Legislation from A1

from West Virginia, Pennsylvania and otherwise. It is important that we shift that—we invest in our own.”

The legislation, also supported by County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, has a stated goal of advancing the County's interest in producing labor-management stability; ensuring compliance with laws and regulations governing safety and health; furthering equal employment opportunities; and raising labor and employment standards. The Curb and Road Rehabilitation 2 construction project category provides the largest ongoing funded Capital Improvement Program (CIP) category for DPW&T.

Project Labor Agreements, also known as Community Workforce Agreements, are legal requirements that create the framework for unionization of government contracts. These contracts are pre-hire collective bargaining agreements with one or more labor organizations.

Sharing his thoughts during the public hearing, Raymin Diaz supported CB-4-2023, noting its potential for creating a career pathway to the middle class.

“This bill moving forward is a great mo-

ment for Prince George's County and a clear signal that creating quality entry level jobs with benefits is an important policy goal. It is also a signal that elected officials in Prince George's County recognize the need to prioritize the local workforce at the same time. I am an immigrant from the Dominican Republic who arrived in Prince George's County when I was 8 years old. I am a graduate of High Point High School. I started out in my construction career as a day laborer. I earned substandard pay and unscrupulous contractors stole my wages. My life changed when I joined Laborers' International Union. LiUNA opened doors and gave me a job with dignity and benefits. With the passage of CB-004-2023, the County can change lives, the same way it did with mine.”

District 7 Council Member Krystal Oriadha, co-sponsor of the legislation, said the measure creates opportunities for both small minority businesses and residents.

“One of the reasons I am a co-proposer of this bill is because it is important that we stand also with the community and residents. There is this idea, or this narrative, that you either have to stand with the business community or with the employees, and I just

don't believe that to be true. I think that as a Council we can strike a balance to be able to stand boldly, and loudly, and clearly represent and push the interests of our residents that do not have the opportunity to own a business but are just as valuable. We also want to have a clear message to elevate and center our small minority businesses. We need to let go of the notion that those two things cannot be done—that we cannot create space and opportunity for our residents that are workers, and for our small minority businesses. We can do that.”

The Council conducted a labor session during its Annual Retreat last January, that included presentations from union principals, and discussions surrounding Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Project Labor Agreements (PLA). Council Members discussed ways to leverage County contracts to benefit residents, focusing on increasing the number of contracts that go to County-Based MBEs while using PLAs to recruit, hire and train County residents, providing them with much needed benefits, including but not limited to, health care, retirement, sick leave, and family leave.

CB-004-2023 will take effect 45 calendar days after it becomes law.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

About Social Security's "First Year Rule"

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'm considering filing for my SS at age 64 in February, before my full retirement age of 66 years and 10 months. I'm working full time and would like to continue earning until I meet the \$21,240 limit for this year. When does the \$21,240 limit go into effect? Does it start after receiving my first SS benefit deposit? Or does Social Security go by my year-to-date earnings starting on January 1st?

If I file in February and it takes 90 days to receive my first SS deposit, and at that point my year-to-date earnings are \$18,500, can I continue to work until I earn the balance of the \$21,240 (\$2,740) and then stop working? Or do they only count the earnings after I receive the first benefit payment? I know that for anything earned over \$21,240 I'll need to repay \$1 for every \$2 over the limit. **Signed: Ready to Retire**

Dear Ready: Since you haven't yet reached your full retirement age (FRA), if you claim now and are working, things will work somewhat differently during your first year collecting benefits.

If you claim for your benefits to start in February, only your earnings starting in February count toward the earnings limit. But during your first calendar year, once your benefits start, you'll be subject to a monthly earnings limit of \$1,770 and, if that is exceeded in any month (February–December), you won't be eligible for benefits for that month. That means that they could withhold your entire monthly amount for any 2023 month after January that exceeds the monthly limit. This is part of Social Security's "first year rule," which applies only during your first calendar year collecting. If, instead, you claim for your benefits to start in March, then the monthly limit will apply from March through December. Remember, it's not when your payment is received that counts; it's when your benefits start (SS pays benefits in the month following the month earned). Beginning in 2024 only the annual limit would apply.

Nevertheless, the "first year rule" offers some latitude on your earnings. If the penalty for exceeding the annual earnings limit (\$21,240 for 2023) is less than the penalty which results from using the monthly limit, Social Security will use the annual limit and assess the smaller penalty amount. So, if your annual (full year) 2023 earnings are less than \$21,240, no penalty will be assessed, or if you only exceed the annual limit by a small amount, you'll be assessed a penalty of \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. But if your annual earnings are substantially more than the 2023 limit, Social Security may deem you temporarily ineligible to get benefits. When you complete your application there will be a section asking you to tell them about this year's earnings as well as what you expect next year's earnings to be. From that they will decide whether you are currently eligible to collect benefits.

So, if your goal is to work only to the point that no penalty will be assessed, you can work until your 2023 earnings reach \$21,240 (whenever that is). Or you could work even a little bit longer and simply take the penalty (half of what you exceed the annual limit by), in which case SS will simply withhold future benefits for enough months for them to recover what is owed for exceeding the limit. But if you continue working full time and will substantially exceed the annual limit, it's likely Social Security will say you are temporarily ineligible to collect benefits (until your earnings are less or you reach your full retirement age when the earnings test no longer applies).

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] 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) 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.

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Economic from A1

at the IBEW, which he said has been a backbone union in Prince George's County for ages.

"I think the key thing we're trying to do right now is make sure the American people hear about all the things that are coming," Ivey told Capital News Service, "from funds, reductions in costs from prescription drugs, infrastructure, build out spending, internet access, all of those things I think are important for him to tell."

Biden repeated his call for Republican lawmakers to pass

his proposal for a minimum billionaire tax and to increase the minimum tax requirements for billion-dollar companies.

"No billionaire should pay a lower tax than a school teacher," Biden said.

After criticizing the Trump administration for sending the country further into debt by enacting tax cuts for the wealthy, Biden said his proposed tax reforms involving large corporations would help decrease the U.S. deficit.

"If Republicans try to take away people's health care, increase costs within class families

and push Americans into poverty, I'm gonna stop it," Biden said.

The union members positioned behind the president held signs with slogans such as "IBEW 26 Stands with Joe" and "IBEW + Biden = Perfect Union."

"Biden's very much been committed to the worker and especially to unions," B. Travis Brown, a fourth-year apprentice at IBEW, said in an interview with CNS. "It's great to see him continue to work on legislation that's going to help middle-class people and help families. That was one of the promises that he

and push Americans into poverty, I'm gonna stop it," Biden said.

Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County Announces First Date of Job Fair Series

By PRESS OFFICER

Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (Feb. 15, 2023)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County is pleased to announce the first of three job fairs to hire applicants for a multitude of Summer 2023 positions. On Tuesday, February 28, from 3–7 p.m., interested applicants are invited to the Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex at 7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington, MD, 20744 to apply in person.

"We are looking for talented and dedi-

cated people to work in a variety of seasonal and part-time positions," states Brenda Miller, Principal Human Relations Operations Specialist at the Department. "We encourage applicants to come prepared to meet our hiring managers and interview for immediate job opportunities in Parks and Recreation." Positions are available for:

- Adapted Aquatics Staff
- Administrative Staff
- Course Instructors
- Customer Service Representatives
- Drivers
- Facility Technicians
- Health & Wellness Staff

- Lifeguards
- Park Maintenance
- Rental Site Support Staff
- Senior Activity Center
- Summer Camp & Playground Leaders & Staff
- Summer Day Camp, Playground, and Teen Center Positions
- Therapeutic Recreation Staff

Additional job fairs to be held in March will be announced shortly. Browse all our openings in advance and find the right fit for you this summer at www.governmentjobs.com/careers/mncppc.

Four-day Work Week Bill Aims to Give Workers and Businesses More Flexibility

By GREG MORTON

Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 16, 2023)—On March 30, 2020, amid a national emergency and rising numbers of COVID-19 cases in Maryland, then-Gov. Larry Hogan issued an executive order mandating most workers stay home to mitigate the virus's spread.

As other states were issuing similar shutdown orders, and businesses and workers were forced to adapt to a new normal, suddenly the nation was forced to collectively re-examine the nature of work.

Now, with the pandemic economic emergency mostly in the rear-view mirror following an economic recovery that has seen unemployment sink to the lowest levels in 50 years and labor force participation rates boosted to near pre-pandemic levels, businesses face a new set of challenges: attracting and retaining workers in a red hot labor market.

A new bill introduced in the Maryland House of Delegates aims to give private businesses a new tool to attract and retain workers: a new vision for the work week.

The bill, HB 0181, introduced by Del. Vaughan Stewart, D-Montgomery, would allow private businesses to opt into a four-day, 32-hour work week pilot program that would include technical assistance from the Maryland Department of Labor and a tax credit of up to \$10,000 in exchange for their participation in a study of the program's success.

The new, shorter work week proposed by the bill would represent a departure from the standard five-day, 40-hour work week established through a 1940 amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act. Drawing on success stories from compa-

nies that have adopted the four-day work week since the pandemic, the bill's objective is to give more businesses the flexibility to try it out for themselves.

"The reality is that it is less about how long you work for and more about the way in which you work," said Joe O'Connor, director of the Work Time Reduction Center of Excellence during his testimony in favor of the bill. O'Connor is also former CEO of 4 Day Work Week Global, an organization that conducted a four-day work week trial program that provided some foundational data for this bill.

In the company's trial program, which included over 25 companies in the U.S. and Ireland, 97% of workers said they wanted to continue the four-day work week.

"This is something that organizations that I've worked with describe as a forcing function. They describe it as the cheapest and most efficient process improvement strategy that they've ever deployed. And why? Because the incentive for employees is so life changing, that it aligns the interest of the individual employees with the objectives of the business in a way that is more powerful than almost any other policy," said O'Connor in support of the bill.

While the idea of a four-day work week predates the pandemic, the fallout from COVID-19 and the rise of remote work has opened the door to non-traditional work situations. According to a 2022 McKinsey survey, 58% of Americans had the opportunity to work from home at least one day a week and 35% reported that they had the opportunity to work from home 5 days a week. 45% of remote workers experienced improved job quality according to a 2020 Gallup poll.

John Byrne, CEO of Baltimore-based software company Tricerot, which had a

policy in place to allow workers to work some days from home before the pandemic popularized the practice, said that Tricerot adopted the four-day work week in part as a response to concerns over work-life balance and burnout from workers bearing the mental weight of living through a global pandemic and struggling to adapt to a new normal at work.

"People were, with this constant work from home, losing their ability to delineate between work and private and personal life," he said.

Byrne also noted that some of the greatest benefits have been in terms of worker mental health and job satisfaction.

"We've had decent results with retention, employee satisfaction is very high. Morale is very high. We've had a reduction in things like sick days," he said.

Stewart, in his pitch to the House Economic Matters Committee on Tuesday, called the plan a "game changer in terms of recruitment and also keeping the workers there," and encouraged delegates to abandon their preconceived notions about "what may sound exotic and provocative and utopian."

Still, some on the Economic Matters Committee remained skeptical of the plan.

Del. Mark Fisher, R-Calvert, questioned whether the pilot program was fair, framing the subsidies for businesses that adopt a four-day work week as punishing the tax-paying small businesses that choose to abide by the traditional five-day, 40-hour-a-week schedule.

"It's all unicorns and pots of gold from what we're hearing," he said, arguing that this should not be a legislative issue at all. He also warned that the subsidy could be "punitive" for small businesses who choose not to adopt a shortened week.

Maryland Legislators Consider Bill to Boost Local Journalism

By CHRISTINE ZHU

Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (Feb. 16, 2023)—Maureen Daly of Long Island's North Shore Leader broke the story of George Santos' deception months prior to the 2022 election.

But people didn't listen, and Santos went on to secure victory in New York's 3rd Congressional District. He's since faced scrutiny from local and national outlets alike for embellishing his background.

Stories like this are what inspired newly elected state Del. Joe Vogel, D-Montgomery, to sponsor a bill sustaining local journalism in the Maryland General Assembly.

HB 540 would allow small and medium-sized businesses to receive a tax credit of up to \$3,000 for advertising in local news outlets such as newspapers, radio and television.

"Sustaining local journalism is essential to protecting our democracy," Vogel told Capital News Service.

As technology advances, some businesses have shifted to relying on media giants like Facebook and Google for advertisements.

This means fewer reliable advertising dollars for smaller publications.

"That's less employees that local newspapers can hire, less journalists covering the

State House, less journalists being able to cover our city halls, and that has serious consequences for our democracy," Vogel told Capital News Service.

Vogel described the bill as beneficial for both businesses and the media.

The legislation would enable small businesses to gain exposure and it would also generate more revenue for the local news sources as these two areas recover from the pandemic.

"This bill really does serve the marketplace, but it also helps local newsrooms with

to continue to push for the same exact things that he's (Biden) is pushing for," Carter added.

Matt McLaughlin, a union member of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300 in Baltimore, said he felt reassured by Biden's speech, both as a union member and as someone who uses insulin.

"One thing that this country does is they tend to discard their seniors. We shouldn't do that," McLaughlin said.

Earlier in the day, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Kentucky, offered a far different view of White House policies in a speech on the Senate floor.

"We've now had 21 straight months above 5% annual inflation. A mind-boggling policy failure," the senator said. "And what does the White House have to say about it? Yesterday the president's press secretary proclaimed, 'the president's economic plan is indeed working.'"

"So I guess the official White House position is that Democrats caused all this crushing inflation on purpose," McConnell said. "This is the kind of insanity that has left just 16% of Americans saying they're in a better financial position than they were two years ago."

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Journalism from A5

their business models and keeping revenues up, which helps newsrooms thrive and survive longer," Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Press Association Executive Director Rebecca Snyder told Capital News Service.

An average of two U.S. newspapers close each week, according to The Hill. Newsroom employment in the U.S. has dropped by nearly a quarter since 2008, according to a Pew Research Center analysis of a 2021 report by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Only 30% of newspapers had a statehouse reporter by 2014, according to the Pew Research Center.

"Local journalists are holding us accountable, and they're holding leaders across the state accountable as well," Vogel said during the bill's hearing in the Ways and Means Committee Thursday.

Along with the number of reporters in newsrooms decreasing over the past few years, some publications have reduced the number of days where they put out a print newspaper, Snyder told Capital News Service.

With less local news, people are less aware of what happens in their surrounding areas.

"It is super important to fund journalism because it directly affects the civic engagement of communities," Snyder said.

The bill would encourage entrepreneurship and development for small businesses in the state, according to testimony at the hearing from Sarah Price from the Maryland Retailers Association.

Price said the first five years of business operations for a company can determine if it stays afloat within its community.

"Anything that we can do to offset the costs of advertising with local news sources and building a strong customer base within that community could make a really big difference for entrepreneurs in Maryland," Price said during the bill's hearing.

Experts predict that the U.S. will lose a third of its newspapers by 2025, according to Vogel.

He said that if lawmakers wait to address the issue, there may not be any more local news outlets to uphold.

"We have an opportunity in this window of time to support the existing local news sources," Vogel said, "(and) allow them to continue doing the critical work that they do for our democracy."

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