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## Encompass Health Hosts Grand Opening Celebration for 60-bed Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospital in Bowie

The hospital is scheduled to begin serving patients in June



PHOTO COURTESY ENCOMPASS HEALTH

Staff at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Bowie join CEO, Joseph Williams, in cutting the ribbon at the grand opening hosted on May 24, 2023.

By PRESS OFFICER  
Encompass Health

BOWIE, Md. (May 24, 2023)—Yesterday, Encompass Health hosted a grand opening celebration for its new, 60-bed freestanding inpatient rehabilitation hospital in Bowie. The Rehabilitation Hospital of Bowie will welcome its first patients in June to the hospital located at 17351 Melford Boulevard.

The specialized hospital will provide care for individuals in Prince George County and the

surrounding communities through comprehensive rehabilitation services. Totalling nearly 60,000 square feet, the hospital includes all private patient rooms, a spacious therapy gym, an in-house pharmacy, a dialysis suite, courtyard, dining room and dayroom areas.

The hospital team will provide inpatient rehabilitation services and higher medical management for patients recovering from stroke and other neurological disorders, hip fractures, brain injury, spinal cord

injury, amputation and complex orthopedic conditions. Patients will receive a minimum of three hours per day of therapy for five days each week, 24-hour nursing care, and access to advanced technologies during their stay.

"We are excited to celebrate the opening of this state-of-the-art hospital in Prince George County which will help patients recover from their injury or illness and find the confidence to move back to a more independent life," said Joseph Williams, CEO of the Rehabilitation Hos-

pital of Bowie. "Every detail of this hospital was created with our patients in mind—the one-story building design helps with accessibility of getting patients to different treatment and non-treatment areas within the hospital, and our freestanding hospital allows for easier transfers from other facilities and more convenient access for families and visitors."

The grand opening celebra-

See CELEBRATION Page A4

## Prince George's County Council Adopts \$5.4 Billion FY 2024 County Budget

By ANGELA J. ROUSON  
County Council Media

The Prince George's County Council, convening on Thursday, May 25, 2023, adopted a balanced \$5.4 billion Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

The adopted General Fund totals \$4.5 billion, with the largest portion of General Funds, nearly \$2.8 billion or 62%, directly supporting the Board of Education for Prince George's County Public Schools. Nearly 20% of General Funds support public safety, and the remaining 18% supports the rest of County Government operations.

The County's new spending plan takes effect with the Fiscal Year that begins July 1, 2023.

Prior to budget adoption, District 8 Council Member Edward Burroughs III, introduced an amendment allocating \$250,000 in Non-Departmental funds to the State's Attorney's Office to support the Emerging Adults Program. Developed to reduce recidivism among young men and women between the ages of 18 and 26, the mission of the Emerging Adults program is to support young people who have become involved with the criminal justice system and assist them with becoming gainfully employed, productive members of the community, who are less likely to re-offend.

See BUDGET Page A4



PHOTO COURTESY NAVY OFFICE OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Petty Officer 2nd Class Anthony Taylor

## Upper Marlboro Native Serves Aboard Forward-Deployed Navy Warship in Japan

By MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS  
JERRY JIMENEZ  
Navy Office of Community Outreach

YOKOSUKA, Japan (May 22, 2023)—Petty Officer 2nd Class Anthony Taylor, a native of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, serves in Japan aboard a forward-deployed U.S. Navy warship.

Taylor joined the Navy four years ago. Today, Taylor serves as an operations specialist aboard USS Peralta.

"I joined the Navy for new opportunities and to travel," said Taylor. "Also, my grandfather was in the Navy and I wanted to follow in his footsteps."

Today, Taylor relies upon skills and values similar to those found in Upper Marlboro to succeed in the military.

"I learned that if you work hard it's very easy for you to stand out," said Taylor.

Modern U.S. Navy surface ships provide a wide range of warfighting capabilities in multi-threat air, surface and subsurface environments.

A Navy surface ship is capable of operating independently or as part of carrier strike groups, surface action groups or expeditionary strike groups.

Jobs aboard a U.S. Navy ship are highly specialized, requiring both dedication and skill, according to Navy officials. The jobs range from maintaining engines to handling weaponry along with a multitude of other assignments that keep the ship mission-ready at all times.

As a member of the Navy, Taylor is part of a world-class organization focused on maintaining maritime dominance, strengthening partnerships, increasing competitive warfighting capabilities and

See UPPER MARLBORO NATIVE Page A4

## Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation, and KABOOM! Unveil Kid-Designed Playspace at Riverdale Park

Community joins forces with nonprofit to advance playspace equity in Prince George's County

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

RIVERDALE, Md. (May 25, 2023)—[Last week], kids at Riverdale Park in Riverdale, MD celebrated as the community unveiled a new kid-designed playground and adventure course. The months-long collaboration between The Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation (MSEF), and KABOOM! culminated this week as more than 150 participants built the new playspace that will spark joy and foster a sense of belonging for kids in Riverdale. The new playspace was a collaborative effort by community members, including kids, who presented creative ideas for their dream play-



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

Celebration in Riverdale Park as the community unveiled a new kid-designed playground and adventure course.

See PLAYSACE Page A5

### INSIDE

New Foodware Bill Starts June 1

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Ask Rusty:  
I'm Approaching 65—Should I Claim Social Security?

Towns and Neighbors, Page A2

Events at Marietta House Museum

Juneteenth Events

Greenbelt Residents Supported With Community Donations

Community, Page A3

To Be Equal:  
A Climate in Crisis

The National Urban League wants to see black businesses and workers participate in the economic opportunity that renewable energy investments are creating.

Commentary, Page A4

Dredged Sediment Is Key for Restoring Chesapeake Islands

Cardin Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Fund Coastal Habitat Conservation Program

Environment, Page A5

# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## In & Around Morningside-Skyline

### The 1000 Fathers Rally for Peace in Prince George's County

Prince George's County Member-at-Large Mel Franklin is calling on 1000 Fathers to attend a rally at The Show Place Arena, 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, on June 11, 3–6 p.m. (Doors open at 2.) Councilman Franklin says, "Fathers must stand up to be a big part of the solution to end violence in our neighborhoods."

"The Rally for Peace will provide resources like job placement, expungement and legal assistance, physical and mental health services, small business support, social services, and much more. You'll also hear from an exciting and motivational array of speakers and entertainers."

Registration is encouraged. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/1000-fathers-rally-2023>. The event is free and open to the public.

### Town of Morningside: mosquito spraying & more

Morningside, in cooperation with the State of Maryland and Prince George's County, will begin spraying for mosquitos on Sunday evenings starting June 11. The spraying will be every three weeks. All pets and people must be inside during spraying. If the truck driver sees people outside when spraying is due to be done, they will not spray that street and will not return to spray later. All spraying will be 10 p.m. Sundays, June 11, July 2, July 23, August 13, Sept. 3 and Sept. 24. For more information, go to: [http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/mosquito\\_control.aspx](http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/mosquito_control.aspx).

Morningside Volunteer Fire Department invites want-to-be firefighters to their Live-In Recruitment Weekend, June 23-25. Call 301-736-4342 for more information.

The annual Morningside Independence Day Parade is coming up July 4. Do you know a band, musician, Scout troop, vintage car, fire engine, clown or politician who'd like to participate? How about kids pushing lawnmowers? Church choirs? PTA officers? For information, or to register, call 301-736-2300.

Morningside's June meetings: Work Session, June 13, and Town Meeting, June 20, both beginning at 7. For All Things Morningside, call 301-736-2300.

GI Liquors still boarded up.

### Skyline Citizens meet June 13

The Skyline Citizens will hold a "SCA-wide" meeting on Tuesday, June 13, 6 p.m.

at the Morningside Firehouse. Spread the word.

SCA used to vote for their officers each spring. Forty years ago, in 1983, Dr. Alvin Thornton, Associate Professor of Political Science at Howard University, was tapped SCA President. Other officers were Kevin Sample, 1st vice-president; David Cullinan, 2nd vice-president; Lelia Lewis, administrative assistant; Michelle Goins, corresponding secretary; Jill Flaherty, recording secretary; and Larry Miller, treasurer.

### Crossland, continued

On Facebook, Bill Berry commented on the cover of the Commencement program for Crossland's first graduating class in 1966 at Cole Field House, University of Maryland. "When Crossland opened their established classes of 8th and 9th. I was in the 10th grade, having been brought over from Roger B. Taney Jr. High. All of us in the 10th grade were seniors in a sense for three years, till graduation in '66. Then, from 1967 on, they followed the norm, having 10th 11th, and 12th grades."

### Places to go & things to do: picnicking in Ft. Washington

The Washington Post's May 19 Weekend section has a great article, "The inside scoop on top picnic spots." The first choice listed—Fort Washington Park:

"A historic fort, a lighthouse, an incredible view and reliable summer breezes are what move Fort Washington Park to the top of Ranger Vaise's favorite spots to picnic." He goes on to tout picnic tables, the view of Mount Vernon, space to spread your blanket on the hillside. "If you've never been there, you're missing out."

He suggests you also make time to tour the fort's underground chambers and drawbridge. "It's as close to a medieval castle as you're going to get." Info: 301-763-4600.

### Changing landscape

The Chesapeake Bay's crab population is up after an all-time low in 2020. This year's estimate is 323 million crabs, a 41 percent increase over last year's 30-year low of 227 million crabs. The McHales checked this out by holding a Mother's Day crab-feast on May 13.

The Town Square at Suitland Federal Center continues to grow. This \$500 million 25-acre mixed-use project will have two million square feet of development including a 120-room hotel, commercial office

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

space, multi-family units, independent senior living, townhouses, retail and restaurant space, and a 50,000-square-foot cultural arts and technology center.

The Animal Shelter's April adoption promotion was a "barking, meowing, and chirping" success. Fees were waived for dogs and cats. During the month, 147 dogs, 46 cats 10 small animals, and two birds were adopted—for a total of 205 pets!

A home at 6604 Suitland Road (5 bedrooms and 2 baths), in Morningside, just sold for \$395,000.

### Two Coronations

I rose very early May 6 to watch King Charles II's ceremonies and appreciated every minute. It reminded me that I watched the last British coronation 70 years ago, on June 2, 1953. I was living at that time in Mill Valley, Calif., north of San Francisco where Jack was serving with the FBI. The British war bride next door invited me to come to her house and watch it on TV! When Queen Elizabeth was crowned, my homesick British friend sat beside me, sobbing.

### Frances Zak

Francis Xavier "Frank" Zak, 77, of Upper Marlboro and formerly of Oxon Hill, a native of Mahopac, N.Y., died Dec. 26, 2022.

He served in the Air Force as an electrical engineer for 20 years, then worked in private industry for 12 years, becoming President and CEO of Adroit Systems, Inc. in Alexandria, Va.

During St. Philip the Apostle Church's early years, he served as Parish Council President, and, since 2009, was President of the Board of Directors for The Forestville Pregnancy Center.

He's survived by his wife Jeanette, three sons, two daughters-in-law, and four grandchildren. A service was held later. Burial is at Resurrection Cemetery.

### Milestones

Happy Birthday to 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; and Laura Smith Jenkins, June 10.

Happy Anniversary to former Morningside Councilwoman Carol (Kline) and Tom DeGraba, their 29th on June 4; and to Bucky and Debbie Tretler, their 47th on June 5.

## New Foodware Bill Starts June 1

Beginning June 1, 2023, all food establishments in Prince George's County can only provide disposable foodware and accessories upon request or at self-serve stations for ready-to-eat foods. As a customer, be sure to ask for the items and condiments you need to enjoy your meal, for all take-out and delivery orders placed in-person, on the phone or online.

County Bill, CB-014-2022, applies to all food service businesses, including full-service, fast food, cafés, delicatessens, coffee shops, supermarkets, grocery stores, vending trucks or carts, food trucks, and cafeterias.

Single-use foodware items covered by the new requirements include: Utensils (knives, forks, spoons, chopsticks), Splash sticks and stirrers\*, Straws\*, Condiment cups and packets, Cup sleeves, Napkins

\*Under County law, CB 52-2019, only compostable and paper products are permitted

For more information, visit [mypgc.us/singleuse](http://mypgc.us/singleuse).

## Social Security Matters

### Ask Rusty:

## I'm Approaching 65—Should I Claim Social Security?

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 am fast approaching 65 (in August) and plan to continue working full time. I would like to know the implications of that, and about drawing Social Security. Same question for my husband who is past his full retirement age (he will be 67 this year) and he continues to work full time. **Signed: Still Working**

**Dear Still Working:** Married couples should always coordinate their retirement strategy, and you're very smart to do so. Born in 1958, your full retirement age (FRA) for Social Security purposes is 66 years and 8 months. Your FRA is the point at which your earnings from work no longer affect your Social Security benefits, but if you claim at age 65 and continue to work full time, you will be limited to how much you can earn before they take away some (or perhaps all) of your benefits. Here's what will happen if you claim Social Security (SS) to start in August when you are 65:

- Your SS retirement benefit will be permanently reduced by 11% (you'll get 89% of your FRA entitlement). Your monthly amount will only change thereafter due to Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA).
- If you start your benefits in August you will be subject to an earnings limit—either a monthly limit of \$1,770 for the remaining months of the year or the 2023 annual limit of \$21,240. If the monthly limit is exceeded you aren't entitled to benefits for that month, or if the annual limit is exceeded they will take back benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 over the annual limit. Social Security will use whichever method yields the smallest penalty.
- Beginning in 2024, you will be subject only to Social Security's annual earnings limit, which will be something more than the 2023 annual limit of \$21,240. If you exceed the 2024 (or 2025) annual limit, Social Security will take away \$1 in benefits for every \$2 you are over the limit (half of what you exceed the limit by). The annual limit will be in effect until you reach your full retirement age of 66 years and 8 months in April 2026.

Since your husband has already reached his FRA, working full time will not negatively affect his monthly Social Security benefits if he chooses to claim his SS benefits now. However, if he hasn't yet claimed your husband is already earning Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) which will increase his benefit when he later claims. DRCs are earned monthly (.667% per month; 8% per year) and can be earned up to age 70 when maximum SS benefit is attained. For your husband, his age 70 benefit would be 29% more than he was entitled to at his FRA. Whether it is wise to wait longer to claim depends on life expectancy, but break even age is about 83 for those who wait until 70 to claim (vs. claiming at FRA). FYI, average life expectancy for a man your husband's current age is about 84; for you about 87.

Since you are both still working full time, be aware that—depending on your combined income from all sources—your Social Security benefits will become part of your taxable income. As a married couple both working full time, your combined income will likely be over the \$44,000 threshold after which income tax will be levied on up to 85% of your Social Security benefits received during the tax year (using your normal IRS tax rate). I suggest you consider the income tax implications of claiming Social Security while you are still working full time.

You did not ask about Medicare, but if you (and your husband) now have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer ("creditable" is a group plan with at least 20 participants) you can defer enrolling in Medicare Part B until your employer healthcare coverage ends, thus avoiding the Medicare Part B premium while you are working.

.....  
*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).*

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## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### VINEYARDS, WINERIES & WINE BARS

A visit through Southern Prince George's County wineries and vineyards is an open invitation to stimulate your senses. Rows and rows of robust colored grapes in hues of sapphire and sage are strewn amidst the vines of this picturesque landscape where the vivid fruit forms in a variety of clusters to create the piquant reds and crisp whites that wine enthusiasts adore. Strolling along the grounds and into the tasting rooms will provide you with a first-rate look into learning about wine. Listen to the vintners describe the notes, breathe the aromas, and taste the finishes while sipping each glass of your choice. Ultimately, the closeness of each winery and vineyard comes together in this bucolic corridor to configure the Legacy Wine Trail.

Vineyards and wineries located in Southern Prince George's County are Gemeny Winery and Vineyards, 8606 Cedarville Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613, Janemark Winery & Vineyard, 15915 Bald Eagle School Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613.

Featured are Legacy Wine Trail, Brandywine, MD. Savor the flavor of Prince George's County, Maryland's newest Wine Trail. Visit Website, Maryland Meadworks, 4700 Rhode Island Ave STE B, Hyattsville, Maryland 20781, Robin Hill Farm and Vineyards 15800 Croom Road, Brandywine, MD 20613, Romano Vineyard & Winery 15715 Bald Eagle School Road, Brandywine, MD 20613, VINO 301 Wine Concierge 145 Fleet Street, National Harbor, MD 20745. VINO 301 Wine Concierge is your personal escort through Maryland's wine regions and culture. VINO, Visit Website, <https://vino301.com>.

### GLADYS KNIGHT

Gladys Knight will perform live Thursday, June 22, 8 p.m.–Friday, June 23, 12 a.m. The address is The Theater MGM National Harbor Resort & Casino, 101 MGM National Ave., Oxon Hill, MD. Information and tickets: [Allevvents.in](http://Allevvents.in).

### NATIONAL ICE CREAM FEST

Join us for a day of ice cream, games, music and fun at the National Harbor's Festival location Saturday, June 17, 1–9 p.m. for the Inaugural National Ice Cream Fest. Come out and enjoy some of the best ice creams in America. Venue: National Harbor, 165 Waterfront Street, Oxon Hill, MD. Information and tickets, [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com), Visit MD.

### BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Leon Timbo will be at Bowie State University on Friday, June 23, 8 a.m. Some write music as a creative release. Others feel compelled to perform. For country-soul singer-songwriter Leon Timbo, music is used as a form of growth and healing. Timbo

has long regarded music as an indispensable aspect of his life for as long as he can remember. Venue: Bowie State University, 14000 Jericho Park Road, Bowie, MD. Information and Tickets: [Bandsintown.com](http://Bandsintown.com).

### SUMMER WHITE AFTER PARTY

Sport your favorite summer white attire and meet us at MGM National Hotel & Casino, 101 MGM National Ave. Oxon Hill, MD for an explosive night of contemporary jazz featuring Pieces of a Dream, world-renowned saxophonist Mike. Information and Tickets: [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com), [Allevvents.in](http://Allevvents.in)

### ANNIVERSARIES CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. DeSales Dade, Sr., and Mr. & Mrs. Charles Williams who are Christ United Church Members Aquasco, MD celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in May.

### JAZZ ON THE LAWN

Pack a picnic, grab a blanket or lawn chair, and enjoy some of the finest local jazz musicians while relaxing on Riversdale's grounds. Bruce Ewan, internationally acclaimed blues harmonica player and singer, brings his all-star band to these concerts sponsored in part by the Maryland State Arts Council and the Town of Riverdale Park. Cost: FREE (<mailto:riversdale@pgparks.com>).

### BILL PICKET RODEO

The Bill Picket Rodeo will be held September 23, 2023, 1:30 p.m. at Prince George's Equestrian Center & Show Place Arena, 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. The Bill Picket Invitational Rodeo celebrates and honor Black Cowboys and Cowgirls and their contributions to building the west. We highlight the irrefutable global appeal of Black Cowboys and Cowgirls in the West and the stories behind a sub-culture that is still strong today. BPIR also serves as a cultural event and opportunity for families to enjoy and embrace the cowboy culture, while being educated and entertained with reenactments, historical highlights, and western adventure.

### ERIC ROBERSON

Eric Roberson will be at the MGM National Harbor Hotel & Casino, 101 MGM National Avenue, Oxon Hill, Maryland. Sunday July 16, 1 p.m. As a Grammy Award-nominee, Singer, Songwriter, Producer and Howard University alum, Eric Roberson continues to break boundaries as an independent artist in an industry dominated by major labels. Information and Tickets: [Bandsintown.com](http://Bandsintown.com).

# COMMUNITY

## Events at Marietta House Museum

### Marietta House Museum's Lunchtime Lecture Series Presents: A Poetry Workshop

By STACEY HAWKINS  
Marietta House Museum

Please join poet and workshop facilitator, Sylvia (Ladi Di) Beverly on **Wednesday, June 7, 12 noon–1 p.m.** at Marietta House Museum for a poetry workshop. The workshop theme is “Summer’s on the Rise”. Learn to connect with the poet in you and the power of the written word.

Sylvia Dianne Beverly, who goes by the name “Ladi Di”, is a native of Washington and is well known for her work establishing D.C. based youth poetry group called “Girls with Hearts”. Ladi Di is the author of *Forever in Your Eyes*, a potpourri of poems about love and appreciation. Her work is also available on DVD “Poetry Tyme (2009)” and CD “Welcome to Love”.

Guests are welcome to bring their lunch and enjoy exploring avenues to writing poetry. In addition to participating in the one-hour free workshop, guests are invited to take a guided tour of Marietta House Museum following the workshop. If the weather is nice, guests might like to take a self-guided walking tour using a free packet available in kiosks by the parking lot.

Please call 301-464-5291 to register or email [mariettahouse@pgparks.com](mailto: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.

### Marietta House Museum and the Prince George's County Historical Society Present: Beyond Old Bowie: A 20-Year Ancestry.com Search for African and Prince George's County, MD Ancestors

Please join us for a hybrid program on **Saturday, June 10** from 1–3 p.m., as Nathania Branch Miles, of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society of Prince George's County, and family researchers Denise Barton and Karen Pearson, present a family journey with place-based research and online information, leading them to numerous other family members and names, such as Duckett, Spriggs, Clark, Queen, and more. The oral and documented history of the Barton-Johnson branch of the family includes property in “Old Bowie” and family burials in the Sacred Heart and Ascension Catholic churches. Prince George's County genealogical resources information will be shared during this presentation.

Denise Barton spent her career in public service, including being an Assistant Attorney General in Michigan. Ms. Barton and her husband live in Ann Arbor. She has two daughters and three grandchildren.

Karen Pearson lives in Texas with her son and his family and has a daughter in New York. Karen spent her career in non-profit management and established “The Reading Light”, an initiative that helps adults gain independence.

Recommended for ages 12 & up (ages under 18 must be accompanied by an adult). Walk-ins welcome. Registration is recommended but not required, however, online participants must register. Direct link for registration: <https://tinyurl.com/ym33z8x2>

For more information, please call 301-464-5291 or email [mariettahouse@pgparks.com](mailto:mariettahouse@pgparks.com).

We look forward to seeing you.

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.

## Local Graduates

### Minnesota State University, Mankato Awards 2,494 Degrees at End of Spring Semester

MANKATO, Minn. (May 22, 2023)—Minnesota State University, Mankato awarded 2,494 degrees to 2,247 students at the end of the spring 2023 semester, including

Riverdale, MD: **Katlyn DeGroat**, BS, Dental Hygiene, Summa Cum Laude

Commencement ceremonies were held Friday, May 5 at 3 p.m. for the College of Business and at 6 p.m. for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Commencement ceremonies were held Saturday, May 6 at 9 a.m. for the College of Science, Engineering and Technology, at 12 p.m. for the College of Education and at 2 p.m. for the College of Allied Health and Nursing.

All ceremonies were held in Taylor Center's Bresnan Arena on the Minnesota State Mankato campus.

More information about the Minnesota State Mankato spring commencement is at <http://www.mnsu.edu/commencement>.

—Dan Benson, Minnesota State University

### Olivia Ann Martin Graduates From Goshen College

GOSHEN, Ind. (May 19, 2023)—Olivia Ann Martin, of Hyattsville, graduated Cum Laude from Goshen College this spring with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics with a minor in Graphic Design.

Members of the Goshen College Class of 2023 were honored during the college's 125th commencement ceremony on April 30. The Class of 2023 consists of 165 graduates who were awarded the following degrees: 115 Bachelor of Arts, 23 Bachelor of Science in Nursing, one Bachelor of Science, 12 Master of Science in Nursing as family nurse practitioners, five Master of Arts in Environmental Education, five Master of Business Administration and four Doctors of Nursing Practice.

—Hannah Scott-Carter, Goshen College

## JUNETEENTH EVENTS

### Mount Calvary Catholic Church: Juneteenth Freedom Day Mass

Principal Celebrant: *Wilton Cardinal Gregory, Archbishop of Washington*

Concelebrant: *Most Reverend Roy E. Campbell, Jr., Auxiliary Bishop of Washington.*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Mount Calvary Catholic Church

What : Juneteenth Freedom Day Mass  
When : **Sunday, June 18, 2023**, 10:30 a.m. EST  
Where : Mount Calvary Catholic Church, 6700 Marlboro Pike, Forestville, Maryland 20747  
Celebrant - Cardinal Wilton Gregory - Concelebrant - Most

Reverend Roy E Campbell Jr, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington D.C.

Plenty of parking  
For additional information: Contact The Office of Cultural Diversity Outreach 301-853-5335 or [culturaldiversity@adw.org](mailto:culturaldiversity@adw.org)  
For ASL interpretation, contact [deafcatholic@adw.org](mailto:deafcatholic@adw.org) two weeks in advance

### Join Us for the Annapolis Juneteenth Parade!

June 17 • 12 p.m.

Again this year, the museum, the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture, the Banneker-Douglass Museum Foundation, Inc., and the Friends of Banneker-Douglass Museum groups will all be participating in the Annapolis Juneteenth Parade on **Saturday, June 17** at noon, An-

napolis City Dock. We would love to see you cheer us on for this celebratory event!

Visit <https://www.theannapolisjuneteenth.org/> for more information about all of the activities associated with this fun-filled and educational weekend.



IMAGE COURTESY BANNEKER-DOUGLASS MUSEUM

## Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® Supports Greenbelt Residents With Community Donations

By RACINE TUCKER-HAMILTON  
Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

GREENBELT, Md. (May 25, 2023)—In partnership with Pearl Elegance Foundation, Inc. (PEF), Psi Epsilon Omega Chapter (PEO) of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.® (AKA) is addressing mental health and self-care issues for women in minority communities.

On Saturday, May 20, PEO hosted a forum, “Pink Table Green Talk”, focusing on self-care matters for women. The discussion was centered around the theme “I am My Sisters’ Keeper” and highlighted various topics, including women’s empowerment, mental health and wellness, spirituality, and balancing life while remaining true to oneself. Participants brought feminine products to donate in support of the City of Greenbelt’s Pink Pantry initiative.

“We know that period poverty and being able to afford period products is a major issue for women and girls from low resource communities,” said Benita A. Swindell, PEO president. “We hope to continue providing support and making change that will have a widespread and long-lasting impact on women in the communities we serve.”

The Pink Pantry provides feminine products to income-qualified Greenbelt residents. This program is committed to

addressing various self-care stigmas and helping empower girls and women to care for their bodies. PEO donated more than 1,000 items to support the women of Greenbelt and the Pink Pantry.



PHOTO COURTESY PSI EPSILON OMEGA CHAPTER ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA SORORITY, INC.

L:R) PEO members Monique Lamar, President Benita A. Swindell and Marsha Mims-Word coordinate collection of period products for Greenbelt's Pink Pantry.

## Regiane Vazquez Seizes Opportunities in Adopted Country

By LIZ CONNOLLY BAUMAN  
University of Maryland Global Campus

Born and raised in Brazil, Regiane Vazquez embarked on an unexpected adventure more than 16 years ago, moving first to Puerto Rico and, shortly after, to the mainland United States with her husband, who is in the Air Force. Knowing little English, Vazquez found herself living in Upper Marlboro, Maryland, with her husband and infant son.

With that change came all the challenges of a new marriage, new country, new language, and new culture. Along the way, she has seized opportunity.

Vazquez is among the spring graduates at University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC). She received a Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity Technology with a minor in digital forensics.

“Preparing to be part of the workforce in another country with a different language has challenged me to discover new horizons,” she explained.

Vazquez’s educational journey began at Prince George’s Community College, where she enrolled in English for Speakers of other Languages (ESL) courses. “I knew the basic words, but with people speaking so fast, this was a challenge for me,” she said.

She then completed an associate degree in cybersecurity. “Every time I tried to turn on the computer, everybody would tell me I needed to be careful of viruses and other threats,” Vazquez said. “In turn I said, ‘No, I want to be able to use the computer. I want to really know how to fight back against threats.’ From this experience, I discovered what I wanted to study.”

An associate degree wasn’t enough. Vazquez was eager to continue her educational journey. In 2019, she happened to pass by UMGC’s campus—and she made a decision.

“I remember driving by and seeing the UMGC campus and imaging myself studying and pursuing my degree at UMGC,” Vazquez said. Since her enrollment at UMGC four years ago, Vazquez has become multilingual in numerous languages including: English, German, French, Portuguese and Spanish.



PHOTO COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND GLOBAL CAMPUS

Vazquez is among the spring graduates at University of Maryland Global Campus (UMGC).

“I had always wanted to learn German and decided to try it,” Vazquez said.

Vazquez has excelled at UMGC. Her two favorite classes were Switching, Routing, and Wireless Essentials and Ethical Hacking. She also was an online cybersecurity engineer intern for the company SAP SE, a multinational developer of business enterprise systems, applications, and products.

Vazquez is focused on the future and that means applying for job positions in cybersecurity and digital forensics. She is also interested in pursuing a Master of Science in Cloud Computing Systems in the near future.

Getting a bachelor’s degree was an important goal, one that she says demonstrated the value of hard work and perseverance to her teenage son and young daughter.

“I’m so thankful for UMGC’s commitment to prepare us for a career important to our future,” Vazquez said.

# COMMENTARY

## Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



### To Be Equal:

## A Climate in Crisis

*“There’s one issue that will define the contours of this century more dramatically than any other, and that is the urgent threat of a changing climate.”*

—Barack Obama, 44th President of the United States

When Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, the city’s black neighborhoods bore the brunt of the storm. Twelve years later, the black districts of Houston were devastated by the full force of Hurricane Harvey. In both cases, these natural dis-

asters exacerbated issues in neighborhoods that were already struggling. For years, communities of color have had to struggle through the everlasting effects of structural racism, the legacy of enslavement and socioeconomic factors like redlining, segregation, and poverty, without considering that climate change is likely to exacerbate these existing racial disparities.

The most severe harms from climate change fall disproportionately upon underserved communities who are least able to prepare for, and recover from, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and

other impacts. As a result, they are at higher risk of climate-related health issues including respiratory and cardiovascular disease, heat stroke, cancer.

Climate change and racism are arguably two of the biggest challenges of the 21st Century, which proves that this problem is systemic. When racism is systemic, it can operate without obvious intent. So, how does one address systemic problems?

With systemic and equitable solutions.

In April, the National Urban League released its 47th State of Black America report titled, *Democracy in Peril: Confronting the Threat Within*, where ACORE, our nation’s foremost experts on environmental justice, energy policy, renewable energy, and civil rights, examine the past and present impacts of fossil fuel and other pollution on Black, Brown, and underserved communities, and illustrate a realistic path forward toward realizing a truly just and equitable clean energy future.

This future is defined by American-made renewable energy.

With the billions of dollars American companies plan to invest in new wind, solar and battery

storage projects, this will greatly improve air and water quality, lower electrical bills, and create new career opportunities—all factors that will greatly improve the quality of life of the nation’s most underserved communities.

The National Urban League has taken its own steps to prepare Black communities for a renewable future. Our Chicago Urban League affiliate created a Solar Energy Jobs Training Program where they utilize classroom trainings and hands-on lab activities to prepare students for work in the solar industry. They also conduct a Solar Sales and Finance course that covers the most critical concepts in evaluating a renewable energy project.

The National Urban League wants to see black businesses and workers participate in the economic opportunity that renewable energy investments are creating. As the eminent threats of climate change continue to loom, we can no longer afford to ignore it. We have an opportunity to realize the clean energy transition in a way that creates a more inclusive and equitable economy, but we need to implement bold and innovative ideas to be part of it.

—May 25, 2023

## Adult Grief Support Programs Meeting This Summer

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN  
Hospice of the Chesapeake

PASADENA, Md. (May 25, 2023)—Chesapeake Life Center will offer a variety of grief support groups for adults that will be meeting in person and virtually through September.

The following grief support groups will meet in person:

- **Drop-In Grief Support Groups** are open to anyone grieving. Groups offer participants an opportunity to share their feelings and obtain support from others who are experiencing loss. There is no fee. These groups will meet as follows:  
North Beach Senior Center, 9010 Chesapeake

Ave., North Beach, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Wednesdays, June 7, July 5, Aug. 2 and Sept. 6.

*Southern Pines Senior Center*, 20 Appeal Lane, Lusby, Maryland, from 2 to 3 p.m. Tuesdays, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8 and Sept. 12.

*Calvert Pines Senior Center*, 450 W. Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick, Maryland, from 1 to 2 p.m. Tuesdays, June 20, July 18, Aug. 15 and Sept. 19.

- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Evening Group** is a group for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet on the center’s campus at 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. June 14 and Sept. 13.

One group will meet both in-person and virtually:

- **SoulCollage Grief Support Group** has participants create a series of collages to commemorate lost loved ones and to visually journal the grief process. The group will meet from 5 to 8 p.m. Monday, June 5 and Sept. 11 at the center’s office at 9500 Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, in Largo, Maryland, as well as via Zoom.

Childcare is not provided, and children are not permitted in any of these groups.

The following groups will meet virtually via Zoom for Healthcare:

- **Loss of Life Partner/Spouse Morning Group** is for individuals grieving the death of a spouse or life partner. It will meet from 10:30 a.m. to noon June 14 and Sept. 13.

- **Quarterly Child Loss Support Workshop** is for parents grieving the death of a child, regardless of age or circumstance. It will meet from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 5 via

Zoom. The cost is \$10.

Acknowledging that not everyone has access to this technology or may not be comfortable with it, the center suggests people call or email the office and grief professionals will work with individuals to help them find other appropriate resources if needed.

Registration is required for all groups and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing [griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org](mailto:griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org). Visit [www.hospicechesapeake.org/events](http://www.hospicechesapeake.org/events) for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

*Chesapeake Life Center, a program service of Hospice of the Chesapeake, serves hospice family members and the community with bereavement services and activities aimed at enhancing the quality of life for those grieving the loss of a loved one. For details, visit [www.chesapeakelifecenter.org](http://www.chesapeakelifecenter.org).*

### Celebration from A1

tion included hospital tours, a ribbon cutting ceremony, and presentation remarks were delivered by Joseph Williams, hospital CEO; Abe Sims, president of Encompass Health’s MidAtlantic Region; Dr. Mohan Suntha, president & CEO of University of Maryland Medical System; and Cynthia Kelleher, president & CEO of the University of Maryland Rehabilitation & Orthopedic Institute.

For more information about the hospital’s services, please visit [encompasshealth.com/bowierehab](http://encompasshealth.com/bowierehab).

Encompass Health (NYSE: EHC) is the largest owner and operator of rehabilitation hospitals in the United States. With a national footprint that includes 157 hospitals in 37 states and Puerto Rico, the Company provides high-quality, compassionate rehabilitative care for patients recovering from a major injury or illness, using advanced technology and innovative treatments to maximize recovery. Encompass Health is ranked as one of Fortune’s 100 Best Companies to Work For and Modern Healthcare’s Best Places to Work in Healthcare. For more information, visit [encompasshealth.com](http://encompasshealth.com), or follow us on our newsroom, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.



PHOTO COURTESY ENCOMPASS HEALTH

Joseph Williams, chief executive officer of Rehabilitation Hospital of Bowie.

for recruitment and replacement of weapons.

- Council Member Krystal Oriadha secured \$250,000 to support the Private Security Camera Incentive Program, also known as the Jayz Agnew Law, named in honor of 13-year-old Jayz Agnew, who was fatally shot in front of his home while raking leaves. The program allows businesses and homeowners to purchase and install cameras to support law enforcement in their efforts to address and solve crime within Prince George’s County communities.
- The Council also responded to residents, who for years have advocated for safer streets, accessible pathways, and road improvements with an allocation of \$2.1 million for additional streetlights and traffic signals, along with \$4.5 million for curb and road rehabilitation.
- Additional Council investments include increased funding for noise enforcement and the Prince George’s Arts and Humanities Council; an additional \$3 million for grants to support community organizations; and \$275,000 for United Communities Against Poverty (UCAP) to support Shepard’s Cove Emergency Shelter for women and children.

In bi-county budget action earlier this month, Prince George’s and Montgomery county lawmakers unanimously adopted new FY24 spending plans for the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC); the bi-county portion of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC); and the Washington Suburban Transit Commission (WSTC). Both Councils approved the WSSC FY 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets of \$1.6 billion, reflecting an increase of 7-percent for water and sewer customers.

For more information: <https://pgccouncil.us/>

### Upper Marlboro Native from A1

sustaining combat-ready forces in support of the National Defense Strategy.

“Being in the area shows the global community that the U.S. Navy is here to protect freedom of the seas,” said Taylor.

Taylor serves in Japan as part of the Forward Deployed Naval Forces. These naval forces operate with allies and partners to preserve a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Service members in this region are part of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, which has the largest area of responsibility in the world.

“As the largest force in our nation’s front line against revisionist actors, U.S. Pacific Fleet meets this great responsibility with strength, resolve and confidence,” said Adm. Samuel Paparo, U.S. Pacific Fleet Commander. “Together with our joint and combined partner operations, we are positioned to defend —across all domains—any attempts to threaten our nation, our allies and partner’s security, freedom and well-being.”

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

“I’m proud of earning my enlisted surface warfare pin and earning my watch supervisor qualification,” said Taylor.

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

“Serving in the Navy is something to be proud of,” said Taylor. “It’s not something that everyone can do or that everyone is willing to do. I get to defend the people I love.”

Taylor is grateful to others for helping make a Navy career possible.

“I would like to thank my grandpa,” added Taylor. “I would not have considered any military branch if it wasn’t for him.”

## The Prince George’s Post

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# ENVIRONMENT

## Dredged Sediment Is Key for Restoring Chesapeake Islands

By PAULA E. WHITFIELD  
for the Bay Journal News Service

It's August 2019 and heat radiates from the expanse of sunbaked "mud" that covers two-thirds of Swan Island, a once half-drowned 25-acre island at the southern edge of Martin National Wildlife Refuge in the Chesapeake Bay.

The western third of the island, which is part of the archipelago that includes Maryland's Smith Island, is a forested hummock known as the "rookery." The newly placed mud (sediment, strictly speaking, which is a mixture of mud and sand) is about a foot deep and slopes gradually from high to low elevation, west to east. Marsh plants, some 200,000 of them, small and struggling in the summer heat, reach across the otherwise barren landscape in parallel rows.

Months earlier, this sediment was at the bottom of a nearby shipping channel—then dredged by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and spread on the island in an effort to restore it. It was enough dredge material to fill 18 Olympic size swimming pools.

In the past, sediment was considered an unwanted byproduct of routine dredging—scraped from the bottom of channels to keep them deep enough for ships. Until fairly recently, the common practice was to dispose of the dredge material upland and offshore, effectively removing sediment from the system. Now sediment is a prized resource in efforts to restore drowning Bay islands.

Given what we are up against, with climate change multiplying threats, we need to think beyond concrete and rebar, beyond even single-habitat restoration. We need to adopt a "multiple lines of defense" strategy to take advantage of the resilience potential of nature. Multiple habitats like islands, wetlands and reefs provide more protective benefits from storm and non-storm conditions than a single habitat type.

Sediment is the key to sustainability for these low-lying ecosystems. Plants have a natural "baffling" effect—slowing the flow of water—which allows sediment to drop out of suspension and settle on the bottom, where the plants trap and stabilize it. This is how natural systems like islands, mangroves, and marshes build elevation. But this can't happen without enough sediment to outpace sea level rise. Plants drown when water rises and there is not enough sediment for them to build elevation.

Islands are the mainland's first line of defense from the Bay's waves, reducing erosion and flood risks to communities and shorelines. But those defenses are wearing thin, quite literally. Erosion and land subsidence (sinking land) have done their work for millennia, and rising seas have sped up the process.

Poplar (before restoration), Barren, James, Tangier and other islands have dissolved to slivers of their former selves. In a 15-year period alone (early 1990s to mid-2000s), islands in Tangier Sound lost 21% of their land to erosion from repeated dune and vegetation washovers. This has caused precipitous declines in waterbird nesting.

Islands are a lifeline for struggling bird populations. "Loss of habitat is driving waterbird declines throughout the Bay," said Matt Whitbeck, a wildlife biologist with Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex. "Islands are especially important for birds because they can provide predator-free nesting habitat."

By August 2022, the once mud-caked eastern third of Swan Island had become a lush waist-high meadow of high marsh sloping toward lower elevations, where patches of 6-foot-high marsh grass push outward into a mosaic of intertidal pools and mud flats—now home to skulking egrets and grandstanding fiddler crabs brandishing claws. Sediment trapped by robust low-marsh thickets forms elevated micro-dunes where dune grasses begin to take root. Semipalmated plovers and sanderlings scurry, heads low, across the pockmarked mud flat and through shallow pools in search of their next meal.

While the "elevation capital" has increased and bought the island more time, the erosional trend is clear. Without action—i.e., some kind of intervention to slow erosion, facilitate accretion or add sediment—Swan Island's days are numbered.

This story is playing out all over the Chesapeake. Starting in 1984 with Hart-Miller Island near Baltimore, the Corps of Engineers has used dredged sediment for the restoration of Battery Island, near Havre de Grace in the upper Bay; Poplar Island, near Tilghman; and parts of Barren Island, off upper Hooper Island in the middle Bay. After Poplar's completion, Barren and nearby James Island will receive sediment from the Port of Baltimore.

See CHESAPEAKE ISLANDS Page A6

## Cardin Introduces Bipartisan Bill to Fund Coastal Habitat Conservation Program

By YESENIA MONTENEGRO  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (May 18, 2023)— Marking American Wetlands Month, Sens. Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, and Lindsey Graham, R-South Carolina, have reintroduced legislation aimed at continuing conservation programs at two dozen coastal areas, including the Chesapeake Bay.

The Coastal Habitat Conservation Act is being sponsored in the House by Reps. Jared Huffman, D-California, and Jennifer González-Colón, R-Puerto Rico.

The Senate and House bills would give statutory authority to, as well as fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Coastal Program, which is voluntary and partnership-based. The program focuses on 24 priority coastal areas along the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, the Gulf of Mexico, the Great Lakes, and the Caribbean. First established in the Chesapeake Bay in 1985, would receive between \$20 million and \$25 million from fiscal 2024 through fiscal 2028.

"Climate change, development and other pressures are challenging our coastal communities, increasing the need to strengthen successful efforts like the Coastal Program that serve to protect and engage them," Cardin said in a statement. "Our legislation demonstrates Congress' bipartisan commitment to strategic habitat conservation in coastal watersheds, which provide a host of ecosystem services such as recreation, tourism, fisheries and education."

The Coastal Program works on habitat conservation on both public and private lands. Because coastal watersheds are often comprised of both private and public land, the program is then able to provide "land-

scape conservation, maintain habitat connectivity and continuity, and to connect and engage partners with the (Fish and Wildlife) Service's conservation priorities and objectives," according to the program's website.

While the Coastal Program does not have a position on the latest legislation, Stephen Guertin, deputy director for program management and policy for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, previously testified in support of the Coastal Habitat Conservation Act of 2021 at a committee hearing.

"These (the Coastal Program's) projects provide lasting benefits to coastal communities by employing contractors and stimulating local economies, restoring coastal wetlands that support commercial and recreational fisheries, improving water quality, and increasing opportunities for hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation," Guertin said during his testimony in 2022.

"The Coastal Program is one of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's most effective and proven initiatives, bringing together public and private partners to voluntarily protect and improve coastal habitats," González-Colón said.

The program is also unique in its ability to provide both financial and technical assistance to third-party land acquisitions in order to protect habitats.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program has been around for several decades but has gone unauthorized, which means that each and every year Congress has to come back and determine an appropriate funding level and appropriate funding for it," said Allison Colden, Maryland executive director of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, established in 1966 to focus on improving water quality and habi-

tat of the Bay.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the Coastal Program have worked together on some projects, including on a dairy farm in Gambrills, Maryland, which was formerly owned by the United States Naval Academy. During this project, the two programs worked on improving the water quality through tree planting and on wetland restoration, according to Colden.

Programs that are authorized and have funding set out in advance are better able to plan for the future, Colden said. For programs whose authorization has expired, like the Coastal Program, this can be more challenging.

Through this latest legislation, the program would receive more funding from the government than it has in previous years.

"The other thing is to think about how well this program leverages outside funding and the fact that they're able to achieve such great projects and such great work throughout the entire country, with just that little amount of funding," Colden said. "It's an extremely cost-effective program that helps bring in dollars and consolidate dollars from other areas to support the federal investment."

"With increasing pressures from climate change, sea level rise, land development, pollution, and habitat fragmentation, this program is more important than ever," Kathy Tsantiris, associate director of government relations at Ocean Conservancy, said in a statement. "Congress should act swiftly to pass this bipartisan and bicameral legislation, which will authorize the Coastal Program in perpetuity with regular appropriations."

## Playspace from A1

ground during a design day in March.

"Through this innovative partnership with KABOOM! and great community sponsorships like Monumental Sports & Entertainment, we are able to more quickly accomplish the goal of the replacement or renovation for the playgrounds the Department of Parks and Recreation currently operates and maintains in Prince George's County," said Bill Tyler, Director of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation. "It's truly a win-win. Our talented and dedicated staff are able to utilize various resources along with imaginative, pesticide-free options while incorporating the vision of the community children and families, more than ever before," concludes Tyler.

Addressing childhood obesity and improving the overall health of the communities they serve is a top priority for The Department and playing provides countless physical, social, and mental health benefits. However, far too many children, especially in communities of color, do not have a place to play near where they live or learn. KABOOM! is working to end playspace inequity, ensuring that kids have access to quality places to play, something that should be part of every child's life. The new play-

space at Riverdale Park, designed with the neighborhood's unique needs and aspirations in mind, brings Prince George's County one step closer toward ending playspace inequity and ensuring that every kid has the opportunity to experience the joys and benefits of play.

"Playgrounds are an iconic part of childhood. They're not only where kids collect some of their best memories, but also where crucial skills are developed that nurture their physical, mental, and emotional well-being," said Lysa Ratliff, CEO of KABOOM!. "With the help of amazing partners like The Department of Parks and Recreation and Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation, we can drive the positive systemic change necessary to ensure every kid in Prince George's County has an amazing place to play and unlock their greatest potential."

Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation has provided support for the new playground through its partnership with KABOOM!, furthering its commitment to ending playspace inequity. Since 2011, MSEF has invested nearly \$825K and partnered with KABOOM! to build 10 playgrounds across the region with the volunteer support of more than 1,000 employees and fans.

"This is our tenth build, and we are excited to continue our partnership with KA-

BOOM! and create a safe and exciting place to play for the kids and families in Riverdale," said Elizabeth Pace, President and Executive Director, Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation. "We are committed to ending playspace inequity so that every child has the chance to experience the joys of childhood."

*The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation delivers an award-winning park system through progressive, innovative leadership and a commitment to the community and the environment in Prince George's County. Visit [www.pgpc.com](http://www.pgpc.com) and on Facebook, Twitter, PhotoShelter, and Instagram. Monumental Sports & Entertainment Foundation is committed to making the region a better place for all by supporting game-changing solutions for our community. We fundraise, provide grants to nonprofits and rally Monumental Sports & Entertainment's teams and fans to support and amplify the impact of community change agents. Together, we're raising the game in the DMV. Learn more at [MonumentalFoundation.org](http://MonumentalFoundation.org) and follow us on Twitter and Instagram. KABOOM! is the national nonprofit committed to ending playspace inequity—the reality that quality places to play are not available to every child, especially in communities of color. Visit [kaboom.org](http://kaboom.org) or join the conversation on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.*

## Earth TALK™ Gas Car to EV Conversion: Is it Even Possible?

Dear EarthTalk:  
Is it possible to retrofit an old car with an Electric Vehicle drivetrain?  
—Jerry M., via email

It is definitely possible to retrofit an old internal combustion engine car with an electric vehicle (EV) drivetrain, but the process can be complicated and expensive. In fact, it may be cheaper when all is said and done—not to mention easier and quicker—to just buy an EV.

If you're undeterred and want to proceed with a conversion anyway, keep in mind that certain types of cars lend themselves to the process better than others. For starters, older cars that rely on mechanics more than computers are often easier to convert. Another consideration to keep in mind is that it's

easier to convert a car with a manual transmission since they use less power and are a lot less complicated than automatic cars. Likewise, lighter vehicles make better candidates for conversions given that less weight translates into greater range.

The first step in retrofitting an old car with an EV drivetrain is to remove the existing engine and transmission. This requires specialized knowledge and tools, so it's important to find a reputable mechanic or EV retrofitting company to do the job. Once the old engine and transmission are removed, the new EV drivetrain can be installed. This typically includes an electric motor, battery pack, charger, and other components needed to make the car run on electricity. The placement of these components will vary de-

pending on the make and model of the car, and the specific EV drivetrain being used.

One of the biggest challenges in retrofitting an old car with an EV drivetrain is finding the right balance between performance and range. The battery pack needs to be large enough to provide adequate range, but it also needs to be small enough to fit in the car without compromising performance or handling. This can be a delicate balance, and it often requires custom fabrication and design work.

Another challenge is integrating the new EV drivetrain with the car's existing systems. This includes things like the brakes, steering and suspension, as well as the dashboard and other controls. In some cases, it may be necessary to replace or

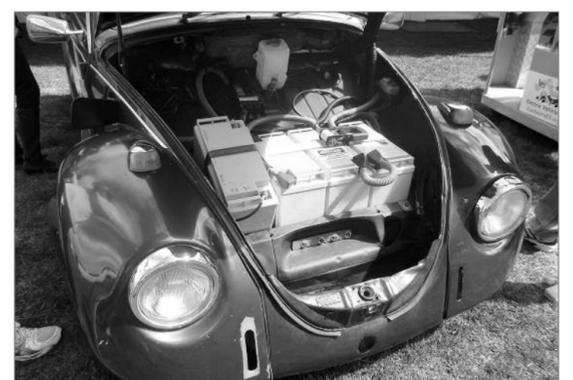
modify these systems to ensure they work properly with the new EV drivetrain.

Despite the hassle and expense, converting an internal combustion engine car over to electric is a great way to breathe new life into your old ride and reduce its environmental impact. In addition to being more efficient and producing fewer emissions than gasoline-powered cars, EVs also require less maintenance and can save drivers money on fuel costs over the long term. It's also a lot less wasteful to electrify an old clunker and give it years and years of additional use than buying a brand-new EV, which requires the extraction and use of precious resources and lots of new carbon emissions to build and ship out.

Several companies, including Electric GT, Legacy EV and EV West, now manufacture conversion kits. Even GM and Ford are getting in on the act with the recent release of so-

called crate engines that car owners (or their mechanics) can easily swap into the engine bays of corresponding models.

**CONTACTS:** Electric GT, [electricgt.com](http://electricgt.com); EV West, [evwest.com](http://evwest.com); Legacy EV, [legacyev.com](http://legacyev.com).



CREDIT: TONY CASTLEY, FLICKRCC.

**It is technically possible to convert a gas-powered car to an EV, but not without complications and expense.**



# Clean Energy Home Upgrades



## Make dependable environmental improvements

### FAMILY FEATURES

When you're considering upgrades for your home, earth-friendly enhancements that impact your energy usage are smart investments. Energy-saving home upgrades can offer long- and short-term advantages for the earth, your wallet and even your safety.

Many homeowners evaluate their energy needs as they plan home improvements. There are several low-carbon, resilient energy options available that can help safeguard your family. Consider these environmentally friendly upgrades to diversify your home's energy sources, reduce energy consumption and ensure your home is well-prepared to withstand interruptions to power service if the electrical grid fails.

#### Diversify Energy Sources

The growing conversation to "electrify everything" will require an overhaul on the aging electric grid just to manage the increase in demand. Accomplishing this will take decades and cost billions, according to the Department of Energy. In fact, according to a study conducted by Acupoll Precision Research on behalf of the Propane Education & Research Council (PERC), 54% of respondents believe electricity for everything will be too expensive for taxpayers while 70% strongly agree Americans should have a choice when it comes to their energy source. Propane is a clean, affordable and abundant energy option that reduces carbon emissions right now. Using propane appliances like furnaces, water heaters, fireplaces and kitchen appliances alongside other energy sources reduces the strain on the fragile electrical grid. Unlike electric appliances, propane appliances can work even during power outages.

#### Seal In Energy

Outdated doors and windows often lack energy benefits. Newer models have stronger, thicker panes that reduce the transfer of heat from inside to outdoors (and vice versa in the warmer months). Updating doors and windows allows you to easily repair any cracks or faulty seals that make it easy for energy to escape. When your home is well-insulated, your heating or cooling system works more efficiently.

#### Consider Solar Panels

When many homeowners think of renewable energy, they often think "solar." Some states are mandating solar adoption, and while financial rebates help, solar panels are still considered an expensive upgrade for many people. The number of panels you need depends on your geographic location and weather, as well as the size of your home and your family's energy consumption habits, which can add up. If you have access to propane and electricity, and are planning to upgrade to solar, consider adding propane appliances to offset the energy load required from your solar system.

#### Install a Backup Power Source

The Department of Energy's "Electric Disturbance Event Annual Report" showed an increase in power outages from 2000 to 2020. More than half of consumers nationwide indicated they or a close family member or friend have been personally impacted by a power outage in the past two years, according to PERC.

As a result, many homeowners are saying "yes" to backup power generators. A propane standby generator can be a key part of resilient home upgrades by offering supplemental electricity in as little as 10 seconds after an outage. Propane doesn't degrade over time, making it an ideal standby power fuel. Plus, it's cleaner than diesel so you can keep your home functioning and family safe while being a good steward for the environment.

#### Increase Energy Efficiency

While landscaping plays an important role in curb appeal, it also serves more practical purposes. Thoughtfully placed trees and shrubs can block the heat that comes from powerful direct sunlight while serving as a break against blustery winds and providing a natural form of external insulation for the home. In outdoor living spaces, propane-powered appliances can offer increased energy efficiency. For example, propane can power full outdoor kitchens, fireplaces and fire pits, patio heaters, flame lighting or pool and spa heaters.

Find more ideas and information to inspire your earth-friendly home upgrades at [Propane.com](https://www.propane.com).



### When the Grid Fails

In 2021, a winter storm decimated a major electrical power grid, leaving thousands of Americans in the dark and cold. Some people lost their lives while others battled to overcome extensive damage to their homes and businesses.

Jennifer Borget's family is one of many that weathered those winter storms. However, the Borget family home used propane to power their water heater, stove, furnace and fireplace.

"When your power goes out, you can still use some propane appliances," said Borget, who blogged about her experience. "This is one of those things I didn't realize but learned during the historic winter storms. When the power was intermittent, our propane-powered fireplace and water heater quickly warmed our family."

One year later, the Borgets are discussing investing in a standby generator to mitigate future power outages.

Another way to reduce the risk of large-scale disasters is increasing Americans' reliance on a broader mix of energy sources. Using a combination of propane, solar, electricity and natural gas can keep homes and businesses alike running efficiently and safely.

Relying on alternative energy sources like propane can also make a meaningful environmental impact in the long-term while offering short-term advantages, including continued access to power during emergencies when another energy source fails.