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M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County Presents Matthew Maybin's "My Folks and Flowers" at Harmony Hall Arts Center

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

RIVERDALE, Md. (May 31, 2024)—Harmony Hall Arts Center, part of the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County, proudly announces the upcoming exhibition of local artist Matthew Maybin, entitled "My Folks and Flowers." This vivid collection of digital paintings will be on display in the Community Gallery from **Saturday, June 15, until Saturday, August 17, 2024.**

Maybin is a resident of Fort Washington, Maryland, and a native Washingtonian. His exhibition, "My Folks and Flowers," is a celebration of diversity, vibrancy, and the timeless beauty of humanity and nature. Each piece in this cohesive body of work showcases an overall community thriving in its unique story.

The artist encourages viewers to connect deeply with his subjects and their symbolic flowers, in hopes of promoting internal contemplation. His use of bright colors and intricate details create a visual tapestry that exudes joy and reflection.

Harmony Hall invites art enthusiasts, community members, and the public to join in experiencing the creative talents of Matthew Maybin. The exhibition will be open to visitors during regular business hours at the Arts Center. Visit pgparks.com/event_list/matthew-maybin-my-folks-flowers.



PHOTO COURTESY M-NCPPC

Diverse Daisies by Matthew Maybin

Harmony Hall Arts Center opened its doors to the public in September of 1989 and quickly evolved into Prince George's County's most popular, premier arts facility. Harmony Hall Arts Center is a one-stop shop for all visual and performing arts needs. The Center offers in-depth programs for the creative

passions of aspiring artists of all ages in ceramics, sculpture, dance, drama, painting, voice, belly dance, and photography. Enjoy the John Addison Concert Hall for a cozy entertainment experience, or view exceptional works of local, national, and international artists in the exhibition spaces.

Small Businesses Honored by SCORE Washington DC

Celebrating Outstanding Local Entrepreneurs

By PRESS OFFICER
SCORE Washington DC

Twelve local small businesses were honored last Tuesday at the SCORE Washington DC annual Client of the Year awards luncheon. SCORE Washington DC provides free mentoring, resources, and training to anyone looking to start or grow a small business. The celebrated businesses ranged from a comedy production company showcasing diverse voices to a software system training certified nurse assistants to meet the demand of an aging population. The 2024 winners are:

- Services Award: Caroline Dockery, Categorized Caroline (Manassas, VA)
- Retail Award: Amanda Preske, Because Science (Washington, DC)
- Medical Services Award: Timothy Zelch, Spine and Orthopedic Solutions (Ashburn, VA)
- Government Contracting Awards: John J. Yim, Intelligence Federal (Vienna, VA) and Cori Kelly, NATECH (Leesburg, VA)
- Arts & Entertainment: Kim Levone, Improbable Comedy (Silver Spring, MD)
- Education Award: Kaltun Jama, Montessori School of Chantilly (Chantilly, VA)
- Technology Start-up: Matt Ruck, XOPAI (Gaithersburg, MD)
- Health & Wellness: Scott Dance, District Martial Arts (Arlington, VA)
- Medical Technology: Charlene Brown, CNA Simulations (Washington, DC)
- Advertising, Design & Marketing:

Lopaka Purdy and Jocelyn Fontaine, Waldinger Creative Communications, Inc. (Towson, MD)

• **Engineering & Construction Management: Yves Rugasaguhunga, PrimECS (Oxon Hill, MD)**

In accepting their respective awards, the honorees credited their SCORE mentors for the success of their businesses and instilling the confidence to succeed. As award winner Charlene Brown said, "I believe that my mentor also deserves an award. Her insights and coaching kept me focused on business priorities. She supported my vision and helped me to lay the groundwork for an incredible company. I'm grateful to SCORE for bringing us together."

Following the presentations of awards, SCORE CEO Bridget Weston, who attended the event along with SBA District Director Larry Webb, lauded the awardees for their hard work and perseverance. She added, "SCORE is immensely proud of our volunteer mentors who generously share their time and expertise with small businesses. Your success is vital to our economy, our nation, and our communities. You truly make a difference." As evidence of the strong commitment to small business growth and development, Weston noted that, in 2023 alone, the SCORE Washington DC chapter's assistance helped to generate 1,222 business openings and 4,100 new jobs in the Metropolitan area.

For more information about starting or operating a small business, visit SCORE Washington DC at <https://www.score.org/washingtondc>.

City of Mt. Rainier Installs New Pet Waste Stations With Chesapeake Bay Trust

Mayor Benitez Hosts Ribbon Cutting For Pet Waste Program That Will Protect Chesapeake Bay

By PRESS OFFICER
Chesapeake Bay Trust

MT. RAINIER, Md. (June 3, 2024)—The Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program, a partnership between Chesapeake Bay Trust and Prince George's County Department of the Environment, has just announced the installation of 11 new pet waste collection stations. The purpose of each station is to give pet owners a place to conveniently drop off bags of their dog's waste, empowering the community to

protect the Chesapeake Bay along the way. Just like human waste, pet waste can make its way into the Chesapeake Bay and do serious damage. These stations will not only promote cleaner, healthier neighborhoods but also help protect the Bay by educating residents on the importance of scooping their pets' poop.

These 11 new stations are the latest additions to the Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program, which is funded by the Prince George's County Department of the Environment and managed by the Chesapeake

Bay Trust. This is the program's 10th year of enacting restoration activities on the ground that improve communities, water quality, climate action, and engages Prince George's County residents in the protection of local rivers.

"This city has been a model for years, if not decades, in installing amazing projects that serve multiple community benefits, as well as natural resource improvement," said

See STATIONS Page A5



PHOTO COURTESY CHESAPEAKE BAY TRUST

The installation of 11 new pet waste collection stations was celebrated on Tuesday, May 28 in Mt. Rainier.

Governor Moore Announces Memorandum of Understanding With NASA Goddard Space Flight Center and MEDCO

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (May 29, 2024)—Governor Wes Moore today announced that the Maryland Department of Commerce signed a new memorandum of understanding with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s Goddard Space Flight Center and the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO). The three-year agreement will support growth in Maryland's aerospace economy in the area surrounding Goddard, located in Greenbelt, and on the Lower Eastern Shore near the rocket launch site Wallops Flight

Facility.

"NASA and MEDCO are synonymous with innovation, growth, discovery, and strength. Today, the State of Maryland reaffirms our commitment to these principles, and others, by investing in this partnership," said Gov. Moore. "Maryland is ready to lead, and by standing united with our partners in both the public and private sector, we will make Maryland more competitive and position our state to win the decade."

Under the memorandum, Commerce and NASA Goddard will collaborate to promote technology transfer, STEM education, aerospace industry devel-

opment and community outreach, including raising awareness of resources such as Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer funding. The funding supports the creation and growth of new space-related businesses, leading economic development efforts around the two NASA facilities, and collaborating on a report analyzing Goddard's economic impact in Maryland.

"Maintaining and growing Maryland's strategic advantage in the aerospace industry requires collaboration with our formidable partners at facilities like the Goddard Space Flight Center," said Maryland Department

of Commerce Secretary Kevin Anderson. "We're thrilled to sign this agreement, which will support NASA's innovative work and help make our state more competitive."

The memorandum signing followed a joint workshop on the workforce needs of Maryland's aerospace industry, led by Lieutenant Governor Aruna Miller and attended by Maryland Historically Black Colleges and Universities, other education stakeholders, and industry leaders.

"This agreement will allow us to advance innovation and increase equitable access to STEM education for Marylanders, and it reflects our commitment to doing

so in partnership," said Lt. Gov. Miller. "By bringing together government, industry, and education, we have what it takes to prepare for the workforce needs of our time, making our state more competitive in the process. An investment in STEM is an investment in Maryland's future."

"Our cutting-edge research, and the critical benefits it provides to society, is only possible with the support of strong partnerships outside NASA," said Goddard Center Director Dr. Makenzie Lystrup, who signed the memo on NASA's behalf. "I'm grateful to clasp hands with our home state and work together to build up the coalition

that will help us all make those next giant leaps."

MEDCO will work with Commerce and NASA to host business outreach events in Prince George's County and on the Lower Eastern Shore.

"MEDCO is proud to team with our partners at Maryland Commerce and support the vital mission at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center," said MEDCO Executive Director Tom Sadowski. "By applying our full capabilities, we will foster innovation and collaborations with education and industry that enhances the mission and helps drive Maryland's innovation rich economy."

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Msgr. McGready, former pastor of local parishes, dies at 85

Monsignor Oliver McGready died May 22 at Morningside House of St. Charles. But before I tell you about his death, let me tell you how he came to be at St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Camp Springs.

Back on January 31, 1971, St. Philip's assistant pastor, Father Francis Dolan, collapsed and died while playing basketball with parish teens during open gym at Foulis Junior High in Morningside. Father Dolan was only 42.

The funeral at St. Philip's Church was huge. The parish was heartbroken. Cardinal O'Boyle lost no time assigning a new assistant pastor, Father Oliver McGready, a charming Irishman who was welcomed with a reception February 28, 1971. He helped the parishioners deal with their grief.

Four years later, St. Philip's founding pastor, Msgr. Joseph Teletchea was transferred to St. Jerome's, and St. Philip's had a new pastor, Father Oliver Mahedy, of Mullingar, County Westmeath, Ireland.

The parish then had a staff of two Irishmen—an assistant pastor from Ireland and a Pastor from Northern Ireland—both named Oliver.

I was reminded of this when I got word that Msgr. Oliver McGready had died May 22 at Morningside House. He was 85.

Oliver McGready was born in Moneymore, Ireland, one of the 15 children of Patrick and Brigid McGready. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Washington at the Cathedral of the Assumption, Carlow, Ireland.

His first assignment was St. John the Evangelist, in Clinton, and then St. Michael the Archangel in Silver Spring, before being assigned to St. Philip's in 1971.

After leaving St. Philip's in 1976, he was pastor of Sacred Heart, LaPlata; St. Mary of the Mills, Laurel; St. Martin of Tours, Gaithersburg; Holy Family, Hillcrest Heights; Shrine of St. Jude, Rockville; and St. Mary's, Newport.

Msgr., Oliver McGready's Mass of Christian Burial was May 29 at St. Peter's in Waldorf. The other Oliver, Father Mahedy, died in 1999. Two Irish Olivers, together again.

Town of Morningside: Low-cost shots for dogs & cats

Morningside's upcoming schedule: June 11, monthly Work Session, 7 p.m. June 19, Morningside offices closed for the Juneteenth holiday.

June 22, Morningside kicks off Summer with an Ice-Cream Social and Roller Skating, 5:30–8:30 p.m. Enjoy a Hot Dog Dinner and Ice Cream Bar. Giveaway and Raffle Tickets for Sale. Admission free. June 29–30, Spring Clean-up. Sunday, June 30, Low-cost shot clinic for dogs and cats.

July 4, The annual Morningside Fourth of July Parade, up Suitland Road, on Thursday, July 4. If you have a marching group, high school band, a vintage vehicle, 10 people pushing lawn-mowers, or any other possible parade item, call 301-736-2301.

Following the parade, Family Fun continues at Morningside, with fireworks at dusk. Volunteers are needed; call 301-736-2301.

Neighbors & other good people

Mary Anderson, owner and operator of Mary's Boutique in Camp Springs for 14 years, died May 4. She was 95. Services were at Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home, Silver Spring.

Germaine Haywood has been confirmed by the M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation as the new Chief of the Park Police.

Changing landscape

The National Zoo announced last Wednesday that China is sending them two new giant pandas—Bao Li, 2, a male, and Qing Bao, 2, female. They will be arriving later this year.

The Boy Scouts of America is changing its name after 114 years. It will be Scouting America, in order to make it possible to include girls. The change will officially take effect on Feb. 8, 2025, the organization's 115th birthday. I have fond memories of Morningside's Irene and Roscoe Smith heading the Scouts (Troop 2827) with meetings at Bells U.M. Church. All three of my sons were Scouts. Only son Brian stayed a Scout and loved the camps.

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

Jobs: teachers needed

Saint Philip's School, in Camp Springs, has openings for two teachers, middle-school math & science teacher and an elementary teacher. Go to mtruss@stpamd.org.

Places to Go and things to Do

The Real Milk and Honey Eatery & Bar has opened at 4531 Telfair Blvd., in Camp Springs. Think: Berry French Toast, Blackened Salmon, Crab Cake Sandwich, Caribbean Jerk Lamb. Opens at 10 a.m. Info: 301-423-1026.

Movies on the Potomac continues at National Harbor through September 29. Thursdays feature date-night films at 7 p.m.; Sundays have family films at 6 pm.

Head for Watkins Regional Park to celebrate Juneteenth 2024 on Saturday, June 15, noon to 5 p.m.

Ever wanted to visit Spain and Portugal? Father Ryan Pineda, as chaplain, is leading a pilgrimage to those countries, October 1–8, 2024. For information, call 347-463-3998.

Leroy Coleman dies at 88

Leroy Coleman, Jr., of Skyline, died May 9, two days short of his 89th birthday. He grew up in Saluda, S.C.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Mary V., Coleman; son Harold; sisters Virginia Vaughn and Marie Glover; brother Lawrence Coleman, and two granddaughters. Services were at Emmanuel Baptist Church with interment at Arlington Cemetery.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Robin Murphy and Rev. Frank Ways, June 9; Laura Smith Jenkins, June 10; Fannie Dimes and Meghan Trexler Decker, June 11; Keenus Clark and Shirley Proffit, June 12; Aimee Crawford, Joel McCune and Cameron Nichols, June 13; Tony Proctor and Rep. Steny Hoyer, June 14; Kara Dameron, Dot Pfeil and June Zaaccagnino, June 15.

Happy Anniversary to my son Mike and Sandy McHale, June 9.

Email (muddmm@gmail.com) birthdays and anniversaries.

Around the County

Mark Your Calendar for the 'Our Streets, Our Future' KickOff on June 22

Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 22 as we kickoff 'Our Streets, Our Future' (OSOF) and highlight Gun Violence Awareness Month, which is June. WPGC 95.5's Poet Taylor will join us along with several bands and community organizations.

We have visited numerous communities over the past three years with our OSOF public safety and gun violence prevention campaign and we want you to join the movement with State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy and her team.

State's Attorney Braveboy is leading the way in protecting our streets, our residents and the future of our county. As part of the campaign, she and members of her team collaborate with non-profit organizations, faith-based leaders, businesses, housing providers, public officials/agencies, law enforcement and others to bring resources and information to communities with the ultimate goal of preventing and stopping crime.

We hope to see you on the 22nd of June.

—Aisha Braveboy, State's Attorney

M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Announces The 2024 Fairwood Community Park Performance Series and Music Festival

RIVERDALE, Md. (May 31, 2024)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County is proud to present its 2024 Fairwood Community Park Performance Series and Music Festival. This dynamic—and completely free—series shines a light on many phenomenal artists resident in Prince George's County; and has been bringing community residents, artists and culture lovers together since 2013. Prepare for an electrifying lineup featuring a vibrant mix of genres from Reggae and Soca to R&B, Soul, Funk and Rock, as well as a performance by Prince George's County's Shakespeare in the Parks. The 2024 Fairwood Community Park Performance Series and Music Festival promises something for everyone.

This year's series kicks off on **Sunday, June 9** and continues select Sundays throughout the summer, culminating in the highly anticipated music festival on Sunday, August 25th. Featured artists include Deborah Bond, The Walker Redds Project, Brencore All Stars, The Exclusives, I&I Riddim, Eclipse International, N2N Band, Kyaira, The 8 Ohms Band and Spur of the Moment.

Grab your lawn chair or blanket and join us at Fairwood Community Park in Bowie as we immerse ourselves in the sweet, smooth sounds of live music. The 2024 lineup includes:

Sunday, June 9, 4–6 p.m. Celebrating Caribbean American Heritage Month

Eclipse International: Filling the air with the sounds of Soca, Reggae and Steeldrum.

I&I Riddim: Captures the spirit and essence of reggae's irresistible upbeat dance rhythm.

Sunday, July 7, 4–6 p.m.

N2N Band: Old and new school R&B, soul, Motown classics and pop music.

The Walker Redds Project: Soul, jazz, and the groove met and created 'pocket jazz'.

Sunday, August 4, 4–6 p.m.

Kyaira: Rising R&B and Soul star with unique powerhouse vocals.

Brencore Allstars Band: Taking you back to the rock, funk, soul superstars of yesteryear.

Sunday, August 25, 2022; 1–6 p.m.

The Fairwood Music Festival

Deborah Bond: D.C. singer-songwriter mixes elements of jazz, funk, and progressive R&B.

The Exclusives: A top cover band playing a variety of music from the 60s to today.

The 8 Ohms Band: This award-winning band blurs the lines between hard groove, funk, pop, soul & reggae.

Spur of the Moment: This Jazz, Funk and Soul group has performed with everyone from Stanley Clarke to Oleta Adams.

Performances are FREE and suitable for all ages. For more information, visit: pgparks.com/event_list/fairwood-community-park-summer-performances.

Titilayo Sunday Graduates From Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

ALBANY, N.Y. (May 28, 2024)—Nearly 240 undergraduate, graduate and PharmD students crossed the stage at Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences' 144th Commencement on May 11, 2024. The ceremony was hosted at Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Saratoga Springs, NY.

Titilayo Sunday of Largo, MD, graduated with a BS Pharmaceutical Sciences.

There were 114 undergraduate grads, 16 BS/MS dual degree grads, 32 Master's grads, and 128 PharmD grads participating in the ceremony. Graduates hail from 21 states, one US territory (Puerto Rico) and 12 countries.

Founded in 1881, Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences (ACPHS) is a private, independent college dedicated to educating the next generation of leaders to improve the health of society. The College offers 12 undergraduate and graduate degree programs, including the only Masters of Biomufacturing and Bioprocessing degree in the state. ACPHS ranks #1 in New York and #2 in the U.S. for best return on investment according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. For more information, visit www.acphs.edu.

—Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

KIDS DAY ON THE PLAZA

Join us for a morning of fun at National Harbor's Kids Day! Grab the kiddos and head to National Harbor for Kids Day every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. from June 6–August 29. Enjoy the summer sunshine and a rotation of family-friendly activities on the Plaza.

June 11: Kids programming with WHUT: LYLA IN THE LOOP Premiere: Join us for a screening of our newest show, LYLA IN THE LOOP. "Lyla in the Loop" is a funny and engaging new animated series for kids ages 4–8 about Lyla Loops and her fantastical blue sidekick, Stu, who uses creative and strategic problem-solving and critical thinking skills to help their family, friends, and community.

June 18: Join the Prince George's County Memorial Library System for a morning of interactive story time, singing, dancing and more.

June 25: Kids programming with WHUT Feel the Beat: Calling all music lovers for an exciting arts and instruments activity topped off with a dance party to some of our favorite past and present PBS Kids Jams.

July 2: Fitness fun with One Life Fitness.

July 9: Kids programming with WHUT. Nature Cat Scavenger. Meet us at the Harbor as we explore nature and engage in an interactive scavenger hunt around the Potomac River.

July 16: Musical morning with the United States Army Band.

July 23: Kids programming with WHUT. Full Steam Ahead: A little bit of science, a little bit of math and a whole lot of fun. Let us work our way through some fun activities from some of our favorite PBS KIDS Series.

July 30: Alice in Wonderland Teen Ensemble Performance by M-NCPPC Department.

August 6: Kids programming with WHUT. All around the World: Pack your (imaginary) bags and travel with us around the world as we learn about different cultures and race to fill out passports at various stations.

August 13: Check back soon for details.

August 20: Kids programming with WHUT. Be my Neighbor Day. Join us for a chance to meet some of the community helpers who are helping to keep our neighborhoods safe and learn more about their world of work.

August 27: Join the Prince George's County Memorial Library System for a morning of interactive story time, singing, dancing and more.

THE ACADEMIC DEGREES

A degree is awarded for the successful completion of a course of study. There are more than 16,000 different academic degrees currently conferred by American colleges and universities. The first known degree was a doctorate conferred by the University of Bologna in the middle of the 12th Century. Originally, the

doctor's and master's degrees were used interchangeably, each indicating that the holder was qualified to give instruction to students. The bachelor's or baccalaureate degree indicated only entrance upon a course of study preparatory to the doctorate or mastership. Gradually, however, the bachelor's degree came to mean successful completion of one level of study preparatory to the higher degrees.

The degree, Bachelor of Science, was awarded to four graduating members of the class of 1851 of Harvard University, probably the first to receive this degree from any institution. From 1851 to 1905, the degree was conferred only upon students in the Lawrence Scientific School; after 1905, on students of Harvard also.

The master's degree, as it has evolved in American universities, is an advanced degree representing at least one year of course work beyond the baccalaureate degree. The degree is sometimes granted after a two-year professional program as is common in business administration or a three-year program in the case of fine arts. It may also have additional requirements such as a major thesis and general examination. Reference: Academic Degrees Office of Education U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1960.

ICE CREAM FESTIVAL

Satisfy Dad's sweet tooth with tickets to the Ice Cream Festival on Monday, June 17, at National Harbor. Enjoy live music by the 80s cover band, the Legwarmers, games and activities, and of course, ice cream. Do not forget to get your ticket.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to volunteer with M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County are almost unlimited. Individuals and groups can help on a one-day project or an ongoing basis. For more information contact the Volunteer Services Office at 301-446-3324.

BADEN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Willow Room Baden's Social Hall is great for indoor gatherings; for example: weddings, wedding receptions, birthday parties, family reunions, business meetings, etc. Seats 250 people dinner style with a dance floor. Events can be catered by our Ladies Auxiliary (reduced hall rental fee) or caterer of your choice. HD projector with sound system. The address is 16608 Brandywine Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613.

Outdoor Rental: Covered pavilion includes picnic tables, and receptacles for outdoor parties, family reunions, birthday parties, company picnics and more. Room and Outdoor Area to eat indoors but still enjoy the country air. Outdoor Men's and Women's restrooms. Softball field, large grass areas, two horseshoe pits, large sandbox for children to play.

COMMUNITY

The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County to Host Claws for a Cause Fundraising Event on June 14, 2024

Crab Feast and Silent Auction to Support Students with Special Needs and Autism

By PRESS OFFICER
The Children's Guild

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, Md. (May 31, 2024)—Registration is now open for the Claws for a Cause benefit for The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County (TCGPG). Money raised will support students with special needs and autism by providing resources such as adaptive play-ground and gymnasium equip-

ment designed to accommodate diverse needs and foster inclusive participation, as well as technology aimed at enhancing learning within special education classrooms.

- What: Claws for a Cause to Benefit The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County
- Location: 5702 Sargent Rd, Chillum, MD 20782
- Date: **Friday, June 14, 2024**
- Time: 6 p.m.

- Ticket Price: \$100 per person
 - To Buy tickets and learn more: www.childrensguild.org/clawsforacause/
 - Sponsorships for this event are also available at www.childrensguild.org/claws-for-cause-sponsorships
- The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County (TCGPG) is a non-public, special education day school approved by the Maryland State Department of Education, for boys and girls

5–21 years old, who have emotional disabilities, autism, intellectual disabilities, and multiple disabilities. The school just earned a four-year accreditation from the National Commission for Accreditation of Special Education Services (NCASES), a part of the National Association of Private Special Education Centers (NAPSEC). The NCASES accreditation is a mark of excellence, representing rigorous standards in the delivery of special

education services. It reflects our dedication to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and effective learning environment that meets the highest professional standards. The Children's Guild (TCG), founded in 1953, is a leading Mid-Atlantic nonprofit organization focused on helping students and families find success socially, emotionally, educationally, and developmentally through special education, school-based mental health services, treatment foster

care, autism services, family mental and behavioral health services, and workforce development programs.

Affiliates of The Children's Guild include The Children's Guild School of Baltimore, The Children's Guild DC Public Charter School, The Children's Guild School of Prince George's County, Monarch Academy Glen Burnie, Monarch Global Academy Laurel, Monarch Academy Annapolis, Monarch Preschool College Park, The Children's Guild-Transformation Academy, The Outpatient Mental Health Clinic (OMHC), Treatment Foster Care, and TranZed Apprenticeships. For more information, visit <https://childrensguild.org/>.

Race, Place & Civic Genealogies Symposium

By PRESS OFFICER
The Center for the Study of Race and Democracy at Arizona State University

WASHINGTON (May 20, 2024)—The Center for the Study of Race and Democracy (CSRD) at Arizona State University is launching Race, Place and Civic Genealogies, its newest initiative, with an all-day symposium in the nation's capital.

The inaugural symposium is inspired by the groundbreaking 2022 Washington Post series on the histories of US elected officials with ties to enslavement and on a revelatory in-depth article about a long-time Phoenix trailblazer, Carol Coles Henry, and her ancestral connections to enslavement and freedom in Virginia. The CSRD programming underscores the potential for revelatory scholarship and programming that enables intentional and attentive approaches to long-observed histories.

The all-day symposium will begin at 9 a.m. EST on Thursday, June 13, 2024, at the ASU Barrett and O'Connor Washington Center, 8th Floor Pavilion, located at 1800 I St. NW, Washington, D.C. This marks

the CSRD's first ASU event in Washington, D.C., and demonstrates the center's commitment to expanding its national engagement with audiences.

"There is no better place than ASU D.C. to begin our deliberate study of the powerful connections between race, place and what the Center is calling "civic genealogies," said Lois Brown, Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Democracy at ASU. "This symposium exemplifies our dedication to exploring the deep and complex histories that shape our society."

Joseph McGill, founder of the Slave Dwelling Project, a history consultant for Magnolia Plantation in Charleston, SC, and author of *Sleeping with the Ancestors: How I Followed the Footprints of Slavery*, will deliver the keynote address.

The symposium will engage several DC professionals, community leaders, and educators. Attendees will gain valuable insights into the interconnected histories of race and place in America, learn from experts and changemakers, and leave equipped with knowledge and inspiration to foster dialogue and action in their communities.

This event emphasizes our commitment to attention, intention and

What: Race, Place & Civic Genealogies Symposium
When: Thursday, June 13, 2024, 9 a.m.
Where: ASU Barrett and O'Connor Washington Center, Washington, D.C.
Registration: Visit csrd.asu.edu for registration information
Free | In-Person Event

potential, encouraging participants to engage deeply with the issues of race and democracy and to contribute actively to the ongoing dialogue.

The Center for the Study of Race and Democracy at Arizona State University facilitates powerful and informed dialogues and transformative scholarship about issues related to race and democracy. The center's innovative programming and outreach efforts contribute to ASU's commitment to academic excellence and accessibility. CSRD's programs feature experts and changemakers who engage and inspire audiences through lectures, workshops, and collaborations.

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission Celebrates Pride Month With June Events

By PRESS OFFICER
M-NCPPC

RIVERDALE, Md. (May 31, 2024)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission recognizes Pride Month 2024 with a series of inclusive events and activities.

Pride Month is an annual event dedicated to the celebration of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender pride and honoring the June 1969 Stonewall Uprising in New York City, which is widely considered a tipping point in the gay rights movement in the U.S.

"From outdoor comedy shows to hiking and birding, we've got a great lineup of programs to celebrate Pride Month," said Miti Figueredo, Montgomery Parks director. "Our parks are truly for everyone, and we want our LGBTQIA+ community to have fun exercising, socializing, and enjoying nature in our parks during Pride Month and all year round."

"During Pride Month, Parks and Recreation celebrates the LGBTQIA+ community and highlights their contributions to society. We foster an inclusive and diverse environment where everyone feels empowered to be their authentic selves," states Bill Tyler, Director of the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County. "Our commitment to

value, respect, diversity, and inclusion is engrained in our culture and guides our actions each day. Together, we can ensure that everyone, regardless of their gender or orientation, can live without discrimination or prejudice."

June Pride Month Events

Pride in the Park: A Comedy Show
Thursday, June 6, 2024, 6–8 p.m.
Brookside Gardens, 1800 Glenallen Avenue, Wheaton, Md., 20902

LGBTQIA+ comics from comedy troupe Improbable Comedy bring the laughs in stand-up routines touching on topics of relationships, family, and love. The event begins at 6pm with food and beverages for purchase. The show begins at 7 p.m. Free. Ages 17+

Pride Month Campfire and Night Hike
Friday, June 7, 2024, 8:30–9:30 p.m.
Meadowside Nature Center, 5100 Meadowside Lane Rockville, Md., 20855

Celebrate Pride with a naturalist-led night hike referencing queer ecology. Enjoy s'mores around a cozy campfire lit up with rainbow flames. All ages. \$7. Registration required.

See PRIDE MONTH Page A4

Student Racial Justice Essay and Creative Arts Award Ceremony

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCLMP

GREENBELT, Md. (May 31, 2024)—The Prince George's County Lynching Memorial Project will present an Award Ceremony for the winners of the Student Racial Justice Essay and Creative Arts Contest on **Saturday June 15, 2024**, from 1–3 p.m. at the Greenbelt Community Center, Room 202, 15 Crescent Road, Greenbelt, MD. The Award Ceremony is co-sponsored by the Greenbelt Black History & Culture Committee.

The contest was open to Prince George's County public, private and homeschool students, grades 9–12. Original works—essay, drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, creative writing, spoken word—were submitted between December 1, 2023, and February 29, 2024. Contest submissions were received from over 80 high school students. Ten winners from the following schools will share in over \$5,000 scholarships from generous donors: **Suitland High School, Frederick Douglass High School, Eleanor Roosevelt High School, Laurel High School, College Park Academy, Charles Herbert Flowers High**

School, Chesapeake Math & IT High School North.

The Award Ceremony will open with remarks from Emmet Jordan, Mayor of the City of Greenbelt; Lois Rosado, Chair of the Greenbelt Black History & Culture Committee; and Lula Beatty, Co-Secretary, Prince George's County Lynching Memorial Project. The students will present their award-winning original works to the community. And each student winner will receive a congratulatory citation from Maryland State Delegate Nicole Williams, District 22.

The Ceremony is open to the public; and the community center is a fully accessible building.

The Prince George's County Lynching Memorial Project educates the public on the truths of our nation's continuing legacy of the institution of slavery and its impact on enslaved persons and their descendants, memorializes victims of racial terror lynchings in our county, and advances the cause of racial justice and reconciliation through mutual support and collaboration.

<https://pgclmp.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/pgclmp/princegeorgescolmp@gmail.com>

Independence Now Celebrates 30 Years of Empowering the Disability Community With Harvest Ball Celebration

By PRESS OFFICER
Independence Now

SILVER SPRING, Md. (May 29, 2024)—Independence Now, a center for independent living serving people with disabilities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, is thrilled to announce its 30th Anniversary Harvest Ball Celebration. This momentous event will take place on **Friday, September 27, 2024**, at the Silver Spring Civic Building at Veterans Plaza, located at 1 Veterans Place, Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Our Harvest Ball will be a fall-themed extravaganza celebrating the growth of the past three decades and the "harvests" to come. Attendees can look forward to an evening filled with music, dancing, delicious food, a silent auction, and more! This event is not just a celebration of our past achievements but a launchpad for future initiatives that will continue to empower individuals with disabilities in

our community.

"We are incredibly proud of the progress and impact we've made over the past 30 years," said Shannon Minnick, Interim Executive Director of Independence Now. "Our Harvest Ball is an opportunity to celebrate our milestones and, more importantly, to look forward to the future. We invite everyone to join us for an unforgettable night of celebration and support."

Sponsorship Opportunities

Independence Now is also seeking sponsors to ensure the evening is a memorable success for all attendees. Sponsor support will not only guarantee a fantastic event but will also directly contribute to our mission of empowering individuals with disabilities. By becoming a sponsor, you help leave a lasting impact on our community, supporting vital programs and services that enhance the lives of those we serve. To inquire about sponsorship opportunities, con-

tact Shannon Minnick at sminnick@innow.org.

Join us as we celebrate 30 years of independence, growth, and community. Let's make this Harvest Ball a night to remember!

Purchase tickets for Independence Now's 30th Anniversary Harvest Ball Celebration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/independence-nows-30th-anniversary-harvest-ball-celebration-tickets-901864299397>.

Independence Now advocates and embodies independence and equality for all people with disabilities. As a member of a nationwide network of Centers for Independent Living, Independence Now is a nonprofit organization designed, governed, and staffed by people with disabilities and serves consumers residing in Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, Maryland. Visit innow.org to learn more and follow us on Facebook, Twitter @InNowOrg, Instagram @independencenow.

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COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Justice Alito Sullies the Integrity of The U.S. Supreme Court

“Professional baseball would never allow an umpire to continue to officiate the World Series after learning that the pennant of one of the two teams competing was flying in the front yard of the umpire’s home. Nor would an umpire be allowed to call balls and strikes in a World Series game after the umpire’s wife tried to get the official score of a prior game in the series overthrown and canceled out to benefit the losing team. If judges are like umpires, then they should be treated like umpires, not team owners, team fans or players.”

—U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin

When the U.S. Supreme Court unveiled its so-called Code of Conduct late last year, I said it would do nothing to restrain unethical behavior by the Justices.

Justice Samuel Alito has wasted no time in proving me right.

The upside-down flag—a symbol of allegiance to the Big Lie about the 2020 election—displayed at Alito’s home in January 2021 violates even the watered-down provisions of the code and disqualifies him from the Jan. 6 cases that are before the court. His feeble explanation, that it was his wife’s decision to fly the flag and

she denied his requests to take it down.

According to the code, “A Justice should disqualify himself or herself in a proceeding in which the Justice’s impartiality might reasonably be questioned,” including such instances in which the Justice’s spouse is known by the Justice to have an interest in the outcome of the proceeding.

Even if Alito does not share his wife’s false beliefs about the 2020 election, he can hardly argue that her interest is not known to him. Lest her decision to fly that flag—if, indeed, it was solely her decision—be dismissed as a fleeting whim of passion, another symbol of loyalty to Trump’s lies flew over the Alito’s vacation home as recently as last summer.

These partisan displays, and Alito’s obstinate refusal to recuse himself, are merely the latest examples of Alito’s corruption and contempt for ethical standards. He accepted the gift of a luxury fishing trip with a billionaire whose hedge fund has repeatedly had business before the court, and failed to disclose it. The Code of Conduct says justices “should comply” with regulations that prohibit judicial officers from accepting gifts “from anyone who is seeking official action from or doing business with the court” and require the disclosure of gifts.

He is credibly suspected of leaking to con-

servative activists his ruling in 2014’s *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby*, exempting private companies from regulations in the case of religious objections. Another of his rulings, in 2022’s *Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization* also was leaked.

While Alito’s behavior clearly violates the court’s Code of Conduct, as I noted in November the code lacks any enforcement mechanism. In fact, “adapting” the federal judiciary’s code of conduct, the court conspicuously dropped word “enforce” from the opening section.

U.S. Rep. Jamie Raskin makes a convincing argument that the Department of Justice can petition the other justices to require Alito’s recusal under the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution and a federal statute that mandates judicial disqualification for questionable impartiality.

But the other justices, as Raskin notes, do not need to wait for such a petition. Alito’s past behavior already has made a mockery of judicial ethics; his refusal to recuse himself from cases related to the 2020 election is just another slap in the fact to the American people. If his fellow justices do not step up to their constitutional obligation to require his recusal, they will be a party to his mockery.

—May 31, 2024

COMMUNITY

Alzheimer’s Association Encourages Americans to Take Charge of Their Brain Health

June is Alzheimer’s and Brain Awareness Month

By CINDY LEACH SCHELHORN
Alzheimer’s Association National Capital Area Chapter

ARLINGTON, Va. (June 3, 2024)—This June during Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month, the Alzheimer’s Association is encouraging all Americans to take charge of their brain health.

Today, there are nearly 7 million people age 65 and older in the U.S. are living with Alzheimer’s dementia, including 300,000 in DC, Maryland and Virginia. The lifetime risk for the disease at age 45 is 1 in 5 for women and 1 in 10 for men. The brain changes that cause Alzheimer’s are thought to begin 20 years or more before symptoms start, which suggests that there may be a substantial window of time in which we can intervene in the progression of the disease.

Experts believe there isn’t a single cause of Alzheimer’s. It’s likely the disease develops as a result of multiple factors. While not a direct cause of Alzheimer’s, the greatest known risk factor is advancing age. Although some risk factors like age cannot be changed, others—including physical activity, not smoking, education, challenging your mind, blood pressure and diet—may be modified to reduce a person’s risk.

“Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month offers the perfect opportunity for people to take charge of their brain health,” said Sheila Griffith, Vice President of Programs and Services with the Alzheimer’s Association National Capital Area Chapter. “We want people to know there are steps they can take to potentially reduce their risk of cognitive decline. We also want to encourage anyone experiencing memory or thinking problems to talk to their doctor. There are many possible causes—and if it is Alzheimer’s disease, there are numerous benefits to getting a timely diagnosis.”

During June, the Alzheimer’s Association is offering these 5 suggestions to take charge of your brain health:

- 1. Incorporate healthy habits that may reduce the risk of cognitive decline:** Research shows that adopting healthy habits may reduce the risk of cognitive decline. As many as 40% of dementia cases worldwide may be attributable to modifiable risk factors. Based on mounting scientific evidence, the Alzheimer’s Association encourages individuals to incorporate these 10 Healthy Habits to reduce the risk of cognitive decline and possibly dementia. Whatever your age or stage of life, now is the time to take charge of your brain.
- 2. Learn the early warning signs of Alzheimer’s and other dementia:** Many people equate Alzheimer’s to memory loss—and while that is one of the most common signs—there are other warning signs that can signal cognitive decline, including altered judgment, mood changes, challenges in decision-making, and planning and carrying out projects. Some memory changes can be a normal part of the aging process, but when changes start to interfere with daily living or stray drastically from the person’s normal behavior, it’s best to get it checked. The Alzheimer’s Association offers these 10 Early Signs and Symptoms of Alzheimer’s to help people identify potential early warning signs of Alzheimer’s or other dementia.
- 3. Be proactive in addressing memory and thinking problems:** Studies show many individuals experiencing memory and thinking problems often put off discussing them with a doctor. A 2022 Alzheimer’s Association report found that 60% of U.S. adults say they would not see a doctor right away if they were experiencing symptoms of mild cognitive impairment. Rather,

they would wait until symptoms persisted, worsened or until family and friends expressed concern.

However, early detection and diagnosis of Alzheimer’s and other dementia offers the best opportunity for care, management and treatment. It also provides diagnosed individuals more time to plan for the future, participate in clinical trials and to live with a higher quality of life, for as long as possible. In addition, there are now treatments that may slow disease progression for people in the early stage of Alzheimer’s, making a timely diagnosis critically important. If you or a family is experiencing memory or thinking problems, it is important to get it checked. The Alzheimer’s Association offers tips and resources to help families navigate these conversations.

- 4. Help accelerate disease-related research:** Clinical trials hold the key to new and better Alzheimer’s disease treatments. Individuals living with Alzheimer’s and other dementias, caregivers and healthy volunteers are needed to participate in clinical trials that help advance Alzheimer’s research. Today, approximately 55,000 volunteers are needed for more than 180 clinical trials. The Alzheimer’s Association TrialMatch® is a free, easy-to-use service that connects interested individuals with appropriate trials.
- 5. Volunteer with the Alzheimer’s Association:** Volunteers are the key to making a difference in the lives of people facing Alzheimer’s and dementia. When you volunteer with the Alzheimer’s Association, you join a network of

About Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month

Established by the Alzheimer’s Association in 2014, Alzheimer’s & Brain Awareness Month is dedicated to encouraging a global conversation about the brain and Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia. To learn more about the Alzheimer’s Association, available resources and how you can get involved to support the cause, visit alz.org/abam.

Fight the Darkness of Alzheimer’s by Supporting The Longest Day

The Longest Day® is the day with the most light—the summer solstice. The Longest Day participants fight the darkness of Alzheimer’s and all other dementia through a fundraising activity of their choice on a day that works for them. With sports tournaments, card games, parties, baking and more, participants raise funds to advance the care, support and research efforts of the Alzheimer’s Association. For more information and to register, visit alz.org/thelongestday.

About the Alzheimer’s Association

The Alzheimer’s Association is a worldwide voluntary health organization dedicated to Alzheimer’s care, support and research. Our mission is to lead the way to end Alzheimer’s and all other dementia—by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. Our vision is a world without Alzheimer’s and all other dementia. Visit alz.org or call 800.272.3900.

“Workout to End Alzheimer’s” at 53 Onelife Fitness Locations on June 8, 2024 to Benefit The Alzheimer’s Association

By PRESS OFFICER
Onelife Fitness

MCLEAN, Va. (June 3, 2024)—On Saturday, June 8, 2024, Onelife Fitness will unite 53 locations across the DMV, Coastal Virginia, West Virginia, and Georgia for a powerful cause:

the “Workout to End Alzheimer’s.” This day-long fundraising event will feature an all-star lineup of instructors and a diverse array of fitness formats, including Cycle, Zumba, Body Pump, and more. The event is open to both current members and non-members, with a minimum donation of \$25 required to partici-

pate. To register for the event or to make a donation, please visit alz.org/onelifefitness.

Let’s move together to make a difference. Join us on June 8 and be part of the fight to end Alzheimer’s!

To learn more or to find the club nearest you, please visit us at onelifefitness.com.

Pride Month from A3

Birding for All

Saturday, June 8, 2024, 4:30–6 p.m.
Locust Grove Nature Center, 7777 Democracy Boulevard, Bethesda, Md., 20817

Birding is for anyone interested in nature. This session in particular welcomes members of the LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, and

accessibility communities into a hospitable learning environment. A park naturalist will introduce the hobby of birding and give helpful tips on spotting different species. A guided trail walk is also offered. Bring your own binoculars or borrow ours. Free. Registration required.

In the Life: Pride Celebration

Saturday, June 29, 2024, 12–4 p.m.
Lake Artemesia, 8200 55th Avenue, Col-

lege Park, MD 20740

Join us for an exciting and empowering workshop designed especially for LGBTQIA+ youth, family, and allies. Whether you’re a seasoned performer or new to the ballroom scene, this workshop is the perfect opportunity to express yourself, learn new skills, and connect with a vibrant community.

The Prince George’s Post

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ENVIRONMENT

Stations from A1

Jana Davis, President of Chesapeake Bay Trust. “There is so much science about the value of being outdoors to stay healthy, both physically and mentally, and this community embodies all of this from the super cool natural resource projects that have been done, in addition to these incredibly awesome pet waste stations.”

The installation was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony this past Tuesday, May 28 in Mt. Rainier. Speakers at the ribbon cutting included Mt. Rainier Mayor Celina Benitez and Chesapeake Bay Trust President Jana Davis. The ribbon cutting celebrated the installation of the final pet waste station.

For more information and upcoming events from Chesapeake Bay Trust, please visit www.cbtrust.org. For more information on the Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program, please visit <https://cbtrust.org/grants/prince-georges-stormwater-stewardship/>.

The Chesapeake Bay Trust (www.cbtrust.org) envisions a restored, protected, and resilient Chesapeake Bay watershed and other natural resources in our area, from the Coastal Bays to the Chesapeake to the Youghiogheny River. The Trust empowers over 400 local community-based groups each year with the resources they need to take on a meaningful and measurable role in restoring forests, streams, rivers, bays, wildlife, and more in their own communities. The Trust is supported by the sale of the Chesapeake Bay license plate; donations from individuals and corporations; and partnerships with private foundations and federal, state, and local governments. The Trust has received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for over two decades. On average, 90% of the Trust's expenditures are directed to its restoration and education program.

Don't Forget to Scoop That Poop

Long walks with your favorite pals are a part of your daily agenda. Be sure to remember to “Scoop that Poop”. Not only does it keep your surroundings beautiful and clean it also prevents diseases that can be harmful to both pets and humans. It is so easy to do—just bring a scooper bag with you when you walk your dog; scoop that poop; seal the bag and toss it in the trash. For more information visit bit.ly/scoopthatpoop.

—Department of the Environment, Prince George's County,

EarthTalk® Q&A

Increased Pollution = More Crime

By RODDY SCHEER AND DOUG MOSS MAY 29, 2024

Dear EarthTalk:

Is it true that there is a link between exposure to different kinds of pollution and an increased propensity to commit crimes?

—H.J., Raleigh, NC

Recent research increasingly suggests a correlation between exposure to various forms of pollution and an increase in criminal behavior. This relationship is multifaceted, influenced by a complex interaction of environmental, biological and societal factors. Nonetheless, key findings from recent studies appear to substantiate this correlation.

One recent study published in The Journal of Environmental Economics and Management found that exposure to higher levels of particulate matter was linked with a significant increase in violent crime, like assault and robbery, but not property crime. This study, along with others, hypothesizes that air pollution can impair cognitive function and increase aggression, thereby potentially escalating criminal behavior.

Meanwhile, a study highlighted by The Journal of Political Economy found a strong correlation between childhood lead exposure and higher rates of crime in adulthood. The research indicates that areas with higher historical use of leaded gasoline experienced more violent crime, underscoring the long-term societal impacts of environmental toxins. Exposure to lead, a toxic metal, has been linked to neurological damage, which can result in behavioral problems and reduced impulse control.

Interestingly, noise pollution also appears to have a connection to crime. A study in Environmental Research found that higher levels of urban noise were associated with an increase in aggressive behavior and violent crime. The stress and sleep disturbances caused by constant noise can exacerbate aggressive tendencies, potentially leading to higher crime rates.

The underlying mechanism connecting pollution and crime often revolves around cognitive impairment. Pollutants like fine particulate matter and lead can cross the blood-brain barrier, leading to inflammation and neurotoxicity. These physiological changes can impair judgment and increase impulsivity. Research cited by ScienceDaily demonstrates that poor air quality can reduce cognitive performance, which is critical for decision-making and self-control, both of which are essential in preventing criminal behavior.

It's important to note that pollution often disproportionately affects lower-income communities, which are already at a higher risk for crime due to factors like poverty, lack of education and limited access to resources. The added burden of pollution can exacerbate these pre-existing social issues, creating a compounded effect on crime rates.

Stricter emissions standards and moving to clean energy are obvious ways we can help reduce pollution-related crime. We can also remove lead paint from older homes and buildings. We can update infrastructure to prevent lead contamination of drinking water. And we can reduce noise pollution through better urban planning and enforcement of noise regulations. Educating the public about the dangers of pollution can help reduce exposure. And supporting economic development and job creation in disadvantaged areas can alleviate some of the socioeconomic pressures that contribute to crime.

CONTACTS: Analyzing the relationship between air pollution and various types of crime, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8362969/>; Noise pollution and violent crime, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0047272722001505>.

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

First Baby Eagles Hatch on Reborn Chesapeake Island

By JEREMY COX
Chesapeake Bay Journal

Some eagle-eyed wildlife biologists have made a surprising discovery at Poplar Island.

That's the island in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Maryland Port Authority have been rebuilding over the last 25 years. What was once almost entirely open water is now more than 1,700 acres of rock-ringed land.

One of the primary aims behind creating the island was to reestablish some of the habitat that waterfowl and shorebirds have lost around the Chesapeake to rising seas, erosion and shoreline development. According to the latest count, about 40 different bird species have successfully nested on Poplar and produced young.

But one iconic species wasn't among them—until now.

In early May a veteran U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service scientist named Craig Koppie shimmied up a cottonwood tree on a spit of higher terrain on the north side of the island. He peered down into a stick-laden nest known to have been built by bald eagles the previous fall. Inside were a pair of newly hatched eaglets—a male and a female.

“It's that quote where ‘If you build it, they will come,’” said Peter McGowan, a Fish and Wildlife biologist who has been involved in the Poplar project since the mid-1990s. “If you have this nice habitat, things will move in, and they will move in quick. You never know what's going to show up, and that's one of the great parts of the job.”

McGowan said he isn't surprised that eagles would nest on the island. He thought it would only be a matter of time. Still, the dynamics behind the island's reconstruction didn't make it a likely candidate to host eagles.

The original Poplar Island once sprawled across more than 1,100 acres a few miles west of Tilghman Island on the Eastern Shore. At its height, Poplar was home to a population of about 100 people. There were several farms, a school, a church, a post office and a sawmill.

Like dozens of other low-lying islands around the Chesapeake Bay, though, Poplar was washing away. By the 1920s, the last of its residents had fled to higher ground. By the late 1990s, only a few acres of land remained.

Enter the Paul S. Sarbanes Ecosystem



PHOTO BY CRAIG KOPPIE/U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

Two eaglets are shown in a nest in May 2024 on Poplar Island in Maryland's portion of the Chesapeake Bay. They are believed to be the first bald eagles to successfully hatch on the reconstructed island.

Restoration Project. Named after the U.S. senator from Maryland who championed the effort, the project is rebuilding the island using mud dredged up from Baltimore's shipping channels to keep its port open to navigation.

The first mud delivery came in 2001, and the last is expected to arrive in the mid-2030s.

To make the island as hospitable as possible for water-loving birds, engineers designed Poplar to poke only slightly above the surrounding tide. The landscape is largely given over to marshes and mudflats. The only trees planted so far have been a handful in a small test plot.

That doesn't bode well for eagles, who generally seek out trees as their nesting spots. But nature appears to have intervened on their behalf, McGowan said.

The cottonwood tree that harbors the young eagles sprang up on its own. It's part of a clutch of trees on about an acre's worth of slightly higher ground surrounded by marsh. Despite the harsh environment, some have grown more than 60 feet tall, McGowan estimates. Cottonwoods—atype of poplar, aptly enough—are known to be fast growers.

Eagles have been spotted flying overhead and hunting around Poplar since the earliest days of its restoration, he noted. A stone's throw away from Poplar lies tree-lined Coaches Island and its cache of four eagle nests (two of which are active).

But McGowan and his colleagues had to wait about 20 years into the project before they noticed the first signs that eagles were trying to nest on Poplar. It started with a pair of eagles' effort to build a nest on the metal grate top of a water-control structure in 2020.

“Obviously, it wasn't the best place for

an eagle to nest,” he said.

The nest didn't last. A second attempt atop a spillway the following year also failed. Then, the scientists noticed a mound of sticks growing larger in a cottonwood tree where a crow's nest had been. It was too big for the supporting branches and eventually tumbled out of the tree.

Another nest in the same tree started taking shape last fall. McGowan can't say for sure whether its builders are the same eagles that had enlarged the crow's nest, but he suspects they are. This time, the nest was more centered over the trunk and less likely to fall.

By March, the amount of time the eagles spent perched on the nest suggested that there were eggs inside of it. Koppie's climb in May confirmed the presence of two eaglets. Before descending, he attached purple bands on their legs, identifying one bird as “09/E” and the other as “10/E.”

Disaster nearly struck toward the end of May when a strong storm knocked the nest out of the tree. Biologists quickly reconstructed a new nest on a nearby pole and put the eaglets in it. Soon, their parents were back to taking care of them, McGowan said.

The young birds will probably take wing by June, McGowan said. Will their parents try again in the future? McGowan is optimistic that they will.

“That's a good place to raise a family,” he said. “So, they should come back next year and in following years.”

Jeremy Cox is a Bay Journal staff writer based in Maryland. You can reach him at jcox@bayjournal.com. This article first appeared [May 2024] on Bayjournal.com and was distributed by the Bay Journal News Service.

Lawn vs. Habitat: Changing our Perception of the ‘Messy’ Yard

By JAKE SOLYST
for the Chesapeake Bay Journal

Around this time last year, I saw a local television news story out of Portsmouth, VA, that was more important to me than Chinese spy balloons, Barbenheimer box office sales or any other world event happening at the time.

The story involved a homeowner along the Elizabeth River whose next-door neighbor hadn't cut or trimmed the vegetation in his yard for more than four years. In the segment, a homeowner named Dennis Melms stands in the middle of his well-groomed backyard as he airs his grievances against the densely vegetated property over the fence. Included in Melms' list of concerns are the intrusion of snakes and raccoons, the lowering of his property value, the dangers posed to his granddaughter and the fact that he can't comfortably play horseshoes in his backyard anymore.

Melms ends the segment by announcing, “You need to cut your grass, Bill!” A literal shout into the void.

For me, this colorful local dispute gets to the heart of a perception issue that is critical to the future of the Chesapeake Bay and its wildlife.

On one side, you have the majority of people whose ideal yard is bright green, low cut and tidy, with perhaps some shrubs or a row of daylilies around the edges. The standard can be traced back to sprawling lawns in English estates and has been reinforced by decades of lawn-care marketing—so much so that turfgrass is now the most irrigated crop in the country.

On the other side, you have the brave few who aim to break tradition and use their yard in ways that benefit the environment.



PHOTO CREDIT ERIC BRAKER/ALLIANCE FOR THE CHESAPEAKE BAY

Homeowner Rodrick West in the District of Columbia has devoted most of his yard to native plants.

I can't say whether Melms' neighbor's overgrown property is out of a love for nature, or simply neglect, but there's a lot of benefit to it. The reason the neighbor can let his yard grow so lavishly is because it's in a Resource Protection Area due to its close proximity to the water. This means, under the law, he doesn't have to cut it if he doesn't want to.

Tall grass, shrubs and trees do a great job of absorbing stormwater runoff, which keeps nutrient pollution, chemical contaminants and sediment from washing into the river. Conversely, frequently mowed turf grass has shallow roots that don't absorb much stormwater.

But the benefits go beyond cleaner water. Bugs, bees and birds are dying off by the billions across the country because of dwindling natural habitat. Melms' yard, though likely a better place for a granddaughter to run around in, provides far less habitat for wildlife. The overgrown property, on the other hand, is likely burst-

ing with insect and pollinator life, which is food for birds.

While I can't defend leaving your yard uncut for four years, I do encourage people to make room for more intentional vegetation in their yards in place of turfgrass.

Breaking the perception is going to require some trailblazers. To help you be part of the change, I have a few tips on how to maintain a more Bay-friendly yard.

• Choose plants based on the benefits they provide to wildlife. For example, a shrub like winterberry produces fruit for birds late into winter, while milkweed is the host plant for larvae of the beloved monarch butterfly. Also try to pick plants that bloom at different times of the year, thus providing different wildlife with habitat and food year-round.

• Where you must mow, set the mower

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301-474-3995
www.fbc-cp.org

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Sunday Worship 11a.m.
Holy Communion 1st Sunday
Wednesday Bible Study 7-8p.m.
Wednesday Prayer Service 8p.m.

UNITED METHODIST

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14418 Old Marlboro Pike,
Upper Marlboro, MD

Church (301) 627-7389

Sunday School (Children/Adults) - 8:30 a.m.
Sunday Worship: 10:00 a.m.

Reverend Twanda E. King, Pastor
www.uumchurch.com

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Matthew 28:19-20

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Morning Worship 10:00 a.m.

Soulful Thursdays
Bible Study 7:00 p.m.

BAPTIST

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6371 Oxon Hill Road
Oxon Hill, Maryland 20745

Sunday School (Adults & Children) - 9:30 A.M.
Worship Service - 11:00 A.M.
Wed. Prayer Service & Bible Study - 7:00 P.M.
Office (301) 839-1166
Fax (301) 839-1721
E-mail: FHBC@verizon.net
Pastor: Rev. Waymond B. Duke

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Wed. Night Bible Study - 7:45 p.m.
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height to 3.5 inches or higher, which will make your lawn healthier and more drought resistant. After mowing, spread some of those clippings back onto the yard as natural fertilizer—or better still, use a mulching mower, which does much of that work for you by leaving the clippings where they lie.

- Use as little chemical fertilizer as possible, especially during rainy seasons or when you're close to a body of water. Better yet, use only native plants, which often require no fertilizer at all.
- Consider giving your property a "mullet," by leaving the front yard with turf grass and dedicating the backyard to native trees, shrubs and other plants. Similarly, you could establish a "wild space" or two in the yard, where you let the vegetation grow and collect all of your fall leaves.
- Look into resources and programs near you to install rain gardens, pollinator gardens and other "conservation landscapes."

To be clear, there will be barriers to rewilding your yard. Replacing turf grass with new plants can be time consuming and expensive, and there's no guarantee wildlife will show up once you do.

The Orwellian elephant in the room—homeowner associations—can also be an obstacle, often requiring that grass be kept under a certain length and even dictating which shrubs and trees are permitted. These rules can often be at odds with environmental best practices.

At the end of the day, we need more middle ground. It's okay to leave space in your yard for kids to run around and to play horse-shoes, but it's also okay to stand out from your neighbors and provide habitat for wildlife.

It's my hope that in my lifetime, homeowners will be proud of their yard not because it's close-cropped and bright green, but because it's attracting birds and soaking up runoff. We are in a time where smart land management is very critical, and we should all be on the same page about what we want to get out of our natural spaces.

Jake Solyst works for the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and is the web content manager in the Chesapeake Bay Program's Communications Office. This article first appeared in the May 2024 issue of the Chesapeake Bay Journal. The author's views do not necessarily reflect those of the Bay Journal.

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