

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 93, No. 11 March 13 — March 19, 2025

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents

Prince George's Business & Economic Imperative Sparks Critical Conversations on Growth, Public Safety, and Innovation

By RACINE TUCKER-HAMILTON
Norman F. Holmes Foundation /
Nudawn Marketing Group

COLLEGE PARK, Md. (March 6, 2025)—Business executives, community partners, and law enforcement officials gathered on March 5, 2025, at IKEA College Park for the Prince George's Business & Economic Imperative, an event fostering high-impact discussions on the county's economic future. Hosted by the Norman F. Holmes Foundation and Nudawn Marketing Group, the convening brought together key stakeholders to address business development, investment opportunities, and public safety's role in economic growth.

The event featured a strong lineup of speakers, including a Fireside Chat with Kevin Anderson, Senior Advisor for Economic Development in the Executive Office of the Governor, who emphasized Maryland's commitment to long-term economic growth.

"Great thanks to Greg Holmes and the Norman F. Holmes Foundation for creating a wonderful opportunity to discuss economic development in Prince George's County and the state of Maryland," Anderson remarked. "We're on our way to winning the decade."

Attendees also engaged in thought-provoking panels featuring Bowie, Greenbelt, and Hyattsville law enforcement leaders and local business executives. The discussions highlighted ways to foster economic prosperity while ensuring a safe, thriving business environment.



PHOTO CREDIT JAMAL LEE, BREASIA PRODUCTIONS

Pictured from L to R: Greg Holmes, Norman F. Holmes Foundation, Sharon Black, IKEA, Matthew McGuire, Strategic Corporate Advisor, Dawn P. Jackson, Nudawn Marketing Group, Kevin Anderson, Executive Office of the Governor, and Andre Armstrong, IKEA

Orlan Johnson, Board Chair for the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, who served as a moderator during the Economic CEO panel, underscored the importance of people as the true drivers of economic success.

"It was great to participate as a moderator for the Prince George's Business & Economic Imperative. The conversation was thoughtful and productive," said Johnson. "However, it was also a reminder that the ultimate resource in economic development is the people. It is not capital or raw materials that develop an economy. Let's keep developing our people."

The event sparked new collaborations, strategic insights, and a renewed commitment to shaping Prince George's County's economic landscape. With robust engagement from business leaders, law enforcement officials, and policymakers, the event reinforced a shared vision for sustainable growth and community-driven innovation. The event organizers closed with a commitment to provide an event recap for attendees including the next steps, how to stay engaged and be a part of developing a new vision to improve the business culture and economic environment in Prince George's County.

Free St. Patrick's Day Weekend LYFT Rides Offered Throughout Greater Washington to Prevent Drunk Driving

Nearly half of U.S. traffic deaths on St. Patrick's Day involve drunk drivers

By ALEXANDRA LUCCHESI
WRAP

TYSONS, Va. (March 3, 2025)—Preparing to combat that time of the year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, nearly half (45%) of U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers, a local nonprofit organization announced today that free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during this month's St. Patrick's Day weekend.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the 2025 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® program will be in operation each evening (4 p.m. to 4 a.m.) from Saturday, March 15 through Monday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day) as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk period.

During these three consecutive evenings, area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones then enter the SoberRide® code in the

app's 'Payment' tab (under the 'Add Lyft Pass' option) to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's 2025 St. Patrick's Day SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 3 p.m. on Saturday, March 15 on www.SoberRide.com and can only be used once during the aforementioned period.

"Nearly half of U.S. traffic fatalities during St. Patrick's Day involve drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Erickson, WRAP's President.

During the 2024 St. Patrick's Day campaign, over 500 (503) persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's SoberRide® program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide® program on the Super Bowl, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day, Halloween and the winter holidays through and including New Year's Eve.

"Lyft is dedicated to providing access to reliable and respon-

See **SOBERRIDE®** Page A2

Prince George's County Libraries Celebrate Women's History Month

By NESTOR A. DIAZ
PGCMLS

LARGO, Md. (Feb. 28, 2025)—This March, the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) is proudly celebrating Women's History Month. PGCMLS will highlight the achievements, contributions, and inspiring legacy of women throughout history and the present day with fun and educational programs, book displays, and exhibits.

Library program attendees will be able to take part in experiences such as an augmented reality exhibit on Margaret Adams, a free Black woman who owned a tavern in 1800s Prince George's County, a roundtable discussion with notable Prince George's County women from a diverse range of career fields, an author talk with award-winning fantasy author

Leslye Penelope, and much more.

"We are proud to celebrate Women's History Month by honoring the accomplishments and integral role women play in every aspect of our communities—from literature to civil rights to entrepreneurship. While we uplift the contributions of women year-round in our collections, programs, and resources, we are grateful for this opportunity to commemorate Women's History Month across all our locations," said PGCMLS Chief Operating Officer Megan Sutherland.

Featured Events
'To Make Her Own Way' Augmented Reality Exhibit

Presented by Sankofa Mobile Museum
Saturday, March 15 from 1–3 p.m. | Teens and Adults | Upper Marlboro Branch Library | Free

Margaret Adams, a free Black woman, owned a tavern in 1800s Prince George's County. While most Black Marylanders were enslaved at this time, Margaret Adams defied the slaveholding society and made her own way by building a successful business. In this special augmented reality exhibit, participants will explore the life of Margaret Adams and see how she resisted one of Maryland's most powerful families.

Deanna Raybourn on "Kills Well with Others"
Co-presented with the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights

Thursday, March 20 at 7 p.m. | Adults | Virtual Event | Free

The Prince George's County Office of Human Rights and the Prince George's County Memorial System are excited to welcome author Deanna

Raybourn for a virtual conversation about her upcoming release "Kills Well with Others." She'll discuss her newest novel which follows four women senior assassins as they take on a challenge from an elite assassin organization.

Uhuru Quilters Guild Exhibit

Saturday, March 22 from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. | All Ages | Spauldings Branch Library | Free

Enjoy a quilt exhibit presented by the Uhuru Quilters Guild, a local community organization dedicated to promoting the work and accomplishments of African American quilters. The exhibit will showcase a diverse range of unique and vibrant quilts created by talented African-American

See **LIBRARIES** Page A2

How One Maryland School District Turned Around Student Behavior With 'Restorative Practices'

PART TWO

By AUDREY KEEFE
Capital News Service

POCOMOKE CITY, Md. (March 3, 2025)—Worcester County's Pocomoke High School opened its doors as usual to 352 students on a bright but chilly Thursday last December. A mix of mellow pop hits played in the background, and students at the school made their way to their first-period class welcomed by staffers with smiles and hellos.

The scene in this small town in the southernmost part of Maryland's Eastern Shore clashed with the image of a mod-

ern high school rife with rifts and cliques. That's because the school welcomes all students and treats them with respect, Pocomoke senior Josie Stevens said.

"Every day I get to come in and everyone's already in a good mood," said Stevens, who is active in the school's Marine Corps Junior ROTC program.

For Principal Jenifer Rayne, this positive environment is a result of the school's adoption of "restorative practices," a social science technique that downplays traditional discipline methods such as suspensions in favor of building meaningful relationships among students and teachers.

In Worcester County, restorative practices appear to be working. District officials credit restorative practices with creating an atmosphere that led to a 28% drop in violent incidents across all schools in the past year.

With a majority-minority population and 70% of the student body listed as economically disadvantaged by U.S. News & World Reports, Pocomoke High School is breaking all academic odds. The school is currently tied for the highest graduation rate in Maryland, according to U.S. News & World Report rankings. The class of 2024 achieved a 100% graduation rate.

Rayne attributed the school's success to its collaborative culture.

"We don't need to feel like we have to protect ourselves here," Rayne said. "We feel accepted, and there is a community-wide goal, including the students, to make sure that our school stays a safe place."

Background and beginnings

Restorative practices are based on the principle that conflict impacts the school community as a whole, so it must be resolved by community-building measures.

Former Pocomoke High School Principal Annette Wal-



GIUSEPPE LOPICCOLO/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Pocomoke High School senior Josie Stevens describes her involvement in the Marine Corps Junior ROTC.

lace led the integration of restorative measures into the school between 2012 and 2018.

All schools in the county have since implemented restorative

practices, with many ramping up their effort in the past two years.

See **BEHAVIOR** Page A3

INSIDE

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Brandywine-Aquasco

"A Fairway to Help" Golf Tournament on May 19, 2025

Towns and Neighbors, Page A2

2025 One Maryland One Book Selection Announced

While Movie Theaters Close Nationwide, Maryland's Independent Theaters Survive

Community, Page A3

ChildWatch: Remembering Selma

Sixty years later, instead of making sure no child's hopes will be denied in America because of color, race, religion, or place of birth, the same categories and more are being used in new ways to try to erase and exclude.

Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Department of Labor's Virtual Workshop for Federal Workers and Contractors

Kenneth Kelly, CEO of Strativia, Named as an Honoree for the Washington Business Journal 2025 Diversity in Business Awards Business and Finance, Page A5

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

PGCHD seeking those who had contact with rabid deer

Prince George’s County Health Department alerted community members that a rabid deer was seen in the 5700 block of Livingston Road in Oxon Hill, February 24 about 6 p.m.

After reporting by a citizen, the deer was located and euthanized by the Department of Natural Resources. The carcass was turned over to the Animal Services Division and tested at the Maryland Department of Health.

On February 28, the Maryland Department of Health confirmed the deer tested positive for rabies.

The Health Department is seeking the public’s help in finding individuals who may have had contact with the deer in the identified area.

If you know of any person or animal that may have had contact with a deer in this area between February 14 and February 24, contact the Health Department immediately at 301-583-3751 or 240-508-5774 after 4:30 p.m. on holidays or weekends.

Town of Morningside: Senior Luncheon

The Town now has six stop-sign monitoring cameras installed near the schools (Foulois and Morningside Elementary). Morningside official Regina Foster told me they are “High performing!” In other words, they’re catching a lot of people rolling through stop signs.

She said the Town’s new speed cameras are also high performing, which means they’re catching speeders and helping the Town fill its coffers. Slow down on Suitland Road!

In other Town news, Maryland Park & Planning has awarded the Town a \$110,000 grant to be used for “community engagement,” which includes activities such as their 4th of July celebration.

One upcoming event includes the Seniors’ luncheon on March 14, with food provided by State Senator Nick Charles. He is sponsoring monthly “healthy food options” for Seniors for the entire year! Thank you, Senator Charles!

As for other activities in Morningside: On March 15, you can enjoy an afternoon of St. Patrick’s Day Bingo. And, on April 12, there’ll be Breakfast with the Easter Bunny and an egg hunt for children. For more information on either event or to register, call 301-736-2301.

Neighbors & other good people

St. Clements’s Island Museum is seeking arts and crafts vendors for The First Landing Wine & Arts Festival which will be held Saturday, April 12. Go to www.Facebook.com/SCIMuseum.

Daughter Therese Gallegos and her daughter Naomi are back from a 6-day visit to Iceland. They soaked in the Hvammsvik Hot Springs, drove through blizzards and past steaming lava fields, ate delicious fish soup, and took dozens of pictures of Icelandic horses and waterfalls. Naomi snorkeled through the icy waters at Thingvellir National Park.

Changing landscape

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is scheduled March 20 thru April 13. Butterflies are “disappearing at a catastrophic rate,” according to The Washington Post. The total number of butterflies in the U.S. has declined 22 percent over the past 20

years. Sad! I love butterflies.

The once tree-filled lot next to the VFW looks sadder and sadder as the dead trees are piled up. Nine homes will, apparently, be built there.

The Joann stores, as I mentioned before, are closing across the country. It has 800 retail locations and employs 19,000 people. Joann was founded 82 years ago. The Washington Post wrote, “Many Joann customers recall wandering the yarn- and fabric-filled aisles as children, the kaleidoscope of colors and textures beckoning them.”

The 7-Eleven across from the Morningside Fire Department had been rumored to close. Now, I understand, that’s not going to happen.

A home at 6105 Cable Avenue, in Suitland, has sold for \$499,000.

Job hunting?

Ross Stores has posted a job for a Retail Associate in District Heights, MD. Apply at Careers. Ross Stores.

Exelon posted a job for Helper Meter Service Technician in District Heights, MD. Apply at LinkedIn.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Constance Bennett and my great-grandson Riley McHale, March 16; Sharon Ryan, Helene Williams, Judy Borman and Alysha Perez, March 18; Kristopher Calhoun and Audrey Pridgen, March 19; Gladys Davidson, March 20, 1917; Russ Kyser, Matthew Curcio-Bobbitt and Dejuh Bedewi, March 21.

Happy Anniversary to Morraine and Harold Wilson on March 22.

Email April birthdays and anniversaries to muddmm@gmail.com.

SoberRide® from A1

sible rides, and we’re proud to partner with programs like WRAP to offer Lyft as an alternative to impaired driving,” said Kamillah Wood, Director of Public Policy for Community Safety at Lyft. “Through our Roadway Safety Program and our partnerships with the public, we hope to empower our community with the tools to protect themselves and those around them this holiday season.”

SoberRide® is offered throughout Lyft’s Washington D.C. coverage area which includes all or parts of: the District of Columbia; the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George’s and towns therein plus the cities of Bowie, College Park, District Heights, Gaithersburg, Glenarden, Greenbelt, Hyattsville, Laurel, Mount Ranier, New Carrollton, Rockville, Mount Pleasant and Takoma Park; and the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William and towns therein plus the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park.

Sponsors of WRAP’s 2025 St. Patrick’s Day SoberRide® campaign include the 395 Express Lanes, Anheuser-Busch, Beer Institute, Brown-Forman, Chesapeake Region Safety Council, Constellation Brands, Diageo, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Foundation of Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Lyft, Molson Coors Beverage Company, New Belgium Brewing, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association. WRAP’s 2025 Public Partner SoberRide® sponsors include the District of Columbia Highway Safety Office, Maryland Highway Safety Office/Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

In addition, a half-dozen of the Washington-metropolitan area’s better-known Irish restaurants have also united to ensure a safe St. Patrick’s Day celebration this year by sponsoring SoberRide®. These dining establishments include: The Dubliner Restaurant & Pub (DC); Ireland’s Four Courts (VA), Kelly’s Irish Times (DC); Martin’s Tavern Est. 1933 (DC); O’Sullivan’s Irish Pub (VA); and Spanky’s Shenanigans (VA).

Since 1991, WRAP’s SoberRide® program has provided 93,936 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Program (WRAP) is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with helping to keep the annual percentage of metro-Washington traffic deaths involving alcohol-impaired driving historically lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization’s popular free safe ride service to prevent drunk driving, SoberRide®.

More information about WRAP’s SoberRide® initiative can be found at www.SoberRide.com.

*Source: St. Patrick’s Day 2022 (6 p.m. on March 17, 2022, through 5:59 a.m. on March 18, 2022; NHTSA’s Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool [FIRST])

St. Patrick’s Day 2022 (6:00 pm on Thursday, March 17, 2022, through 5:59 am on Friday, March 18, 2022; source: NHTSA’s Fatality and Injury Reporting System Tool [FIRST])					
6:00 p.m. Thursday, March 17--5:59 a.m. Friday, March 18 2022	0.0 g/dL BAC	0.01-0.07 g/dL BAC	0.08+ g/dL BAC	.15+ g/dL BAC	Total
	35	4	33	23	72

Libraries from A1

quilters from the community. Through this exhibit, we honor the rich history, stories, and traditions of the African American experience as expressed through this beautiful and intricate craft.

Ms. Story’s Living History—Presented by Actress Shemika Renee
Wednesday, March 26 at 5:30 pm | Kids to Adults | Laurel Branch Library | Free

Step back in time with Ms. Story as she brings remarkable Black women from history to life. Through first-person storytelling and authentic costumes, participants can experience history from the Colonial era through the Civil Rights Movement.

Craft Programs

- Crafternoon: Kids Coloring Club—Women’s History Month: Saturday, March 15 at 3 p.m. | Kids to Adults | Glenarden Branch Library | Free
- Kids Create: The Art of Alma Thomas: Monday, March 17 at 4 p.m. | Ages 5–12 | Laurel Branch Library | Free
- Crafternoon: The Art of Alma Thomas: Monday, March 17 at 4 p.m. | Ages 5–12 | Beltsville Branch Library | Free
- Story Explorers: Celebrate Women’s History: Tuesday, March 25 at 4 p.m. | Ages 5–12 | Hyattsville Branch Library | Free
- Craft and Create: Speak Tree: Wednesday, March 26 at 6 p.m. | Teens and Adults | Accokeek Branch Library | Free
- Ready 2 Read Art: Ages 3–5, Amelia Earhart Plane Craft: Thursday, March 27 at 11:30 a.m. | Ages 3–5 | Baden Branch Library | Free

STEM Programs

- Ready 2 Read STEM: World Frog Day: Thursday, March 20 at 10:30 a.m. | Ages 3–5 | Largo-Kettering Branch Library | Free
- STEM for Families: Computer Programming Pioneers Ada Lovelace and Grace Hopper: Thursday, March 20 at 4:30 p.m. | Ages 5–12 | Bladensburg Branch Library | Free
- Ready 2 Read STEM: Ages 3–5: Saturday, March 22 at 11 a.m. | Ages 3–5 | Bowie Branch Library | Free

Ready 2 Read Storytimes

- Saturday, March 15 at 11 a.m. for Ages 3–5 at the Bowie Branch Library | Free
- Saturday, March 15 at 1:30 p.m. for Ages 3–5 at the Upper Marlboro Branch Library | Free
- Thursday, March 20 at 10:30 a.m. for Ages 3–5 at the Bladensburg Branch Library | Free
- Saturday, March 29 at 3 p.m. for Ages 2–3 at the Bladensburg Branch Library | Free

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

TRIBUTE TO MY GRANDMOTHER

A tribute to Ruth Brown Harper, my beautiful loving Grandmother, who lived to be 106 years old. My Grandmother received many accolades during her lifetime. Some of these included: the Maryland State Flag, which was flown over the State House in Annapolis, Maryland in honor of her 100th birthday at the request of Delegates James E. Proctor, Jr. and Joseph F. Vallario, Jr., the State of Maryland.

It was always a historic moment to hear my grandmother speak of her days growing up. She saw our county move from the age of horses to one of automobiles, airplanes and space travel. She witnessed the miracles of science and medicine. She lived through the great depression to the War in Iraq.

She attended Nottingham Myers Church in Upper Marlboro, Maryland every Sunday if it was not raining or snowing. She received her license at age 70 after my grandfather died. She drove from Largo, Maryland to Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church in Upper Marlboro for church until she was 98 years old. She shared an abundance of love and was respected by everyone. A Nottingham Myers UMC Certificate was presented to her in appreciation for her years of Knowledge, Wisdom, and Integrity. Her service to God lasted for four generations.

She lived alone in her apartment until she was 103 and started walking with a cane because of arthritis in her left leg. Then she told us that she was ready to move and had found a place. She moved to Fort Washington Health and Rehabilitation Center in Fort Washington, Maryland. She died the same night that I visited her. She died sitting in her chair by the window where we used to sit, talk, and watch the cars pass the building every time I visited. My grandmother was a very strong independent woman with strong moral values.

Grandmother taught me good and strong moral values. Along with my parents she instilled in me all the traits to become a successful woman in life. I wanted to honor my grandmother because March is Women’s History Month. Submitted by her Granddaughter Audrey Turner Johnson.

MARCH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Happy Birthday to Pastor Melaina Trice who is our Pastor at Clinton United Methodist Church. Happy Birthday to Elizabeth Davis, Marquis Wallace, Shirley Brown, Bonnie Johnson, Dezmund Wood, Anthony Oghogho, Elena Gatling, SSG Joseph Prah, Safiya Terry-Joseph, Brittany Baker, Denise Reid Bourne, Mildred Edwards, Vedall Grant, Redland Kelley, Greta Davis, Lloyd Brown, Patricia Stephens, Tina Fields, Niecia Tay, Aja Laylonie Bell, Henry Thomas, Bonnie Droter, Shirley Jackson, Judy Jones-Terry, Shonnel Noel, Amiah Knight, Daniel Jones, Daniel Glee who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays in March.

MARCH WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations to Marian and Dr. Anthony Thomas, Emmanuel and Claudette Oghogho, Chris and Jasmine Taylor Marshall who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in March.

FAMILY CRISIS CENTER

The Family Crisis Center of Prince George’s County, Inc. is a private non-profit, 501(c)(3) human service organization. Our mission is to promote and facilitate the elimination of abusive behavior in intimate relationships. A volunteer Board of Directors, which includes a diverse mix of community leaders, allied professionals, and victim advocates, governs the Family Crisis Center. Services are funded with the assistance of public and private contributions, and grants administered through Prince George’s County Department of Family Services Administration for Children, Youth and Families, Maryland Department of Human Resources (VOCA & DV) Funds, Governor’s Office of Crime Control & Prevention (MVOC & VAWA Funds).

In addition, the agency sponsors annual fundraising events to assist with funding for our programs. For over 25 years, FCC has been the primary service provider in Prince George’s County that addresses the entire family with comprehensive services delivered by a team of highly skilled and dedicated professionals.

Programs and services are 24-Hour Crisis Hotline, Safe Passage Program & Emergency Shelter, Family Violence Intervention Clinic, Legal Advocacy, Community Outreach & Education, Children & Youth Services, Stay in Touch Program.

Support survivors in their efforts to regain control over their lives by allowing them to make their own decisions. Allowing them to share both good and bad feelings about the abuser. Accepting that their opinions and solutions may change over time with acquisition of new information and support. Always checking to see what other assistance they may need. Understand that leaving is a process, if that is what they choose to do, they must always put safety first.

URBAN FARM FESTIVAL

The Second National Urban Farm Festival will be on Sunday, May 4, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Life Impact Thrift and More, 7310 Moores Road, Brandywine, Maryland. Join us to nourish your Mind, Body and Spirit. Family fun for all ages. Get ready for a day filled with fun, learning, and delicious food. This in-person event celebrates the importance of urban farming. Discover innovative farming techniques, taste fresh organic produce, and connect with local farmers. Whether you’re a seasoned gardener or just starting out, there is something for everyone at this festival. Do not miss out on the chances to explore the world of urban farming and be inspired to grow your own food. Mark your calendars and join us at the National Urban Farm Festival.

“A Fairway to Help” Golf Tournament on May 19, 2025

Registration 7:30 a.m. Shotgun start 8:30 a.m.

Lake Presidential, 3151 Presidential Golf Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

Register for New Horizons’ 12th Annual golf tournament.

Proceeds benefit participants with disabilities. Funds raised provide necessary skill development, job training, and employment services to help those we serve to lead fulfilling and productive lives.

We invite you to consider sponsoring or participating in the tournament. Whether you’re a seasoned golfer or a beginner, this event promises a day of fun and camaraderie on the greens, all for a great cause.

By joining us, you not only enjoy a wonderful day of golf but also make a mean-

ingful difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities. Your support helps empower them with the skills and opportunities they need to thrive.

Jerry’s Seafood has once again kindly agreed to provide delectable food at the turn. We look forward to seeing you there!

COMMUNITY

2025 One Maryland One Book Selection Announced

Marylanders throughout the State Will Read *Kin: Rooted in Hope* by Carole Boston Weatherford; book includes art by her son Jeffery Boston Weatherford

By SARAH WEISSMAN
Maryland Humanities

BALTIMORE (March 6, 2025)—Maryland Humanities is thrilled to announce “Kin: Rooted in Hope” by Carole Boston Weatherford as the 2025 One Maryland One Book Selection. The poetry collection from the Maryland author includes art by Jeffery Boston Weatherford.

A combination of history, art, and personal genealogy depicts the author’s search for her family tree, which leads her to ancestors who were some of Maryland’s founders. Through art and poetic voice, Carole and Jeffery Boston Weatherford impart their family’s lives and offer a view into Maryland’s African American history.

“‘Kin: Rooted in Hope’ is a family affair, a mother-son collaboration on a family saga dating back to colonial Maryland,” says Carole Boston Weatherford. “Kin conjures the past, reclaims lost ancestral narratives and brings us to the realization that knowing your history is generational wealth,” Weatherford continues.

“As a Marylander, I am so proud that Kin’s selection as the 2025 One Maryland One Book will further amplify our

ancestors’ voices. Their story of bondage and freedom—a history shared by many African Americans—is the American story.”

The collection weaves the personas of the Weatherfords’ ancestors, from experiences on the Wye House Plantation in Talbot County through the Civil War and into the twentieth century. Maryland locations feature prominently in the book, many the subject of their own poems, including the Chesapeake Bay, the port of Oxford, Fort McHenry, and the Wye River, where the Wye House plantation sits.

“Kin: Rooted in Hope” is a Coretta Scott King Honor Book and a Boston Globe-Horn Book Poetry Award Winner. A selection committee consisting of Maryland teachers, scholars, librarians, writers, booksellers, and community workers chose the book for One Maryland One Book under the theme of “What We Collect / What We Tell.”

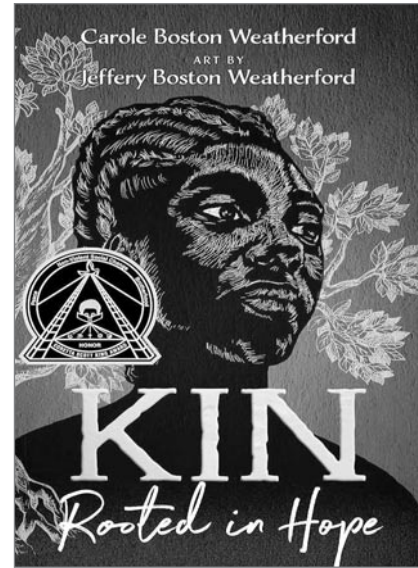
Maryland Humanities looks forward to staging programming that invites readers to explore histories of African Americans, of Maryland, and their families. Maryland Humanities will announce our 2025 Author Tour details this summer. A calendar of free public events, including our annual Author

Tour and VIP Reception, will be available online. To keep up with this year’s One Maryland One Book you can follow us on all social media platforms @mdhumanities, sign up for our Literature eNewsletter, or with a monthly donation you can become a Humanities Hero and receive special OMOB perks.

“I couldn’t be more excited about ‘Kin: Rooted in Hope’ as our 2025 One Maryland One Book pick,” says Lindsey Baker, CEO of Maryland Humanities. “This book does exactly what our theme asks of us—it pieces together history, memory, and loss to reclaim stories that deserve to be told. Carole Boston Weatherford and Jeffery Boston Weatherford don’t just bring the past to life; they remind us why it matters today. With deep Maryland roots, Kin is a powerful, moving, and necessary read, and I can’t wait for people across the state to experience it.”

Carole Boston Weatherford recently received the 2025 Children’s Literature Legacy Award from the American Library Association. She holds a Newberry Honor and Nonfiction Award from the Children’s Book Guild.

One Maryland One Book is a program of Maryland Center for the Book at Maryland Humanities, presented in



PHOTOS COURTESY MARYLAND HUMANITIES

Left: a grayscale version of the front cover of *Kin: Rooted in Hope*. Right: Author Carole Boston Weatherford

partnership with The National Endowment for the Humanities and Howard County Library System. One Maryland One Book 2024 is sponsored by The Institute of Museum and Library Services via the Maryland State Library Agency, and other funders that may be announced later.

Maryland Humanities creates and supports bold experiences that explore and elevate our shared stories to connect people, enhance lives, and enrich communities. For more information, visit www.mdhumanities.org. Maryland Humanities is generously supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities; the State of Maryland; the Citizens of Baltimore County; private foundations;

corporations; small businesses; and individual donors. Connect with Maryland Humanities on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, LinkedIn, and YouTube.

Through our Maryland Center for the Book program, Maryland Humanities created One Maryland One Book (OMOB) to bring together diverse people in communities across the state through the shared experience of reading the same book. We invite readers to participate in book-centered discussions and related programs at public libraries, high schools, colleges, museums, bookstores, and community and senior centers throughout the state. Connect with Maryland Center for the Book on Facebook.

While Movie Theaters Close Nationwide, Maryland’s Independent Theaters Survive

By ADAM HUDACEK
Capital News Service

Driving through Maryland, you might come across an iconic sight: a neon-lined, art deco facade standing out amongst mundane downtown storefronts. The posters flanking its double-wide doors aren’t showing the familiar blockbusters of the day—they’re advertising indie circuit flicks and 35mm prints dug out from basement boxes.

It’s an independent movie theater, part of a group of cinematic safe havens beating the national trends of declining theatrical profits.

Since a wave of pandemic-era theater closures that began five years ago, the United States has lost nearly 5,000 theater screens, about 12% of the pre-pandemic footprint. Over half went dark between 2022 and 2023, the worst single-year slump in at least 30 years. Simultaneously, streaming services soared in popularity while traditional film studios were forced to delay theatrical content on the release calendar, or abandon exclusive theatrical releases.

Even when theaters reopened as lockdown restrictions loosened, national ticket sales failed to recover. In 2024, cinemas only sold about two-thirds of the number of tickets they did in 2019. Average ticket prices have risen from \$9.16 in

2019 to \$11.31 last year, but that hasn’t been enough to offset shrinking attendance.

Despite this industry-wide decline, many of Maryland’s independent theaters have survived.

Unlike major theater chains, like Cinemark, Regal or AMC, independent theaters have the freedom to mix up their programming slate and show older, limited release or rare films. Those showings, which are labeled as repertory films, are powering the independent theater industry, said Todd Hitchcock, executive director of the AFI Silver Theatre and Culture Center.

“We saw much quicker, stronger return for our repertory programming,” Hitchcock said. “That just speaks to the unique value proposition of those [films] and the dedicated cinephile showing up.”

Hitchcock runs one of many iconic film venues across the state, a list that includes Baltimore’s Senator Theater, Charles Theater and the 110-year-old Parkway Theatre, as well as the Frostburg Palace Cinema, Greenbelt Cinema and Bengies Drive-In Theater, which boasts America’s largest theater screen.

Each theater features programming that differs from the traditional first-run exhibition model. The AFI Silver Theater is well known for its various festivals, like the AFI European Union Film Showcase and AFI Latin American Film Festival, which

reached record high attendance last year.

This diversification is out of necessity. Outside of exclusive 70mm presentations, like those of The Brutalist and Oppenheimer, Hitchcock said that many first-run releases have faltered.

“A film that 10 years ago might have played eight weeks here is only playing four weeks,” Hitchcock said. “For the right film, people are clearly both getting the awareness and the motivation to see it while we have it on screen, but it’s not applied consistently across the board with everything that’s coming out.”

It doesn’t help that the pandemic accelerated the gradual decline of major studio releases. In 2024, major studios released a little over half the number of films they did at their 30-year peak in 2006. Minor studios’ outputs have boomed, but those films typically release fewer theaters and collect lower grosses. To make matters worse, prolonged Writer’s Guild of America and Screen Actors Guild strikes in 2023 halted an already disrupted film production schedule.

At Greenbelt Cinema, admissions at the theater have fallen about 50% since the pandemic, executive director Caitlin McGrath said.

“It’s not a great time to be running a movie theater,” McGrath said. “It means that we have to shift the pieces of the pie so we are just working

more on our contributed streams of revenue versus earned.”

For the non-profit Greenbelt Cinema, that means relying less on concessions and ticket sales and relying more on donations and grants. It also means diversified programming, to a further extent than many other independent theaters across the state. Greenbelt Cinema has shown special events like the U.S. presidential debate and added engagement-focused screenings, like a dance documentary paired with a Q&A and workshop with the film’s subject and director.

McGrath wants to offer moviegoers an experience that’s different from what they can find on streaming services or at larger theater chains. Although Greenbelt Cinema’s recovery is far from complete, the theater remains open, a better fate than other exhibitors have faced, most notably Washington’s famed E Street Cinema earlier this month.

In fiscal year 2024, the AFI Silver Theater reported attendance comparable to pre-pandemic levels, but Hitchcock stressed that without a significant amount of films in the release pipeline, the theater’s recovery—and the recovery of other independent theaters in the region—could be short-lived.

“It’s not like we get all the way back and then everything is permanently fixed,” Hitchcock said. “There’s still ups and downs.”

Behavior from A1

The recent ramp-up included dozens of professional development days in the summer of 2023 for faculty and staff, who then introduced “community-building circles” where students and teachers can discuss issues within each school.

The transition shifted the focus on discipline to a more situational approach, where troubled students are encouraged to talk their way through problems and repair what was harmed, whether it is another student’s feelings or a physical object.

The new approach appears to have created a calmer atmosphere in the county’s schools. During the 2022–23 school year, 432 violent incidents were reported in the district—while in 2023–24, there were only 285, according to Wallace, who now serves as chief safety and academic officer for grades 9–12 at Worcester County Public Schools.

There hasn’t been a single fight reported in the fall semester at Pocomoke High School, according to Rayne.

Pocomoke High School was not the same place a decade ago. Wallace said the hallways were full of conflicts, and a student

even punched a teacher in the face in 2010.

Rasheeda Collier, who graduated in 2009 and is now a restorative practices administrator at Pocomoke, laughed when asked how the school environment could have changed if these practices had been implemented when she attended the school. Collier recalled a different method of conflict resolution.

Suspension rates were high, and students weren’t given the chance to explain their actions or discuss their deeper-rooted issues leading to misbehavior.

“It was a different time,” Collier said. “They felt like suspension was more effective in punishment—versus now, we’re looking at research and we’re looking at data and we’re looking at the outcomes. Suspension is not effective for children. Restoring, rebuilding, repairing, promoting empathy, compassion—that’s a more effective purpose than suspension.”

Conflict and consequences

Collier now runs the LIFT—Learning Interventions for Transformation—classroom, where students who misbehave are referred. There, they discuss what they did wrong and how to move past it.

Suspensions are now rare at Pocomoke High School. Instead, students work with Collier in the LIFT classroom to discuss why they acted a certain way.

Students also set goals to help them break their pattern of negative behavior, Rayne said. These strategies can include self-regulation or self-control. Students check in with Collier for a period of time depending on the severity of their actions, and keeping those students in class is a priority.

“We’re not doing hardcore punishment,” Collier said. “We’re doing a rebuilding process with them, which is important because [students] feel safe.”

Collier said these practices appear to prevent students from making the same mistakes twice. Pocomoke had 50% fewer students with multiple referrals for bad behavior from September through December than it did in the same period a year earlier, Rayne said.

“Our students are still able to learn, and they’re actually able to grow in the area of social-emotional strategies,” Rayne said.

The school also offers conflict resolution circles—or restorative conferences—for students when

they are involved in verbal or physical altercations between other students or teachers. These conflict resolution circles are led by a trained mediator and allow both parties to reflect on their roles in the problem and how they can move on from it.

Snow Hill High School junior Dai’Jon Johnson participated in a restorative conference after an altercation with a teacher. During the conversation, the pair realized their argument was a misunderstanding. They talked their way through their issues.

“I got what I had to say off my chest and the teacher did, too, and we all hugged at the end,” Johnson said. “It was cool. ... I feel like it really helps you see the other side of people.”

Building community

Restorative practices involve much more than a reimagined approach to school discipline. They also get students and teachers talking in hopes of preventing disciplinary problems.

Classrooms use “community-building circles” at least once a week to help students and teachers find common ground with differing emotions and experiences.

“Through positive relationship building, you build stronger character in your students,” Wal-

lace said.

The circles offer students and teachers an opportunity to share their thoughts on the question of the day and interact through active listening.

“At first, I wasn’t too keen on it,” said Stevens, the Pocomoke senior. “I actually really do think it does help [keep] the classroom together, especially with our small classroom sizes in Pocomoke.”

She said students learn more about their peers’ personalities through discussion questions such as: “What superpower would you want to have?” or “What are you doing for winter break?” These simple questions open space for students to connect.

“I like knowing more about the people around me,” Stevens said.

Kanye Reid, a junior at Pocomoke, said the circles offer a safe place for those who often don’t speak up in class.

“For more personal questions as well, if you want to share, it offers a space ... so you’re not just stuck suffering in silence,” Reid said.

Teachers also benefit from community-building circles and discuss personal stories and facts they otherwise wouldn’t have the

chance to share. The circles humanize teachers and help students see their instructors as individuals who have their own set of passions and hardships, according to Snow Hill High School government teacher David “D.J.” Draus.

“It pays off down the road when you go back to being a teacher and you’re asking [students] to do some challenging things ... they don’t want to do as learners,” Draus said. “You have to basically ask them to trust you ... and you can’t just build trust in students by being a teacher of content.”

Criticism and implementation

The use of restorative practices is growing in the nation’s schools—but not without some criticism.

The National Center for Education Statistics reported 59% of schools in their subject pool utilized restorative practices in 2022, up from 42% four years earlier. Parents Defending Education, a nonprofit designed to “keep politics out of education,” reported 1,474 school districts nationwide participate in the

COMMENTARY

Marian Wright Edelman
*Founder and President Emerita,
 Children's Defense Fund*



ChildWatch:

Remembering Selma

Sixty years ago, on Sunday, March 7, 1965, John Lewis and Reverend Hosea Williams set out on a nonviolent march with a group of 600 men, women, young people, and children headed from Selma, Alabama, to the state capital in Montgomery. They were seeking the right to vote and protesting the tragic death of Jimmie Lee Jackson, a 26-year-old Black church deacon and military veteran who had died February 26 from injuries he received eight days earlier when he, his mother, sister, and 82-year-old grandfather attended a nonviolent voting rights demonstration that was attacked by law enforcement officials. Jackson was beaten and shot by an Alabama state trooper while trying to shield his mother from a police nightstick. As the marchers left Selma's Brown Chapel AME Church on the morning of March 7

and headed to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge, they were also immediately met by lawless state and local law enforcement officials and brutally attacked. The televised images of "Bloody Sunday" and the savage beatings of the marchers—including John Lewis, whose skull was fractured—were a pivotal moment in the Civil Rights Movement and in America's struggle to become America.

Two weeks later, I traveled from Mississippi to Alabama to join John Lewis, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and about 25,000 fellow citizens to walk the 54 miles from Selma to Montgomery and complete that March. This time we were safer thanks to Federal District Court Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr.'s order that we had a right to peaceful protest, and with National Guard protection. And we were buoyed by

President Johnson's March 15th Special Message to a Joint Session of Congress, "The American Promise," calling on Congress to pass what became the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

In that speech President Johnson said: "This was the first nation in the history of the world to be founded with a purpose. The great phrases of that purpose still sound in every American heart, North and South: 'All men are created equal'—'government by consent of the governed'—'give me liberty or give me death'... Those words are a promise to every citizen that he shall share in the dignity of man." He continued: "To apply any other test—to deny a man his hopes because of his color or race, his religion or the place of his birth—is not only to do injustice, it is to deny America and to dishonor the dead who gave their lives for American freedom." He said on the "issue of equal rights," "should we defeat every enemy, should we double our wealth and conquer the stars, and still be unequal to this issue, then we will have failed as a people and as a nation." The address is a profound contrast to the message of today's President.

As Dr. King spoke to the crowd at the end of the exhilarating Selma to Montgomery March, like President Johnson, he reminded us that the work was not yet done. Dr. King said: "Let us therefore continue our triumphant march to the realization of the American dream. Let us march on segregated housing until every ghetto or social and economic depression

dissolves, and Negroes and whites live side by side in decent, safe, and sanitary housing. Let us march on segregated schools until every vestige of segregated and inferior education becomes a thing of the past... Let us march on poverty until no American parent has to skip a meal so that their children may eat... Let us march on ballot boxes until we send to our city councils, state legislatures, and the United States Congress men who will not fear to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God."

Sixty years later, instead of making sure no child's hopes will be denied in America because of color, race, religion, or place of birth, the same categories and more are being used in new ways to try to erase and exclude. Racial inequities in education, housing, and other measures still loom large, but face new prohibitions on attempts to acknowledge them, study them, or correct them. Voting rights remain under attack, and voting rights protections, including those created in the 1965 Voting Rights Act, have continued to be weakened. And we remain in desperate need of more leaders who will not fear to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God. But the courage that propelled the Selma marchers forward in the face of brutal systemic resistance must keep pushing all Americans closer to the day our nation finally realizes President Johnson's American promise and Dr. King's American dream.

—March 7, 2025

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

60 Years Ago, the Brutality of Bloody Sunday Struck the American Conscience "Like Psychological Lightning"

"At times history and fate meet at a single time in a single place to shape a turning point that is man's unending search for freedom. So it was at Lexington and Concord. So it was a century ago at Appomattox. So it was last week in Selma, Alabama."

—President Lyndon Johnson

The headline on the front page of the New York Times, 60 years ago [last] week, read, "Alabama police use gas and clubs to rout Negroes."

The eighth paragraph: "John Lewis, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,

was among the injured. He was admitted to the Good Samaritan Hospital with a possible skull fracture."

The Selma Voting Rights Campaign had been going on for more than nine weeks at that point. Day after day, Black citizens, tried to enter the Dallas County Courthouse to register to vote. Day after day, Sheriff Jim Clark and his deputies blocked their path. Hundreds were arrested, and many were beaten. But the campaign had, so far, failed to attract the widespread sympathy of the nation.

"The world doesn't know this happened because you didn't photograph it," Rev. Martin Luther King,

Jr., told Life magazine's Flip Schulke, who'd put down his camera to assist a child who'd been knocked to the ground. "I'm not being cold-blooded about it, but it is so much more important for you to take a picture of us getting beaten up than for you to be another person joining in the fray."

On March 7, 1965, photographers and network television captured the violence on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and changed the course of American history.

At 9:30 p.m., ABC interrupted the broadcast of Judgment at Nuremberg, an acclaimed 1961 film that explores Germans' individual and collective responsibility for the Holocaust, to show the brutal footage.

"The juxtaposition struck like psychological lightning in American homes," journalists Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff wrote in The Race Beat, an account of the role newspapers and television played in the Civil Rights Movement.

Photographs of an unconscious Amelia Boynton—one showing a trooper wielding a billy club above her, another with a fellow marcher trying to lift her off the ground—were splashed across the front pages of newspapers and magazine covers not just in the United States but around the world.

On March 9, President Lyndon Johnson released a statement "deploring the brutality with which a number of Negro citizens of Alabama were treated when they sought to dramatize their deep and sincere interest in attaining the precious right to vote."

On March 15, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was introduced in the U.S. Senate, jointly sponsored by

majority leader Mike Mansfield, a Democrat, and minority leader Everett Dirksen, a Republican. President Johnson signed it on August 6, with Lewis, King, Rosa Parks and other civil rights leaders standing alongside him.

For decades, the Voting Rights Act enjoyed the full support of both parties. But around the moment Black voting rates started to reach parity with white rates, the Supreme Court in 2013 gutted the Act to remove a provision that voting changes in states with a history of suppression must be approved by the Justice Department. Subsequent Supreme Court decisions have further weakened the Act, and states have rushed to enact racially-motivated restrictions on voting.

[Last] week, Rep. Terri Sewell—whose district includes Selma—reintroduced the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Among other provisions the legislation would require federal review of specific voting practices known to be used to discriminate against voters of color and restore voters' ability to challenge racial discrimination in court.

When urging Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act in 1965, President Johnson said, "Rarely, at any time, does an issue lay bare the secret heart of America itself. Rarely are we met with a challenge, not to our growth or abundance, our welfare or security, but to the values and the purpose and meaning of our nation."

Sixty years later, we face that challenge once again.

—March 7, 2025

Local Non-Profit SAFEQ Partners With Truist Bank to Deliver Financial Literacy Training to Landover's Underserved Youth

By PRESS OFFICER
SAFEQ

In partnership with Truist Bank's Beyond the Field Financial Literacy Training Program, Student Athletes for Education Opportunities (SAFEQ), Inc., a longstanding non-profit in the Washington, D.C. area, has developed an initiative to train Washington area middle through high school student athletes in how to navigate the sports money management arena, from early branding and name, image, likeness (NIL) sponsorships to semi-professional and professional careers and sponsorships, to career transitions. Starting

with the Kenmoor Middle School in Landover, Prince George's County, SAFEQ and Truist will launch the effort on Friday, March 14, 2025 in the school gym from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Initially, sixty student athletes from among a cross section of its enrollees have been hand-picked by the school for participation.

The event will comprise an afternoon of learning and fun-filled activities for the students, including a special learning session on financial literacy, money management, and generational wealth, by Truist Bank's Latoya Gurley, who heads up the Bank's Beyond the Field community

outreach literacy program; interactive games; a pizza party; and giveaways. SAFEQ's president and CEO, J. Laffeyette "Coach" Carter will speak with the kids about NIL opportunities, bullying, the influence of hip hop and how to position themselves to take advantage of opportunities in life. With the support of the Centers for Disease Control and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, both of which have donated an array of technology devices to support this effort, "Coach" Carter will engage the kids in a variety of related-interactive activities in which these devices will be awarded to the winner. Commenting on the initiative,

Coach Carter explains, "We are committed to enhancing not only the academic success of these kids, but also helping them learn some of the critical details about sports careers, early on, including the pressures and challenges they will face..."

Founded in 1990 by former UDC All-American linebacker J. Laffeyette "Coach" Carter, Student Athletes for Educational Opportunities, Inc. (SAFEQ) began as a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization, and over the past 34 years, has since expanded its programs and services into Montgomery and Prince George's Counties and Brooklyn New York. Carter began his jour-

enhancing the daily lives and boosting the educational and career opportunities of student athletes.

The organization was recently recognized and awarded a check for \$2,000 by the DMV's Eastern Automotive Group and WJLA-TV news for its work with Washington area youth.

You can learn more about SAFEQ and its programs by visiting our website at www.safeq.org.

Behavior from A3

practices.

Parents Defending Education claims restorative practices can lead to a lack of accountability for students involved in violent or disruptive behavior. The organization also raised concerns the practices could prioritize "feelings" over actual consequences, which could halt learning.

The Delmarva Parent Teacher Coalition, a Salisbury, Maryland, parent-teacher group, agrees restorative practices help create excuses for a child's bad behavior.

"Restorative Practices does reduce the number of suspensions, expulsions, arrests

and juvenile referrals not because it's effective, but because it's designed to downplay, minimize and prevent reporting in the name of 'social justice,'" editors wrote in a 2024 article called, "Why School 'Restorative Practices' are Destructive."

Members of the Delmarva Parent Teacher Coalition declined an interview request.

However, supporters of restorative practices said these criticisms may not be enough to discredit the work done at Pocomoke High School and other Worcester schools.

Wallace said for restorative practices to work, all students and staff must be on board. "It's worth the time," Wallace said.

Investing in students to provide conflict

resolution strategies and promote community will help kids focus on staying in the classroom, she said. When conflict rates drop, students spend more time learning.

"Those are hours and hours of time our school administrators and our teachers got back with kids, and hours of time our kids got back in instruction," Wallace said.

The talk-heavy approach intrinsic to restorative practices comes naturally to some, Rayne said. She said through ample training sessions and community investments, any educator can come to adopt—and appreciate—restorative practices.

"That's what happy humans do," Rayne said. "We're restorative."

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
 P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
 Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
 Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260
 Email: pgpost@gmail.com
 Contents © 2025, The Prince George's Post

Publisher/Senior Editor Legusta Floyd	Editor Lisa Duan
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Administrative Assistant/ Billing Julie Volosin
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Web Manager Kyler Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151. Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790. Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20773.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Did We Make a Mistake Starting My Wife's Social Security Now?

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 hope we haven't made a mistake! My wife just applied for her Social Security benefit. She was born in May 1962, and the estimated amount of her benefit is \$1280/month. Her work income last year was \$5,616; however, mine was about \$65,000. I do not plan on taking my benefit until the age of 70 in July of 2027.

My worry now is about the penalty for earning too much. We figured that since her income was so low, we wouldn't have to worry about that penalty, so we signed her up, and then it hit me: what if they look at MY income, especially since our tax return is filed as Married Filing Jointly. Do we have a problem, or are they just going to look at HER income to determine if there is a penalty? I hope I haven't messed this up. Also, I think I read that any penalty you are assessed for earning too much is returned to you once you reach FRA; is that true? **Signed: Uncomfortable Senior Citizen**

Dear Uncomfortable Senior: First, let me ease your anxiety—you haven't "messed this up." While it's true that your income will be included when the IRS determines how much of your wife's Social Security benefits are taxable, changing your IRS filing status is usually not wise. However, considering your combined income and your "married/jointly" IRS filing status, up to 85% of the SS benefits your wife receives during the tax year will be included as part of your overall taxable income as a married couple. Your wife's monthly SS benefit is about \$1,280, so about \$13,000 (annually) will be included in your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) when you file your taxes. You can have income tax withheld from your wife's SS benefit by filing IRS Form W-4V at your local SS office (you can have 7%, 10%, 12% or 22% withheld). Note your wife's tax obligation for this year will be less because she will not get SS benefits for all of 2025.

The other thing you are concerned about is whether your income will be counted when determining if your wife will be subject to Social Security's "Annual Earnings Test (AET)," and the answer to that is "no." At her current earnings level (about \$5,600), your wife is well below the annual earnings limit (\$23,400 for 2025) for those collecting early Social Security benefits. So, the AET will not apply and will not reduce your wife's monthly Social Security benefit. FYI, if her earnings did exceed the annual earnings limit, it is true that some of the resulting penalty would be recovered after she reaches her full retirement age (FRA) of 67.

Note the distinction between "taxation of SS benefits," and the "annual earnings test" for those collecting early benefits. Taxation of benefits is always based on your joint income when filing married/jointly, but the Annual Earnings Test (AET) looks only at your wife's personal work earnings until she reaches her FRA.

As I expect you already know, by claiming now (at age 62+), your wife's monthly SS retirement benefit will be permanently reduced (by about 26%). Until you later claim your SS benefit, your wife will receive her reduced personal SS retirement amount. But, when you claim, her benefit amount will be reassessed to see if she is also entitled to an incremental amount as your wife. If her SS entitlement at her FRA (even though she claimed at 62+) is less than 50% of your FRA entitlement, then her benefit will increase. However, she will not get the full 50% of your FRA entitlement because she claimed her own SS retirement benefit before her FRA (more likely, she will get about 34% of your FRA entitlement).

In the end, you really did not make a mistake by filing for your wife's Social Security to start now. By the time you personally apply at age 70, your wife will have collected about \$46,000 in Social Security benefits which, I'm sure, will be helpful. And only a relatively modest amount of income tax will be paid on her Social Security benefits.

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

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

Readout of Governor Moore's Attendance at the Maryland Department of Labor's Virtual Workshop for Federal Workers and Contractors

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (March 5, 2025)—On March 5, Governor Wes Moore attended Seeking New Opportunities After Work as a Federal Employee or Contractor, a virtual workshop hosted by the Maryland Department of Labor's Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning.

The workshop is a free, 3-hour, expert-led session for individuals who are impacted by the federal transition and is designed to provide assistance, strategy, and confidence to transition into the next stage

of their career. The event is part of the Moore-Miller Administration's action to support Maryland's federal workforce and contractors.

To open the workshop, Governor Moore provided remarks to reinforce and uplift the administration's commitment to supporting federal workers. The governor thanked attendees for choosing public service and expressed solidarity despite the uncertainty that surrounds this unprecedented time.

More than 250 individuals registered to attend today's workshop. Maryland Department of Labor Professional Outplace-

ment Assistance Center Director Suja Joseph acted as primary facilitator.

The Maryland Department of Labor will continue to present Seeking New Opportunities After Work as a Federal Employee or Contractor weekly on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to noon. Workshop topics include understanding and translating skills to the private sector landscape; providing guidance and tips on applying for state jobs; career and skills assessments; effective job search strategies; interview preparation; resume reinvention; networking for success; and more.

Kenneth Kelly, CEO of Strativia, Named as an Honoree for the Washington Business Journal 2025 Diversity in Business Awards

By MONICA BISCOE
Strativia

LARGO, Md. (March 5, 2025)—Kenneth Kelly, CEO of Strativia, has been recognized as an honoree for the Washington Business Journal's (WBJ) 2025 Diversity in Business Awards. These awards recognize leaders of color who champion business excellence and foster workforce diversity.

"It is a tremendous honor to be recognized by the Washington Business Journal with this award," said Kenneth Kelly, President and CEO of Strativia. "This accomplishment reflects the dedication of our outstanding team, whose hard work

and commitment have established Strativia as a leading provider of consulting, technology, and professional services."

Since founding Strativia in 2006, Kelly has transformed the company into a powerhouse in government contracting, securing key contracts with federal agencies, including the Department of Energy (DOE), the Department of Commerce (DOC), the Department of the Army, and the Department of the Navy, among others. With roughly 300 employees operating in 31 states and internationally, Strativia continues to uphold a high standard of excellence in professional services.

Apart from achieving business success, Kelly is profoundly dedicated to

giving back to the community that shaped him. He actively spearheads philanthropic initiatives, including the Prince George's County High School Shark Tank Business Plan Competition, 100 Black Men of Prince George's County, and Covenant House. Under his leadership, Strativia has also received the Governor's Citation from the State of Maryland for its integrity and excellence.

Honorees for the WBJ 2025 Diversity in Business Awards are chosen based on their professional achievements, community leadership, and philanthropy. Kelly and the other awardees will be honored on April 24, 2025.

University of Maryland Extension Workforce Development Internship

By PRESS OFFICER
University of Maryland

This Spring, the University of Maryland Extension will hire the fourth Cohort for "Creating Leadership and Professional Development Through Extension Internships," Summer 2025.

The University of Maryland Extension received a grant on April 15, 2021. The grant was endowed by the United States Department of Agriculture and sponsored by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to create a summer internship program that will provide meaningful and technical skills to students at underserved institutions, community colleges, or non-Land Grant institutions to train a future agricultural workforce.

University of Maryland Extension (UME) created a summer internship program with seven interns annually paired with competent mentors; interns will gain hands-on experience and participate in

leadership and professional development training. The project will address the eight core competencies in career readiness. Along with professional development and one-on-one pairing with a faculty mentor, interns will have networking opportunities with private industry professionals. The experience will be a ten-week program in which interns work full-time.

The objectives of the project are to 1. Provide experiential learning opportunities in Extension and agricultural research to undergraduate students, including those at community colleges and underserved institutions in Maryland, through creating a summer internship; 2. Develop internal hiring and mentorship skills in UME Faculty; 3) Increase student interns' career-readiness and leadership skills; and 4. Increase the number of students from these institutions continuing their education and entering the agricultural workforce.

The Application for Summer Internship

2025 is open. For more information and to apply, visit <https://go.umd.edu/extensioninternships>

Program Contacts:

Shannon Dill, Extension Educator - AgFS
410-822-1244 | sdill@umd.edu
Andrea Franchini, Program Coordinator
301-226-7416 | andrea1@umd.edu
Ms. Shannon Dill, PI, is the Project Director and oversees the entire project. Co-PI's include Dr. Nicole Fiorellino. The project runs from April 15, 2021, to April 14, 2026.

This work is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture, AFRI Competitive Grant Workforce Development, project MD-UME-09312.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Esta institución ofrece igualdad de oportunidades.

Maryland Clean Energy Effort Leaves Door Open for Natural Gas

By ADRIANA NAVARRO and
RACHEL MCCREA
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (March 7, 2025)—Environmental advocates are fighting an energy bill that Democratic leaders say will lower utility bills and further the state's clean energy initiative.

If it is passed, the legislation would make it easier to build new natural gas plants in the state—a move that has frustrated environmentalists typically allied with the party.

"I know that people are frustrated about prices. It is front and center," said Senate President Bill Ferguson, a Democrat from Baltimore City and sponsor of the bill. "We're going to have to make some tough choices that make some of our friends unhappy, but it's about making sure that our constituents are served with lower bills in a way that still recognizes that we're in a climate crisis."

The Next Generation Energy Act aims to lower utility bills by building new energy projects in the state, requiring new projects to be cleaner than coal or oil. These projects include power plants and energy storage,

according to the office of Del. C.T. Wilson, a co-sponsor of the bill.

The bill sets up a procurement process for new dispatchable and nuclear energy projects. Dispatchable energy—any type of energy that can be adjusted to fit the needs of the power grid—is often used in reference to both renewable and nonrenewable sources of energy.

But the main concern that brought climate activists to pack the committee room at a recent hearing was a portion of the bill that could pave the way for the construction of new natural gas plants as Maryland approaches emission reductions and clean energy deadlines in the 2030s and 40s.

"Even though the dispatchable energy technically in the bill as outlined, says it can be battery storage or gas," said Brittany Baker, the Maryland director of the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. However, "because of some of the other provisions in the bill, it's way more likely that that ... the project that would win, would be gas plants rather than battery storage projects."

Natural gas is considered cleaner than coal and oil but still contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, according to the U.S.

Energy Information Administration. Environmental advocates criticized new natural gas as expensive and bad for both the climate and public health at an online news conference in February.

Ferguson says that the hope for the bill, if passed, is a "shorter-term impact [on utility bills] that will be marginal but a longer-term impact that will be dramatic."

At the hearing, bill sponsors spoke of the urgent need to lower utility bills by building more energy generation in the state. They highlighted the supply and demand issues that have been plaguing the regional power grid, and Maryland's reliance on imported energy.

"Our top priority must be to expedite the construction of new, cleaner energy in Maryland," Ferguson said during his testimony.

But opponents to the bill hold firm that new natural gas was antithetical to Maryland's climate goals. They're doubtful about how effective it will be in tackling rising utility costs.

"The utility bill hikes that we're seeing right now are not related to supply and demand issues. Those won't be coming until June," Baker said. "Once we do see that piece, the solution is not building out a gas plant, because at least in the estimate that

Energy from A5

I'm aware of, that generation won't even start coming on the grid for five or six years. A battery storage project could start coming onto the grid in less than two."

The timeline, Ferguson told Capital News Service, depends on who bids for the dispatchable energy, so there is not currently a known timeline on when customers could see an impact on their utility bill.

The bill also states that any new natural gas plant would have to be able to convert to hydrogen or zero-emissions biofuel and use carbon capture in the future. However, Baker said green hydrogen "has not proven itself to be scalable."

"There will be some uses for green hydrogen in our clean energy future, but it will never be for powering power plants or providing day-to-day heating requirements for homes and communities," she said.

So why are utility bills so high?

Utility bill prices have soared in Maryland, and have been on the minds of lawmakers and advocates alike this session.

Bill sponsors emphasized regional problems during the recent hearing, saying the state needs to address supply and demand issues to promote energy reliability and affordability.

But many of the issues driving up utility bills right now are more localized and immediate, experts say. They point to a cold winter,

rising distribution rates, and other factors.

Lawyer David Lapp told CNS that most of the energy bills being heard in the General Assembly can only impact utility bills in future years. Lapp is the state's People's Counsel, appointed by the state attorney general and charged with representing the interests of residential utility customers.

"The costs that are driving up customer bills today are not impacted by ... these bills to promote generation in the state," Lapp said. "The high bills right now are largely the result of increased consumption because of cold weather and, for many Maryland customers, distribution rates that have largely increased in recent years."

Temperatures in Maryland dipped dramatically in late January when a polar vortex veered into the region.

He pointed to rising costs of the delivery of gas and electricity—not a rising cost of fuel—as a major source of rising energy costs. He said that distribution rates have been on the rise for years among energy companies serving Maryland, including Baltimore Gas and Electric, Columbia Gas, Delmarva Power and Pepco.

Distribution rates for those companies have all gone up in recent years, according to the Office of People's Counsel.

"You could have somebody who's literally a mile down the road and paying significantly less than half of what (other) customers are paying," Lapp said.

Chuck McDade, a senior communications specialist for Pepco, attributed recent utility bill spikes to the cold weather as well as other current impacts including changes in rates. Other cost adjustments could also play a part, he said.

The commission approves rate increases in proceedings similar to a court's, said Communications Director for Maryland's Public Service Commission Tori Leonard. That includes a public hearing.

However, Lapp stressed that while the commission may give approvals, Pepco still holds responsibility for submitting the rate changes.

"It is true that the Public Service Commission has approved those," Lapp said. "But it is also true that Potomac Edison hasn't come in and asked for higher rates, and we're not aware of any data showing any significant differences in performance of Potomac Edison versus Pepco."

"They're monopolies, which is why they should be heavily regulated," Lapp said of utility companies. "Are regulators doing a good job keeping those prices down is one of the relevant questions here."

Paul Pinsky, director of the Maryland Energy Administration, introduced another possible reason for high utility bills in a column for The Baltimore Sun—local utility companies replacing functional pipes to make a profit.

"I wish ... we could look to one source and say, 'this is the problem,'" he told CNS, "but I think it's more complicated than that."

EarthTalk® Q&A Why Is the Great Salt Lake Shrinking & Can We Save It?

By Mahnoor Mazhar Iqbal | March 5, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:

Why is Great Salt Lake shrinking so much and can it be saved?

—E.T., via email

Utah's Great Salt Lake is the largest saltwater lake in the Western Hemisphere. It is a remnant of Lake Bonneville, which dried up 14,000 years ago due to extreme drought. It contributes \$1.9 billion annually to Utah's economy and provides 7,700 jobs. Over 10 million birds rely on this lake for their survival.

Apart from natural fluctuations, the Great Salt Lake's water level has dropped continuously since 1870, mainly due to the desiccation of the lake and the diversion of upstream water. The Great Salt Lake gets most of its water from the Bear, Weber and Jordan rivers, but now a significant portion of water is being diverted for agricultural and industrial use. Climate change and increase in temperature are also contributing to the Great Salt Lake's desiccation. Due to temperature increases, the rate of evaporation has also increased, impacting the salinity of the lake. Agriculture dominates water use by

74 percent, nine percent by mineral extraction, nine percent by industrial use and eight percent by evaporation.

"The lake has a lot of social and economic relevance for the region and Utah," says Siiri Bi-galke, a climate scientist at Portland State University who has studied recent volume levels of Great Salt Lake. Indeed, the cost of the Great Salt Lake drying—including loss of mineral extraction, landscape mitigation costs, the loss of lake recreation and economic value, the loss of brine shrimp, health costs, and impacts to ski resorts—could total as much as \$2.17 billion per year. The decline in Great Salt Lake water levels could kill some 6,500 jobs, most of which stem from a loss of mineral extraction output. Researchers say the tax rate in Utah would have to increase by more than 50 percent to make up for these potential losses.

The desiccation of the Great Salt Lake will lead to air and water pollution, a decline in agricultural productivity, loss of industry, and economic devastation. Even if the lake is not completely lost, the shrinkage can expose lakebed sediments

containing heavy metals and organic pollutants which could significantly deteriorate air quality.

To save the lake, a minimum streamflow of 2.5 million acre-feet per year must be maintained. Ensuring that river flow remains at or above this threshold is essential for stabilizing the lake's water levels. Water flow to upstream farms should be limited. Local governments should coordinate with state and federal programs to expand water conservation awareness. You can get involved by creating and sharing media on this issue to raise awareness. Additionally outdoor vegetation should be converted to drought tolerant to conserve water.

CONTACTS: The Aridification of the Great Salt Lake <https://ballardbrief.byu.edu/issue-briefs/the-aridification-of-the-great-salt-lake>

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

CLASSIFIEDS

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Let the Multimedia Specialists of MDDC Ad Services help you in growing your business and increasing your customer base. CALL TODAY at 855-721-MDDC, Ext. 4 and start seeing results NOW!

FOR SALE

Power Of 3 5G Networks, One Low Price! Call Today and Get The Latest iPhone Every Year On Us! 855-977-5719

BUSINESS SERVICES

Increase the digital presence of your business! Contact MDDC Ad Services to receive a FREE Digital Footprint Consultation for your business from a TOP PERFORMING advertising agency! Call 855-721-MDDC, Ext. 4, www.mddcadservices.com.

FOR SALE

Get DISH Satellite TV + Internet! Free Install, Free HD-DVR Upgrade, 80,000 On-Demand Movies, Plus Limited Time Up To \$600 In Gift Cards. Call Today! 1-855-407-6870

Get Boost Infinite! Unlimited Talk, Text and Data For Just \$25/mo! The

Prepare for power outages today with a GENERAC Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a FREE 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase. Call 1-855-993-0969 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move.

REAL ESTATE

We Buy Houses for Cash AS IS! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer and get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-866-541-7929

SERVICES—MISCELLANEOUS

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 350 plus procedures. Real dental insurance

SERVICES—MISCELLANEOUS

- NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-855-337-5228 [#6258](http://www.dental50plus.com/MDDC)

Let the Multimedia Specialists of MDDC Ad Services help you in growing your business and increasing your customer base. Call today at 855-721-MDDC, Ext. 4 and start seeing results NOW.

Save loads of money with your advertising budgets! CONNECT with the Multimedia Specialists of MDDC Ad Services. Expand your brand's reach in our Bulk Advertis-

SERVICES—MISCELLANEOUS

ing Network - CALL TODAY! With one call, one placement, one bill, you'll reach over 1,000,000 readers in the entire Mid-Atlantic region. Call 855-721-MDDC, Ext. 4 or email kberrier@mddcpress.com.

VEHICLES WANTED

DONATE YOUR CAR/TRUCK/RV - Lutheran Mission Society of MD Compassion Place ministries help local families with food, clothing, counseling. Tax deductible. MVA licensed #W1044. 410-228-8437 www.CompassionPlace.org

NO HIDDEN FEES. NO HIDDEN ANYTHING.

Plans start at just \$20/month.

Consumer Cellular **866-337-1676**

© 2024 Consumer Cellular Inc. Terms and conditions subject to change.

MARYLAND | DELAWARE | DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MDDCPRESS
FOUNDATION
HELP FUND THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM
mddcpress.com/foundation

LET THE PROS HANDLE IT! LeafFilter GUTTER PROTECTION

Say "NO" to Cleaning Out Your Gutters. Protect Your Home With LeafFilter.

20% OFF + **10% OFF**
Your Entire Purchase* Seniors + Military
USA 3+ years ** We offer financing that fits your budget! Promo: 285

CALL TODAY FOR A **FREE INSPECTION!** **1-844-566-3227**

NU LOOK HOME DESIGN

50% OFF + No Interest til 2030
ROOFING, SIDING, WINDOWS, DOORS, GUTTERS

20+ Years Experience | 50,000+ Satisfied Clients | Lifetime Warranty on Everything! | Locally Owned & Operated

Schedule A FREE In-Home Estimate Today!
Call **855.852.0597**

DENTAL Insurance

Great coverage for retirees.

Get your **FREE** Information Kit from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company.

Call **1-855-337-5228**
Dental50Plus.com/Mddc

Product/features not available in all states. Contact us for complete details about this insurance solicitation. To find a network provider, go to www.physiciansmutual.com/dental. This specific offer not available in CO, NV, NY - call 1-800-969-4998 or respond for a similar offer in your state. California C549465, C55949438 (ID: C25492), PA: C25494; Insurance Policy P5491699 (GA: P5494), OK: P549K, TN: P549TK, 6347-0125

DONATE YOUR CAR, TRUCK, RV

Your donation helps provide food, clothing, hope.



Tax deductible. MVA licensed #1044



410-228-8437
www.CompassionPlace.org

Be prepared before the next power outage.



It's not just a generator. It's a power move.™

Receive a free 5-year warranty with qualifying purchase* - valued at \$535.

Call 855-993-0969 to schedule your free quote!

*Terms and Conditions apply.



WESLEY FINANCIAL GROUP

You CAN Cancel Your Timeshare

We have helped over 30,000 American families save over \$450,000,000 in timeshare debt and maintenance fees. We can help you too.

Get your free information kit and see if you qualify:

Call 1.888.984.2917

This is an Advertisement. Wesley Financial Group, LLC ("WFG") and/or its affiliates, successors, or assigns are not lawyers and/or a law firm and does not engage in the practice of law or provide legal advice or legal representation. Actual results depend on each client's distinct case and no specific outcome is guaranteed.