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Governor Moore Visits Prince George's County Food Pantry Serving Federal Workers During Federal Government Shutdown

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Oct. 24, 2025)—Governor Wes Moore today visited the Bowie Food Pantry in Prince George's County. Within the past two months, the pantry has experienced a significant increase in demand for food assistance due an influx of federal employees in need, including many who remain unemployed following mass federal layoffs earlier this year.

"This shutdown is a continuation of the reckless actions we've seen since Day One of this federal administration," said Gov. Moore. "Now the president would rather allow the government to remain shut down than negotiate in good faith, leaving Maryland's economy and working families to deal with the consequences. But while the president continues to look away, Maryland will do everything in its power to deliver relief to those struggling."

The Bowie Interfaith Pantry and Emergency Fund provides food assistance and emergency financial aid to area residents. Approved clients receive four pre-packed bags with dry and canned foods, fresh produce, and personal care items once



PHOTO CREDIT PAT SIEBERT, COURTESY MARYLAND GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE

Governor Wes Moore visited the Bowie Food Pantry in Prince George's County on October 24, 2025. The pantry has experienced a significant increase in demand for food assistance.

or twice a month. To cover a new surge in demand caused by the government shutdown furloughs, the pantry has been forced to make exceptions to its food assistance qualifications to meet the needs of county residents—55,000 of whom are federal workers. At the current rate, the pantry expects to log roughly 100 more client visits in October than they did in August.

"The Bowie Food Pantry continues to provide year-round food assistance to qualifying residents of Prince George's County," said Bowie Food Pantry Execu-

tive Director Michaeline Gandolph. "As the federal government shutdown continues and the price of food goes up, we are seeing a noticeable increase in demand from local families and individuals impacted by furloughs, reduced hours, and financial uncertainty. Our mission has always been to provide food for those in need in Prince George's County. We are doing everything we can to meet that demand. We are deeply grateful to our donors for their continued generosity and support."

Many of the pantry's

clients are also participants in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). In a letter dated Oct. 10, the Trump Administration directed Maryland not to issue SNAP benefits, in addition to choosing not to release contingency funding, as required by law. As a result, SNAP benefits are likely not to be deposited on EBT cards beginning Nov. 1 and 680,000 Marylanders who rely on SNAP to eat—including nearly 270,000 children—stand to go hungry.

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Marietta House Museum Presents Lunchtime Lecture: White Marsh Historical Society

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

Please join us on **Wednesday, Nov. 5**, noon–1 p.m. for Marietta's Lunchtime Lecture: White Marsh Historical Society. Genealogist and President of the White Marsh Historical Society, Kevin Porter, will discuss his ongoing and extensive work with Sacred Heart Church and cemetery that reveals generations of Queen family genealogy.

Recommended for ages 12 & up. Children must be accompanied by an

adult. This is a free program. Walk-ins are welcome. Visitors may bring a bag lunch. For those who would like to register, visit www.pgparksdirect.com and enter ticket code: MHM-SPEC-GA-20251105.

For more information, please call 301-464-5291 or email marietta-house@pgparks.com

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

Key Braveboy Administration Officials Sworn in After Council Confirmation

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (Oct. 22, 2025)—On Tuesday, October 21, 2025, eight senior nominees serving in County Executive Aisha Braveboy's cabinet were confirmed by the County Council and officially sworn in to continue serving in the roles to which they were appointed.

At the swearing-in ceremony, County Executive Braveboy said, "This is a team of accomplished leaders. I know that their collective wisdom and knowledge, their educational backgrounds, their professional experience, and most importantly, their compassion for the people of Prince George's County will complement my vision for Prince George's County."

"Every one of them has answered the call and so far, have exceeded my expectations. These confirmations are more than a defining moment for the Braveboy Administration. It's a mon-

umental vote of confidence that signals we are implementing change and improving the quality of life for all Prince Georgians. Just as I've said many times, we are just getting started," said Braveboy.

The following County officials were confirmed and sworn in:

- **Maxene Bardwell**, Chief Administrative Officer
- **George Nader**, Chief of Police
- **George Nichols**, Assistant Chief of Police (sworn in, council confirmation not required)
- **Thelmetria Michaelides**, Fire Chief
- **Dr. Katina Gomez**, Director of Homeland Security
- **Linda Allen**, Director of Finance
- **Dr. Samuel Moki**, Director of Environment
- **Alice Williams**, Director of Procurement & Purchasing Agent
- **Vennard Wright**, Director of Information Technology & Chief Information Officer

Joint Center Presented Governor Wes Moore With Louis E. Martin Great American Award

By PRESS OFFICER
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

WASHINGTON (Oct. 23, 2025)—Today, the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies honored Maryland Governor Wes Moore with its highest honor—the Louis E. Martin Great American Award—at The Gathering Spot in Washington, DC.

The ceremony included an award presentation and a policy discussion with distinguished panelists: Shalandia Young, 43rd Director of the United States Office of Management and Budget; Rey Ramsey, President and CEO of Nathan Cummings Foundation; and Dedrick Asante-Muhammad, President of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, as the moderator. The conversation highlighted how states—particularly Maryland—are meeting this moment through innovative approaches to governance that safeguard vulnerable communities, respond to federal funding cuts, and maintain investments for a better future.

"Governor Wes Moore represents the best of contemporary political leadership," said Joint Center President Dedrick Asante-Muhammad. "As the first ever Black governor in Maryland's history, leading a state with one of the largest Black populations in the nation, he holds a unique perspective to help accurately assess the needs of his constituents. His leadership demonstrates how bold, values-driven governance can expand opportunity and protect vulnerable communities even in challenging times. Honoring Governor Moore with the Louis E. Martin Great American Award affirms our commitment to lifting up leaders who embody the spirit of equity and hope that Martin championed throughout his life."

"I thank the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, not simply for this honor, but for the decades of service that have defined one of America's great institutions of economic empowerment," said Gov. Moore. "I stand on broad shoulders, shaped and shepherded by the Joint Center. Together, we will continue to



PHOTO CREDIT: POLLY IRUNGU

Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies honored Maryland Governor Wes Moore with its highest honor—the Louis E. Martin Great American Award—at The Gathering Spot in Washington, DC.

deliver the kind of progress that those who came before us fought for, and those who come after us deserve."

The Louis E. Martin Great American Award recognizes individuals who have made transformational contributions that further the promise of America as a land of hope and opportunity for all. First awarded in 2004, the honor memorializes Louis E. Martin (1912–1997), a principal founder of the Joint Center and the first chair of its board.

Past recipients include Federal Reserve Board Member Dr. Lisa D. Cook, former Joint Center President Spencer Overton,

Secretary of State Colin Powell (posthumously), La June Montgomery Tabron, Cedric Richmond, Stacey Abrams, then-Senator Kamala Harris, former Joint Center President Eddie Williams, Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter, Senator Cory Booker, former Ambassador Susan Rice, Congressmen John Lewis and James Clyburn, Dorothy Height, and Muhammad Ali.

Wes Moore is the 63rd Governor of the state of Maryland. He is Maryland's first Black Governor in the state's 246-year history, and is just the third African American elected Governor in the history of the United States. Moore is a graduate of Valley Forge Military Academy and College, where he received an Associate's degree in 1998, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He then went on to earn his Bachelor's in international relations and economics at Johns Hopkins University. As the first Black Rhodes Scholar in the history of Johns Hopkins University, he earned a Master's in international relations from Wolfson College at Oxford. Moore is also the author of the books "The Other Wes Moore" and "Five Days."

Louis E. Martin was a 1934 graduate of the University of Michigan, a Chicago Defender journalist, the founding editor and publisher of the Michigan Chronicle, and a founder of the National Newspaper Publishers Association. In serving as an advisor to three presidents, Martin was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and the nomination of Thurgood Marshall to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967. Martin was one of the founders of the Joint Center in 1970, and served as its board chair from 1970–1979. Among friends and colleagues, Martin was known for expressing his warmest respects with his favorite compliment: "You are a great American."

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, America's Black think tank, provides compelling and actionable policy solutions to eradicate persistent and evolving barriers to the full freedom of Black people in America. We are the trusted forum for leading experts and scholars to participate in major public policy debates and promote ideas that advance Black communities. We use evidence-based research, analysis, convenings, and strategic communications to support Black communities and a network of allies.

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

PRE-MEN’S DAY SONG SERVICE

Saturday, October 25, 2025, at 4 p.m., the men celebrated with a Pre-Men’s Day Song Service. Guests were Men’s Choirs from Asbury and Clinton United Methodist Churches and the New Burning Light. Christ United Methodist Church, 22919 Christ Church Road, Aquasco, Maryland, 20608. Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor.

ANNUAL PARISH MEN’S DAY

Sunday, October 26, 2025, at 10 a.m., men at Christ United Methodist Church celebrated their Annual Parish Men’s Day. “Men Serving a Righteous God with Distinction” (Malachi 3:18). Guest Speaker: Rev. Kevin Brooks, Mt. Calvary/St. Matthews Charge, Charlotte Hall, Maryland. Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church, 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Rev. Shemaiah Strickland, Pastor.

LINE DANCING NIGHT

Line Dancing every Wednesday night from 5–11 p.m. at Piano Keys Restaurant and Lounge in Brandywine, Maryland. Each and every Wednesday, we are turning midweek into a whole vibe. WEAR YOUR DANCING SHOES! DJ Carlos on the first and second Bringing the Heat. Happy Hour Food & Drink Specials 5–7 p.m. So come early. FREE Line Dancing lessons with LaShea Lyonna 7–10 p.m. FREE VIP TABLE, SO COME EARLY. RSVP or for more info: (240) 816-2211. Piano Keys Restaurant & Lounge, 7651 Matapeake Business Drive, Brandywine, Maryland. Tag your crew and let us pack the floor.

CHRISTMAS AT THE HARBOR

Experience the magic of Christmas like never before at National Harbor. Create holiday memories while you stroll the Waterfront District shops or Tanger National Harbor for the perfect gift, delight your taste buds with a special meal at one of our restaurants, or soar above it all with a ride on the Capital Wheel.

FESTIVE FIREWORKS

Join us Saturday nights from November 9–December 28 at 5:30 p.m. for a spectacular fireworks display following the tree lighting show at National Harbor.

THE CAPITAL WHEEL

The Capital Wheel’s Photos with Santa Paws every Saturday from November 29–December 20 noon–2 p.m. Santa cannot wait to meet your four-legged best friend. Join us every Saturday this holiday season November 29, December 6, 13, and 20 for a howl-iday ride high above National Harbor and snap the paw-fact holiday photo with Santa Paws himself. You and your pup will enjoy it.

Dogs ride FREE with a paying adult (up to 2 pups per adult ticket). Holiday Yappy Hour at Flight Deck with fire pits, seasonal drinks, and pup-friendly treats. Want the VID (Very Important Dog) treatment? Upgrade tour holiday package with tickets, drinks, and a keepsake photo, the Ulti-mutt way to spoil yourself

and your pup this season. So, leash up, snuggle in, and make this holiday one to remember. It is the paw-feet way to celebrate. Address is 141 American Way, Oxon Hill, Maryland 20745. Buy your tickets now online: <https://thecapitalwheel.com/photos-with-santa-paws/>.

HARMONY HALL

“Harmony Hall, located in Fort Washington, Maryland, is managed by the United States National Park Service as part of the National Capital Parks-East System. It has been a National Park Service site since 1966. Harmony Hall is a 2- and one-half story Georgian country house built of red brick during the eighteenth century. It is surrounded by 65 acres (26 ha) of land on Broad Creek, a Potomac River tributary ... The home has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1980, at which time its condition was described as “excellent”. As of January 2010, Harmony Hall is closed to the public. ...”

“Harmony Hall is also the name given to a community center building, on adjacent property, owned by the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission and used as their southern area headquarters office. The center includes a fitness center and hosts concerts, stage plays, art exhibits, art classes, scout meetings, and other cultural programs. The building was originally an elementary school.” The address is 10711 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland. Information from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

CROSSLIGHT WORSHIP

Join us Saturday, November 15, 5 p.m., for An Evening of Worship with Thanksgiving” at Clinton United Methodist Church, 10700 Brandywine Road, Clinton, Maryland 20735. Rev. Melaina Trice, Pastor. Special Guest Harpist Kim Sator. Limited seating. Get your tickets now. More information <https://CROSSLIGHT-WORSHIP.COM>.

AARP TAX-AIDE VOLUNTEERS & TRAINING

Preparation for 2026 tax season is underway and once again the Senior Information and Assistance Office is Partnering with AARP to assist seniors and moderate- to low-income adults with income tax preparation. This is a FREE service through the AARP Tax Aid Foundation. Last year volunteers assisted over 930 local residents with filing their federal and state tax returns in Charles County.

We are currently looking for Volunteers to assist in Tax coordination. We need Tax Counselors and Client Facilitators. Tax Counselors provide preparation for tax returns. Client Facilitators greet taxpayers and assist them with completing intake and necessary forms.

Training will take place during the month of January. Individuals wishing to enroll in the AARP Income Tax Training Program 2026 should apply directly to <https://www.aarp.org/volunteer/programs/tax-aide/> Click “Volunteer Now” then “Create Account”. Once submitted, your application will be routed to the volunteer program coordination in your jurisdiction.

sions in Maryland, with President Trump’s partial shutdown in 2018–2019 costing thousands of Marylanders \$778 million in wages.

“Gov Moore and I stand together in our care and concern for residents impacted by the fed gov shutdown,” said Prince George’s County Executive Aisha Braveboy. “We depend on partners like the Bowie Food Pantry and their incredible volunteers while we weather this difficult time.”

“During this very challenging time, the District 4 County Council office remains steadfast in our commitment to support our residents,” said Prince George’s County Councilmember Ingrid S. Watson. “Our visit to the Bowie Food Pantry underscores our vital partnership with Governor Moore to ensure that everyone has access to essential food assistance and resources. Together, we are dedicated to standing with our community and ensuring no one goes hungry.”

The Bowie Food Pantry is generally open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 to 11 a.m. for drive-up food pick-up.

- As the shutdown continues, Maryland will continue to offer a broad range of supports for federal employees and other workers impacted by federal actions, such as: (<https://response.maryland.gov/federalpublicservants>)
- Support in finding a new job through 33 American Job Centers and a specialized Professional Outplacement Assistance Center, including individualized career guidance, résumé workshops, mock interviews, career and skills assessment, effective job search strategies, and networking support;
 - Additional career resources, such as information on transitioning to a teaching career;
 - A weekly virtual workshop designed specifically for former federal employees and federal contractors, and attended by more than 1,700 workers to date;
 - Job fairs and recruitment events;
 - Unemployment insurance;
 - Resources for veterans;
 - Legal resources; and
 - Resources related to health coverage, housing, and food, cash, and other assistance.

Pantry from A1

“Donald Trump continues to drag out his government shutdown as he refuses to negotiate with Democrats—and our dedicated federal civil servants are unfairly bearing the brunt,” said U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen. “I’m grateful for the work that the Bowie Food Pantry is doing to support Marylanders in need, including many patriotic federal workers who are struggling to put food on their tables through no fault of their own. We can end this shameful shutdown and get federal employees back to on the job—but Republicans must come to the table to responsibly fund the government, hold the President accountable to the law, and prevent millions of Americans’ health care costs from skyrocketing.”

“If Republicans refuse to reopen the government by November 1, this President will decide whether families will be able to access their SNAP benefits,” said U.S. Senator Angela Alsobrooks. “I have pushed this Administration to use every available resource to fund this lifesaving program. Children should not go hungry because Republicans have decided to shut down the government. I commend the Bowie Food Pantry for the work they do, especially in this challenging time. In the meantime, we will keep fighting for Marylanders.”

“I thank Governor Moore for visiting the Bowie Food Pantry today. The Pantry has supported Marylanders through all of the crises that Donald Trump has brought upon them, from senseless firings to disastrous tariffs that have sent food prices skyrocketing,” said U.S. Congressman Steny H. Hoyer. “After shutting the government down, the White House has told the American people that its “main focus” is building a new ballroom, and House Republicans are nowhere to be found. Today, Governor Moore is showing that his main focus is on supporting Marylanders during this difficult time. I am grateful to the governor and all of the staff, volunteers, and donors to the Bowie Food Pantry for their steadfast service to our community.”

“I want to thank Governor Wes Moore for his leadership and compassion in standing with the families of Prince George’s County today,” said U.S. Congressman Glenn Ivey. “Far too many of our neigh-

bors, especially federal workers who’ve been furloughed, fired by DOGE, or RIF’d under Russ Vought’s reckless directives, are struggling to make ends meet. The Bowie Food Pantry is doing heroic work, but no one should have to rely on charity because of political games in Washington. Governor Moore and I are working closely with federal team Maryland, state, and local partners to ease the suffering across Prince George’s County and beyond. Together, we’re fighting to restore stability, dignity, and fairness for every worker and every family affected by this shutdown.”

As the federal government remains shut down, the Moore-Miller Administration will continue to mobilize resources to assist both furloughed federal employees and “excepted” federal employees (also called “essential”), who are required to continue working during the government shutdown without pay.

To assist essential employees, Governor Moore announced the launch of the Federal Shutdown Loan Program earlier this month, which offers a one-time no-interest loan of \$700 to help workers meet expenses like rent and groceries. The loan must be repaid 45 days after the shutdown ends, giving workers time to receive the back pay they are owed by the federal government.

Furloughed federal employees—who are not working and are not being paid during the government shutdown—may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits through the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program. They are required to repay those benefits after the shutdown ends and they receive retroactive pay.

Furloughed employees of federal contractors—who are not working and are not being paid—may be eligible for state unemployment insurance benefits.

The federal government is the largest employer in the State of Maryland. Prior to this year’s federal workforce cuts, 269,000 Maryland residents were employed by the federal government and more than 160,000 federal civilian jobs were located in Maryland. Since the Trump Administration has taken office, Maryland has lost more than 15,000 federal jobs—the largest number in the nation. Past government shutdowns have had direct repercus-

Calendar of Events

NCRTV’s Hallo-Weekend!

Date and time: 10/31–11/2: Friday, October 31, 2025, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Saturday, November 1 and Sunday, November 2: 12–4 p.m. Description: Halloween is upon us! Join National Capital Radio & Television Museum to celebrate the spooky season during our Hallo-Weekend. Special Spooky Radio programs will be playing all weekend long, and we’ll have some radio, television and Halloween themed crafts to keep their chocolate-covered hands busy (no candy in the museum though—SORRY!). Enjoy docent-led tours of the museum as you learn about the unique and interesting history of broadcasting!

Cost: Kids dressed in costume get free admission!
Location: National Capital Radio & Television Museum, 2608 Mitchellville Rd., Bowie, MD 20716
Contact: ncrtv.org, 301-390-1020

Concord Emancipation Day Celebration

Date and time: Saturday, November 1, 2025, 12–5 p.m. Description: Celebrate heritage, resilience, and the progress of African Americans from enslavement through emancipation and beyond. The Concord Emancipation Day Celebration will feature live music and performances by The Kim Michelle Experience, hands-on history craft demonstrations, heritage farming workshops, kids & family zone, classic and custom car showcase, food trucks, and more.
Cost: FREE
Location: Concord Historic Site, 8000 Walker Mill Road, Capitol Heights, MD 20743

Sankofa Mobile Museum—Held in the Parking Lot

Date and time: Saturday, November 8, 2025, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. Description: The Sankofa Mobile is a multi-technical experience that shares the historical stories of African American families and their journeys in Maryland. This stand-alone exhibit is presented in celebration of Emancipation Day in Maryland. Exhibit Information: Our Own Liberators: The Butler Family’s Fight for Liberty and Justice (Recommended for ages 10 and up), and To Make Her Own Way: A Free Black Woman’s Fight for Equality in Early America (Recommended for ages 12 and up). *Please note: The library opens at 10 a.m., and entry to the building will not be available prior to that time.* Ages: Teen (13–18 yrs) | Elementary (5–12 yrs) | Adults | Location: Greenbelt Branch Library, 11 Crescent Rd, Greenbelt, MD 20770

Touch-A-Truck at Calverton!

Date and time: Saturday, November 8, 2025, 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. Description: Join us for one of our favorite community events of the year! Families are invited to explore and climb aboard more than 27 trucks and vehicles, including fire trucks, dump trucks, police vehicles, and more! This year, we’re adding even more fun with local food trucks, featuring: Calvert Crabs, Hot Dogs & More, The Novel Bakery, Judy’s Food Express. Bring the whole family to see, touch, climb aboard, and learn about fascinating trucks and vehicles at Touch-A-Truck! *Please bring a non-perishable food item to support End Hunger in Calvert County!*
Cost: FREE
Ages: All ages
Location: The Calverton School parking lot, 300 Calverton School Road, Huntingtown, MD 20639
Contact: (410) 535-0216, www.calvertonschool.org

Sly & The Family Stone Tribute

Date and time: Saturday, November 8, 2025, 8 p.m. Description: Enjoy a live tribute to Sly & The Family Stone, the iconic American funk band from the 1960s and ’70s. The tribute features Gold Soul Movement, a collective of DMV-based artists celebrating soul music’s timeless, genre-blending power. For all ages.
Cost: \$35 | \$30 Senior/Student, purchase tickets via PARKS Direct
Location: Publick Playhouse, 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD 20784

Creative Entertainment Presents:

Whitney Houston, I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

Date and time: Saturday, November 15, 2025, 7 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. Description: Creative Entertainment presents Whitney Houston I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU, a musical journey and tribute to the greatest female voice of all time, starring Talein. Talein, award-winning artist and former lead-vocalist of the legendary R&B Group Atlantic Starr, is going to take you on a musical journey of one of the most prolific female vocalists of our time—Ms. Whitney Houston, affectionately known as Nippy to her family. But to the world she was “The Voice”.
Cost: \$40 Balcony \$45 Orchestra \$50 Center Front Orchestra <https://bowiecenter.org/event/creative-entertainment/>
Location: Bowie Center for the Performing Arts, 15200 Annapolis Road, Bowie, MD 20715

Prince George’s County Farm Bureau’s

All You Can Eat Dinner

Date and time: Sunday, November 16, 2025, 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Description: Get ready for a delicious afternoon at the Prince George’s County Farm Bureau’s All You Can Eat Oysters, Fried Chicken & Ham Dinner. Enjoy a hearty meal in support of local agriculture, with take-out options available. Don’t miss this flavorful community gathering!
Cost: Tickets are \$35 if purchased before November 12 and \$40 after. Secure your spot by mailing a check to PGCFB (13501 Molly Berry Road, Brandywine, MD 20613) or buying online at bit.ly/4grdwfs.
Location: Robin Hill Farm & Vineyards, 15800 Croom Road, Brandywine, MD 20613
Contact: PGCFB@yahoo.com or call 301-579-6552

COMMUNITY

Calendar from A2

Trot for a Turkey

Date and time: Saturday, November 22, 2025, 6–8 p.m.
Description: Help families in need by running or walking through the beautiful Winter Festival of Lights! The almost 3-mile course will feature dazzling light displays. The registration feed will provide families in need with a holiday turkey.
Register through ParksDirect
Location: Watkins Regional Park, 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD

“Rich With Love”: A Film Screening and Panel Discussion

Date and time: Friday, December 12, 2025, 6:30 p.m.
Description: The City of Bowie, in partnership with the Bowie State University/University of Maryland Social Justice Alliance, invites you to a screening of “Rich With Love”, a moving mini-documentary honoring the life and legacy of 1LT Richard W. Collins III, a Bowie State University ROTC graduate who was tragically killed in a racially motivated hate crime on the University of Maryland campus in 2017, just three days before his college graduation. Following the film, a panel discussion will reflect on 1LT Collins’ lasting impact and the ongoing pursuit of justice, equity, and inclusion in Maryland.
Cost: FREE, open to all, **Reserve your seat: bit.ly/richwithlove**
Location: Bowie Playhouse, 16500 White Marsh Park Dr., Bowie, MD 20716
Contact: (301) 809-3014

Marlboro Pike Partnership, CDC & Regional Planning Partners Publish Economic Development Studies Renewing Revitalization Efforts Along Historic Gateway Corridor

By PRESS OFFICER
Marlboro Pike Partnership, CDC

PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY, Md. (Oct. 23, 2025)—The Marlboro Pike Partnership (MPP) is proud to announce the release of two publications drafted in partnership with the Prince George’s Planning Department - Community Planning Division. In November 2023, as a Planning Assistance to Municipalities and Communities (PAMC) grantee, MPP worked with consultants from Partners for Economic Solutions to prepare a market feasibility assessment of the Marlboro Pike corridor spanning from Brooks Drive to the I-495 Capital Beltway. Additionally, MPP and the Planning Department partnered to apply for the Urban Land Institute’s Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), supported by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOC), which produced a report highlighting expert, multidisciplinary advice on advancing revitalization along the Marlboro

Pike corridor through land use, real estate and special initiatives. The panel convening marked a major milestone for implementing a community-driven vision grounded in the original Marlboro Pike Sector Plan published in 2009.

“The Prince George’s County Planning Department is happy to provide technical support and resources towards future revitalization opportunities for the Marlboro Pike Corridor,” declares Planning Department Director, Lakisha Hill. “Kudos to the Marlboro Pike Partnership in continuing to leverage their ongoing mission to improve the quality of life and safety along this important corridor.” The TAP brought together experts in planning, urban design, and economic development to tackle critical questions around corridor revitalization, walkability, transit access, urban design standards, and the creation of healthier, more connected neighborhoods. At the heart of the initiative is a renewed commitment to transforming Marlboro Pike into a vibrant, walka-

ble, and attractive destination where residents can live, work, shop, and play.

“This effort is about more than development—it’s about strengthening identity and community,” said Ashley Sharp, President and Founder of Marlboro Pike Partnership. “Through strategic partnerships and targeted investments, we’re working to reimagine Marlboro Pike as a thriving corridor grounded in community. This is a major step forward for residents and businesses alike. MPP is proud and grateful to lead this initiative forward as the common thread among many stakeholders.”

About Marlboro Pike Partnership: Our mission is to improve the residential and commercial experience on and around the Marlboro Pike corridor by prioritizing revitalization, public safety, economic development and community empowerment in Prince George’s County, Maryland. Visit www.MarlboroPikePartnership.org to learn more.

Hospice of the Chesapeake and Partners In Care Join to Support Aging Community

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN
Hospice of the Chesapeake

PASADENA, Md. (Oct. 23, 2025)—Hospice of the Chesapeake is proud to announce that Partners In Care of Maryland, Inc., has officially joined its family of services under a newly formed umbrella organization, Chesapeake Health Partners.

This incorporation marks a significant milestone in the organizations’ shared mission to serve Maryland’s aging population with compassion, dignity and connection.

Becky Miller, President and CEO of Hospice of the Chesapeake said that thousands of Americans turn 65 every day. By 2030, nearly one in four Marylanders will be 65 or older. “That’s not just a statistic, it’s a call to action,” Miller said. “By coming together, we can ensure that older adults in our community continue to receive the care, support and connection they need to thrive.”

As Maryland’s largest independent nonprofit hospice organization, Hospice of the Chesapeake has been a trusted resource for individuals and families facing serious illness, helping them live each day with intention and peace. Partners In Care, a Maryland-based nonprofit, has built its legacy on helping older adults remain independent and engaged through its signature Service Exchange model where mem-

bers help one another with transportation, handyman services, social connection and more.

Under Chesapeake Health Partners, Hospice of the Chesapeake and Partners In Care of Maryland, Inc., will work together to expand their reach and impact across the region. This collaboration isn’t simply about gaining efficiencies; it’s about amplifying each organization’s ability to serve.

“Together, we can build a stronger safety net for older adults, one that keeps people in their homes, connected to their neighbors and supported through every stage of aging and illness,” said Brian Hahn, Partners In Care of Maryland, Inc., Chair of the Board of Directors. Partners In Care of Maryland, Inc., will retain its name, mission and volunteer-driven programs, ensuring continuity for members, volunteers and staff.

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(Oct. 20, 2025)—Brian Hahn, Partners In Care of Maryland, Inc., Chair of the Board of Directors and Becky Miller, Hospice of the Chesapeake President and CEO, pose for a photograph at the Partners In Care, Maryland, Inc., offices in Pasadena, Maryland.

COURTESY PHOTO



Exploring the Annapolis Witch Trials

Local storyteller harks back to the witch trials of colonial Maryland with a new nighttime tour around Annapolis. Tourists find parallels in the era of modern witch hunts.

By ALINE BEHAR KADO
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Oct. 14, 2025)—Rebecca Fowler was an indentured servant here in the late 1600s, working the land for years until she and her husband were finally lucky enough to own a plot of land.

But her luck ran out after he died and she took full title. She was soon charged with a deadly crime for a woman of the period: witchcraft.

A long trial led to her sad end as the only person executed for witchcraft in Maryland history, but the story didn’t die there. It’s getting told anew on nighttime tours around this historic city.

“The gallows would have been there,” says Melissa Huston as she stood on a cobblestone street in the old part of Annapolis on Wednesday night, gesturing to the town’s execution site.

The story sent chills up the spines of the tour group, never mind the fact that Fowler was executed in her hometown of St. Mary’s City. This self-made woman from centuries ago still figures prominently in the story of the Maryland witch trials.

Huston debuted her tour this week, featuring the history and legends of Maryland and connecting each one to a landmark in Annapolis, the capital city and the center of the state’s witchy history.

“I am a history storyteller,” said Huston, creator and tour guide of the Annapolis Witches & Legends Walking Tour. “We don’t do gimmicks. We do pure, authentic storytelling.”

It’s not a coincidence that her attention has turned to the Maryland witch



A group crowds around Melissa Huston in front of the State House as she debuts her witch tour.

hunts this particular fall. She defines a witch trial as an irrational accusation or case based in fear.

“Even today, everything is called a witch trial,” said Huston. “Which is what we are doing today to trans communities, immigrant communities and other minority communities. It translates across lives.”

“It is such a small percentage of this population just trying to live their honest, true lives, and they’re being vilified and demonized by people in power and being blamed for things that are way out of their control and have no business being blamed for,” said Huston. “That’s a modern witch hunt.”

Back in the colonial period, there were around 25 cases of alleged witchcraft in Maryland. Most cases were treated as slander, leading to just two convictions and one execution. Three

of these cases happened in Annapolis.

Massachusetts had about 200 cases during the more famous Salem witch trials. But Maryland’s religious tolerance allowed for a more measured approach, according to Huston.

Huston’s interest in witches started years ago when she learned two of her ancestors died during the Salem trials.

She has been researching witches and witch trials in Maryland for the past year and decided to pitch doing a witch tour around Annapolis.

She’s not the only one who’s haunting the antique streets. Mike Carter, CEO and founder of Annapolis Ghost Tours and Crawls was excited to introduce something new.

“I feel like a lot of people think, ‘Oh, well, Annapolis is old, there must be lots and lots of witches,’” said Carter. “The tour we do is to cover all the cool

stuff that we do know about the history of witches in Maryland.”

Huston and Carter believe that there could be medical or scientific explanations for the so-called witchcraft women in that time were accused of. Most of these “witches” tended to be, after all, single, older women and widows.

“The tour also tries to highlight and celebrate the power and the resilience of women,” said Huston. “I think a lot of us, especially because the Gen X women are starting to hit their 50s. I’m hitting my witch era.”

“You get to an age where you’re more comfortable in your skin, and you’re more comfortable speaking your mind, and filters start to come off,” she said. “And I think that’s also why a lot of women of a certain age are the ones that are accused of witchcraft.”

Huston says she is glad to be doing something different from the ghost stories she’s used to.

“I have been looking forward to telling these stories,” said Huston, who works as a tour guide for the Annapolis Ghost Tours and Crawls’s Hidden History Pub Crawl.

People in the crowd shared Huston’s interest.

“Women have been vilified throughout history,” said Celeste Dean, an Annapolis resident who participated in the tour. “I think that was just one of the ways that that took form.”

They weren’t there for ghost stories. The participants, mostly women, came to learn about other women of generations past.

“I believe in spirits,” said Deb Leonard, another tour participant. “The definition of a witch is the problem.”

The tour group gathered one recent night, next to a giant pumpkin near the harbor. Flags fluttered on sailboats. The sun crept behind clouds and a nearly full moon rose behind the nearby State House.

Huston dressed in a flowing black skirt, a patterned top and a wide-brimmed, velvety hat. Around her wrist, she wore several glow stick bracelets.

She led the tour through the cobblestone streets, reaching stops like the Governor Calvert House and the State House. After an hour of walking and listening to history come alive, the tour reached the St. Anne’s Parish cemetery.

Almost 30 people crowded around the grave of a man named William Bladen. Huston told the story of Virtue Violl, the last person charged with the felony of witchcraft in Maryland.

It was 1712. Violl had gotten into a dispute with another unmarried, older neighbor.

The story goes that she must have made some comment about the other woman’s tongue. Witnesses claimed the victim was spelled speechless. To them it was obviously witchcraft.

Bladen, then the attorney general and vestryman at St. Anne’s, brought the case to trial. But the jury was made up of “more sophisticated” men, according to Huston. Maybe the victim had a terrible allergic reaction that made her tongue swell, Huston mused. Or perhaps Violl said something so shocking that the other woman was unable to respond.

In any case, the jurors most likely believed this was just a dispute, as Huston recounts it, and found Violl not guilty. The parties went their separate ways, and prosecutor Bladen lived four more years before coming to rest, here, in the St. Anne’s cemetery.

Huston didn’t condemn Bladen, but she did choose to stand on his grave to close her tour. As she did, the bells of St. Anne’s tolled to mark the 8 o’clock hour.

“Perfect timing,” one participant said, sending scattered giggles through the crowd.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Do I Need to Sign Up for an Online Social Security Account?

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 recently heard the tail end of a radio program which was discussing “signing up for my Social Security account.” I am now 76 years old and have been receiving my SSA monthly amount directly into a credit union account for years. Since the time when I applied to begin receiving Social Security, I have had no need to contact SSA again since everything is working fine. I do not like having to use the Internet. It seems the government is just giving me busy work and requiring me to remember usernames, passwords, etc. just when I am trying desperately to simplify my life. Can you shed any light on the need to sign up for an online SSA account by answering this:

1) What is the background regarding this “call” by the SSA to create an online account?

2) Why is the SSA wanting us to have “accounts”? Mysteriously, no one I have asked is able to give me a reason why we should have “accounts” on-line.

3) What happens if I do not sign-up for an “account”?

4) Is there a window of time during which we must “sign up”? Thanking you in advance for any light you can shed on this issue.

Signed: Concerned Senior

Dear Concerned: While creating an online Social Security account is recommended by the Social Security Administration, doing so is more of a convenience than a necessity. It is mainly a way to confirm your identity to Social Security in advance, in case you need to contact them in the future to make changes to your SS account. If you don’t plan to make any changes, then it is not mandatory for you to create an on-line “my Social Security” account. Nothing will change for you—you will continue to get your monthly benefits as you have been doing all these years.

Regarding your specific questions:

1. What is the background? Social Security has, for many years, been encouraging people to do business with them “online.” This is, essentially, a way to improve the efficiency of a) getting your needs handled more quickly, and b) improving SSA’s internal efficiency so as to handle more transactions with fewer staff.

2. Why does SSA want you to have an online account? SS fraud has become an issue, with nefarious individuals constantly trying to get at a person’s Social Security (and other) government benefits. As part of its process for online access, SSA has evolved to a quite secure online identification process, which includes modern security techniques. These include things like “Two-Factor Identification” and use of certain specific identification measures through two main programs for access to government systems (known as LOGIN.gov and ID.me). These create a single pre-verified way to access multiple government systems (such as SSA, IRS, VA, etc.). It means that only one ID and password are required to access numerous government systems and ensures that those who access the account are the correct person. It is primarily a way to protect your benefits from others and prevent fraud.

3. What happens if I do not sign-up for an “account”? Nothing will happen, unless you have a need to change something with Social Security. For example, if you for some reason wanted to change the financial account to which your SS benefits are deposited. With a secure LOGIN.gov account you could make that change quickly using your online account. Without a secure online account, you would, instead, need to make an appointment to visit your local Social Security office to make the change and provide proof of who you are. Again, this is to reduce fraud.

4. Is there a window of time during which we must “sign up”? As indicated above, there is no time in which you must “sign up.” If you do not sign up for online access, and don’t need to change anything with respect to your SS benefits, then you do not need to create an online account.

So, while creating an online SSA account is highly recommended, it is not mandatory for those who have no need to interact directly with the Social Security Administration.

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 ssadvisor@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.

Maryland Dental Action Coalition Honors and Recognizes Senator Benjamin L. Cardin With Oral Health Advocacy Lifetime Achievement Award

Inaugural award to be presented at MDAC’s biennial Oral Health Summit on Nov. 17

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland Dental Action Coalition

COLUMBIA, Md. (Oct. 23, 2025)—Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC) has established the Senator Benjamin L. Cardin Oral Health Advocacy Lifetime Achievement Award to honor exceptional advocacy to improve the oral health of Marylanders. The inaugural award will be presented to Senator Benjamin L. Cardin at MDAC’s Oral Health Summit on Monday, November 17, 2025 at Turf Valley Resort in Ellicott City, Md. Senator Cardin will provide remarks at the ceremony.

Senator Cardin, now retired after serving nearly six decades as an elected Maryland official, has long championed equitable access to dental care, playing a key role in expanding coverage through the Children’s Health Insurance Program, the Affordable Care Act, and most recently, Maryland Medicaid. His efforts have improved the health of millions, especially children, seniors and underserved communities. The success of Maryland’s adult dental Medicaid Program—which in less than three years has already delivered dental care to hundreds of thousands of residents—reflects the kind of progress made possible by Senator Cardin’s years of tireless advocacy. Senator Cardin’s testimony to the Maryland Senate Finance Committee helped propel the passage of this groundbreaking legislation. The Oral Health Advocacy Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes this lasting impact and his pivotal role in laying the

groundwork for such transformative change.

“Senator Cardin’s unwavering commitment to oral health has changed the lives of children across Maryland and the nation,” said Mary Backley, chief executive officer of MDAC. “His leadership has helped ensure that oral health is recognized as essential to overall health, and this award is a tribute to his legacy of advocacy and impact. We need champions like Senator Cardin now more than ever.”

The inaugural award will be presented to Senator Cardin in person at MDAC’s upcoming Oral Health Summit by a group of Maryland lawmakers who supported legislation to establish comprehensive Medicaid adult dental coverage.

This year’s oral health summit—Innovation, Advocacy, Action: Shaping Maryland’s Oral Health Future—spotlights Medicaid coverage, workforce solutions, school-based care, community health workers and the future of fluoridation. Through keynotes and break-out sessions, attendees will gain insights and explore strategies to advance oral health equity statewide.

Visit www.mdac.us to for more information on the Award and the summit.

The Maryland Dental Action Coalition (MDAC), the state’s leading non-governmental oral health policy and advocacy organization, works to improve the health of all Marylanders through increased oral health promotion, disease prevention, education, advocacy and access to oral health care.

Amazon Outage Shows one bad day Can Break the Internet

The recent Amazon Web Services outage shuts down thousands of sites, leaves hundreds of millions of users offline

By RUBY SIEFKEN
Capital News Service

When Amazon Web Services went down [last] week, much of the internet went with it.

The outage began in northern Virginia at AWS’ largest data center, and ultimately impacted over 1,000 organizations and more than 100 million users worldwide. While most services returned to normal after the 15-hour long outage, the system failure highlights how a single error at a major tech firm can ripple across global internet operations.

“Day-to-day, people don’t even realize that there’s so many services that rely on a single entity’s infrastructure,” said Alan Liu, an assistant professor of computer science at the University of Maryland. “When this happens, the impact is so large.”

The outage affected both Amazon-owned organizations and companies that rely on its technological infrastructure.

“These companies paid computing costs to Amazon, like we pay utility fees to [Baltimore Gas and Electric] to get gas and electricity,” said Liu. “These companies are paying money to Amazon for their computer storage and network services.”

This isn’t the first outage of its kind. In 2021, Meta experienced a near six-hour global disruption that yielded similar consequences. And experts say that it probably won’t be the last.

“We all need to be more resilient and robust in the way we plan,” said David Mussington, a UMD public policy professor of the practice. “Practicing incident recovery and response and protecting key data assets is the way forward.”

What happened?

The Monday outage occurred at US-East-1 in northern Virginia, the largest AWS data center in the United States. It impacted thousands of organizations globally, including leading airlines, media outlets, real-time communication platforms and home security systems.

AWS announced the outage at 12:11 AM PDT on Oct. 20, saying “we are investigating increased error rates and latencies for multiple AWS services in the US-EAST-1 Region.”

Amazon periodically updated their statements throughout the day, saying the disruption was caused by a Domain Name System malfunction, leading to database errors and cascading failures affecting networks worldwide. This is a system that translates user-friendly domain names, like “CNSMaryland.org,” into the numerical IP addresses that computers use to communicate with each other.

Sites including Delta Airlines, Netflix, Venmo, Snapchat, Duolingo, Canvas and many others experienced “increased error rates.” Affected entities experienced stalls, delayed communication and posting and, in some cases, complete shut downs.

AWS identified the issue and began restoring services by early afternoon on Oct. 20. While most services have now returned to normal, some may have experienced residual delays.

What are the consequences?

This outage caused significant financial losses for AWS and affected companies. Liu said the potential financial impact could surpass \$100 billion.

When organizations that rely on digital

website traffic experience a shutdown, their revenue stream is interrupted. Multiply that loss across the hundreds of companies affected, and the \$100 billion figure becomes highly plausible.

“The issue is risk and recovery of loss of business continuity due to an infrastructure failure, and that is something you can mitigate through planning and appropriate contracting,” said Mussington.

According to Mussington, planning should include the establishment of secondary and tertiary providers outside of the tech market leaders as a contingency.

Will this happen again?

AWS has multiple industry competitors including Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform and IBM Cloud. These companies that face identical vulnerabilities could have experienced similar outages, Mussington said.

“I think the major thing is usually human error,” Liu said. “Engineers are using some code that was not fully tested, or some code that is causing a configuration error.”

“It didn’t happen to them this time, but it could,” Mussington said.

AWS has the most extensive, reliable and secure global cloud infrastructure in the world, according to their website. Yet, they still experienced a large-scale outage.

This begs the question, how secure are the world’s most secure platforms?

“Amazon is the leading global player in this field,” Liu said. “But the leading player needs to take bigger responsibility on safeguarding the services that depend on it.”

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HOME *and* GARDEN

5 Ways to Age-Proof Your Home

Easy upgrades to improve the lives of older adults

FAMILY FEATURES

A home is more than four walls – it’s where birthdays are celebrated, holiday dinners shared, illnesses weathered and losses mourned. Home is, as the saying goes, where the heart is.

It’s little wonder then most people want to remain in their homes as they age, based on AARP research. Yet, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, less than half of U.S. houses are equipped with accessibility features for older adults.

It doesn’t take a full remodel to make a home safer. Updates like installing handrails or improving hallway lighting can go a long way.

For those who need support in making these changes, programs like Helping Homebound Heroes, a partnership between Meals on Wheels America and The Home Depot Foundation, provide senior veterans with essential home modifications and

repairs. This year, the initiative marked a milestone: 4,000 homes modified for seniors’ safety.

“By improving safety and accessibility, we’re helping senior veterans stay in the places they love,” said Ellie Hollander, president and CEO of Meals on Wheels America. “Our work is about preserving independence and dignity – helping older adults live safely, confidently and with connection to their communities.”

These practical tips show how small fixes can add up to big peace of mind:

1. Create a safer entryway.

For older adults, steps to the front door can be an obstacle. A ramp or zero-step entry allows for easier coming and going, and a covered porch or awning keeps walkways dry.

Path lights improve visibility at night, and a sturdy bench by the door provides a place to rest or put groceries.



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock



A MILESTONE MAKEOVER

Juan Lopez, a 63-year-old U.S. Army and Air Force veteran, has always been a do-it-yourselfer. When an ice storm sent a tree limb crashing through his roof, the damage was more than he could handle. Water seeped inside and mold quickly affected his wife’s health.

Through Helping Homebound Heroes, Lopez received critical support. Crews completed nearly \$40,000 in upgrades, from replacing his roof to installing new windows, a furnace and walk-in showers with grab bars.

“I don’t know what I would’ve done if they had not stepped in,” Lopez said. “It’s been such a blessing in our lives.”

Since 2015, The Home Depot Foundation has contributed more than \$21 million to Meals on Wheels programs, helping veterans like Lopez remain safely and comfortably in their homes as they age.

- 2. Upgrade the bathroom.**
- According to multiple studies, falls in the bathroom are more likely to cause injury than in other parts of the home.
- If you’re planning a bathroom project, start with small changes like raised toilet seats or toilet and shower grab bars. For a more extensive remodel, install non-slip flooring, replace traditional tubs with walk-in showers and add handheld showerheads.
- 3. Improve flooring.**
- The flooring in your home can have a big impact on safety. If you have thick or loose carpet, consider replacing it with a low-pile option.
- Slip-resistant flooring, such as vinyl or cork, also provides good traction and can be more forgiving than hardwood or tile. Simple visual cues can help, too. Transition strips between rooms or on stair edges make changes in floor level easier to see.
- 4. Brighten up rooms.**
- Brighter overhead fixtures improve visibility, making it easier to spot steps, furniture and

other obstacles. At night, motion-sensor lights brighten bathrooms and hallways so it’s easier to move around safely.

Lighting can also support overall well-being. Bulbs mimicking natural daylight help regulate the body’s circadian rhythm, boosting energy during the day. In the evening, switching to softer, warmer light signals the body to wind down.

5. Keep essentials within reach.

Storing everyday items at waist or shoulder height reduces the need for stretching, bending and climbing, all of which can increase the likelihood of falls. Sometimes a simple cabinet reorganization is enough but features like pull-down shelving can make storage more accessible.

Extender rods or remote controls let you adjust ceiling fans and lights from the ground, while motorized window shades can be raised or lowered with the push of a button.

For more resources and support for seniors, visit mealsonwheelsamerica.org.

6 Energy-Saving Tips

Simple steps to help homeowners cut utility bills

FAMILY FEATURES

Fall is the perfect time for homeowners to take simple steps to lower utility bills, improve comfort and take advantage of available rebate programs. While 71% of homeowners say energy efficiency is important, according to research from the Alliance to Save Energy, fewer than 35% consider their homes efficient.

Plus, heating and cooling account for 50-60% of total household energy use, and more than half of U.S. homes remain under-insulated with outdated HVAC systems. With colder weather on the way, a few smart changes now can pay off all winter long.

“Now is the ideal time to put efficiency in focus; and it isn’t about one big project, it’s about small steps that add up to comfort and savings,” said David Rames, senior product manager at Midea. “We want to empower homeowners with practical tools and modern technology to help them cut utility bills, improve comfort and take advantage of rebate programs that can make upgrades more affordable.”

Consider this expert-backed guidance from the experts at Midea to help improve home efficiency:

Seal it up: Air leaks around windows, doors and attics can account for up to 30% of heating loss, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Use weatherstripping and caulk to prevent waste. Adding attic insulation is another small investment that can lead to major energy savings.

Smarten your thermostat: A programmable or smart thermostat can automatically adjust heating schedules and save up to \$180 per year.

Upgrade your filter: Replace HVAC filters monthly during peak seasons to improve airflow and reduce system strain.

Invest in efficiency: Replacing aging systems with high-efficiency heat pumps can cut heating costs by up to 50% while also providing energy-efficient cooling in summer.

Explore new technologies: Consider a next-generation heat pump that is designed to deliver reliable heating even in sub-zero temperatures. For example, the Midea EVOX All Climate Heat Pump provides 100% heating output down to -31 F and continues operating at -40 F, making it an option for families across the country who want to be more energy efficient.

Compact plug-and-play technology solutions like the Midea packaged window heat pump (PWHP) can offer an efficient upgrade option for apartment renters or multifamily housing. These can be installed in less than an hour and plug into most standard outlets.

Take advantage of rebates: Federal, state and local utility programs can help consumers save thousands on energy-



efficient upgrades, such as qualified heat pump systems. Check available offers before making a purchase.

Fall may go by quickly, but the habits it encourages can deliver benefits year-round. When homeowners stay mindful of efficiency, they save money, support a more reliable energy grid and create a more sustainable future for their families. From quick DIY fixes to advanced heat pump technology, families have more tools available to take charge of their energy use and choose solutions that fit their lifestyle.

“Efficiency is no longer a luxury; it’s a necessity for comfort and cost savings,” Rames said. “With the right tools and choices, families can take control of their energy bills this winter and for years to come.”

For more information, call 1-888-643-3262 or visit mideacomfort.us.

EarthTalk®
Q&A

Waste Colonialism: U.S. Continues to Export Garbage Overseas

By Shashwat Mishra | October 16, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:
Is the U.S. still sending large barges of trash and recycling overseas? If so, which countries are taking most of it and is this good or bad for the environment?

—P.L., via email

In what is called “waste colonialism” the U.S. exports large amounts of trash and recycling overseas, particularly plastic waste. For decades, countries in Asia have received this waste, but growing environmental concerns have led several of them to change their policies.

The biggest shift came in 2018 when China stopped accepting most imported recyclables through its National Stop policy. This left the U.S. scrambling to find new destinations. Since then, countries like Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam have become major importers of American waste. Some of these materials are technically recyclable, but many shipments include contaminated or low-quality plastics that are difficult or impossible to process properly.

These countries are left dealing with the consequences, including pollution, public health risks and damaged ecosystems. Some governments have pushed back. Malaysia has returned containers of waste to sender countries, and Thailand plans to ban plastic imports entirely by 2025. The Philippines has also made headlines for sending back trash shipments to Canada and South Korea.

The environmental and social effects are serious. Much of the waste ends up burned or dumped illegally. This releases harmful chemicals into the air and water, affecting both people and wildlife. In many communities near dumping or processing sites, residents report increased health issues and environmental degradation. Waste also clogs waterways, contaminates soil and reduces air quality.

Supporters of the trade argue it provides economic benefits and supports recycling markets in developing countries. But critics point out that these benefits often come at too high a cost and that real recycling rarely occurs.

To address the issue, U.S. experts and advocates recommend improving domestic recycling infrastructure reducing single-use plastics and enforcing stricter export rules. International agreements like the Basel Convention aim to regulate the waste trade, though the U.S. has not ratified the treaty. In the long term, reducing waste at its source is key. Consumers can help by using less plastic, choosing reusable products and supporting policies that prioritize sustainability and fairness in how waste is managed worldwide.

CONTACTS: Waste Trade: A Form of Colonialism | Break Free From Plastic, <https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/2024/08/01/waste-trade-a-form-of-colonialism/>.



PHOTO CREDIT: PEXELS.COM.

The U.S. still exports large amounts of trash and recycling overseas, particularly plastic waste.

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

Community from A3

Both organizations remain committed to their shared mission of compassion, dignity and community. Volunteers and staff will continue to play an essential role in delivering services that help older adults remain active and independent.

By combining resources, Hospice of the Chesapeake and Partners In Care can continue to innovate, adapt and meet the growing needs of Maryland’s aging population.

“This is about hope, growth and community,” Miller said. “We’re honoring our roots while embracing new possibilities. Together as

Chesapeake Health Partners, we’re committed to helping Marylanders age safely and independently in their own homes, supported by our expert care, resources and community connections.”

At Hospice of the Chesapeake, we support individuals and families facing progressive, serious illness to reimagine hope—living each day with intention and peace—while ensuring our nonprofit organization remains a vital resource for future generations. We develop care plans to minimize symptoms and focus on what matters most for patients and families in Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles and Prince George’s counties. Caring for life throughout the journey with illness

and loss is the mission of Hospice of the Chesapeake. For more information, please visit www.hospicechesapeake.org.

Partners In Care Maryland, Inc. is a volunteer-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and a recognized leader in providing programs and services that support the independence of older adults, age 60 and older. Through a unique culture of service exchange and time banking, members use their gifts and talents to support one another—truly embodying the spirit of Neighbors Helping Neighbors. Visit www.PartnersInCare.org for more information.

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