

# The Prince George's Post



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## MGM National Harbor Welcomes the Holiday Season With Enchanting New Winter Display

*Celebrate the most wonderful time of the year with a 20-foot-tall toy snowman, 16-foot-tall rocking horse and more festive delights*

By PRESS OFFICER  
MGM National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, Md. (Nov. 24, 2025)—MGM National Harbor is celebrating the holiday season with a dazzling new Conservatory display filled with festive charm. Guests can marvel at snow-covered Christmas trees, glittering ornaments, and a towering 20-foot-tall toy snowman. Now through January 24, guests can experience the joy and wonder of the season through the Conservatory's breathtaking and timeless décor.

- The holiday display features:
- A 20-foot-tall toy snowman
  - A 25-foot-long toy train and caboose
  - A 35-foot-tall soldier on a holiday drum
  - A 15-foot-tall rocking horse
  - Eight red bows with oversized ornaments overhead
  - Six large white Christmas trees ranging from 16-to-25 feet-tall

### Veuve Clicquot In the Snow

Beginning on Friday, December 5, from 5–10 p.m., Veuve Clicquot will debut its limited-time holiday pop-up bar, In the Snow, located in The District at MGM National Harbor. The space will be transformed as a charming after-ski retreat with snowy accents, cozy winter vibes and nostalgic ski-inspired décor. Guests can escape the cold in this picturesque setting while enjoying Veuve Clicquot



PHOTO COURTESY MGM NATIONAL HARBOR

See **DISPLAY** Page A3    MGM National Harbor is celebrating the holiday season with a dazzling new Conservatory display filled with festive charm.

## Maryland Department of the Environment Honors Student Artists at “Rethink Recycling” Sculpture Contest

*Two Suitland High School students earn first-place awards; Annual Awards Promote Recycling, Creativity Among Students*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Department of the Environment

BALTIMORE (Nov. 21, 2025)—Tamaya Harding, a student at Century High School, won the grand prize at the Maryland Department of the Environment's 24th annual “Rethink Recycling” Sculpture Contest today at Montgomery Park in Baltimore City. The winning entry, a flower arrangement made from plastic spoons, floral foam and Christmas light wire, was entitled “What We Once Enjoyed.”

Students from four schools and one 4-H club, representing five counties, won the top prizes in four other categories. This year, 49 entries from 14 high schools and one 4-H club were on display. The students made their sculptures from reused materials.

“These sculptures bring the benefits of recycling to life in a beautiful way,” said Maryland Department of the Environment Secretary Serena McIlwain. “Waste diversion reduces the amount of material going into landfills, and that helps us reduce greenhouse gasses and fight climate change.”

The grand prize winner received a \$500 Amazon gift card. The category first-place winners, each of whom received \$200 Amazon gift cards, were:

- Creativity: **Chelsie Cunningham**, Suitland High School, for “Specimens”
- Workmanship: **Shakeema Randolph**, Suitland High School, for “Luminous Lamp Post”
- Use of Materials: Alana Van Ornum, Kent Island High School, for “Revival of the Ordinary”
- People's Choice: Darwyn Inselman, Kent Island High School, for “Chesapeake Avian Life”

The second-place winners in each category, who received \$100 Amazon gift cards, were:



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

**1st Place Creativity: “Specimens”, Chelsie Cunningham, Suitland High School**

- Creativity: Natalie Burns, C. Milton Wright High School, for “Mother Nature and the Protector”
- Workmanship: Anvita Divvela, Damascus Community 4-H Club, for “The Girl”
- Use of Materials: Cassandra Krug, Kent Island High School, for “Real Magic Gown”
- People's Choice: Jeb Grissom, Century High School, for “Recyclesaurus”

All winners also received two passes to the National Aquarium. All students and teachers who participated received a \$30 Amazon gift card.

To see photos of the winning entries, visit: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mdenvironment/albums/72177720330483983/wit/h/54938341586>

Sponsors of the event were: the American Cleaning Institute; Electronics Value Recovery; the Maryland-Delaware-D.C. Beverage Association; the Maryland Recycling Network, the National Aquarium; and Waste Management.

“The American Cleaning Institute is



PHOTO COURTESY MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

**1st Place Workmanship: “Luminous Lamp Post”, Shakeema Randolph, Suitland High School**

proud to continue its support of the Rethink Recycling Sculpture Contest, said Emily Trentacope, vice president of sustainability for the American Cleaning Institute. “We're committed to eliminating cleaning product packaging waste, and supporting recovery, reuse, and recycling systems is a big part of our roadmap to get there. We appreciate the awareness MDE brings to reducing

See **SCULPTURE** Page A3

## Maryland Transit Administration Announces Delivery of Final Light Rail Vehicle for Purple Line Project

*Arrival of 28th Light Rail Vehicle Marks Major Milestone as Project Advances Dynamic System Testing*

By PRESS OFFICER  
Maryland Transit Administration

RIVERDALE, Md. (Nov. 25, 2025)—The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration announces a major milestone in the advancement of the Purple Line project—the arrival of the 28th and final light rail vehicle (LRV) to the state of Maryland. Arriving ahead of schedule, the vehicle delivery marks a significant step in the overall progress of the project and will enhance the project team's ability to advance comprehensive testing and commissioning activities across the full alignment.

“This milestone underscores the tremendous progress the Purple Line has made in 2025,” said Purple Line Senior Project Director, Ray Biggs II. “Every milestone we reach brings us closer to delivering a more accessible and better-connected region.”

The final vehicle delivery on November 19 completes the project's full order of 28 state-of-the-art vehicles. At 142-feet long, the light rail vehicles are one of the longest in the United States, with capacity for 430 passengers and seating for 80. The LRVs can accommodate up to eight wheelchairs and have 8 bike racks to support first- and last-mile connections. The Purple Line LRVs were built by CAF, a Spain-based railcar manufacturer, and assembled in

Elmira, New York. Once delivered, each LRV undergoes an extensive commissioning and testing process.

The Purple Line is now 84.6% complete with more than 148,000 of 193,100 feet of track laid overall, bringing rail progress to 76.6%. All rail in Prince George's County is installed. For more information about the vehicles and the Purple Line project, as well as the latest construction updates, road closures and detours, visit <https://purplelinemd.com>. Watch the video celebrating the 28th LRV delivery on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7Vf-PYavLE>.

The Maryland Transit Administration is one of the largest multi-modal transit systems in the United States. The Purple Line is a 16-mile, 21-station light rail line that will extend from Bethesda in Montgomery County to New Carrollton in Prince George's County. It will directly connect to the Metro-rail's Red, Green and Orange Lines at Bethesda, Silver Spring, College Park and New Carrollton. The Purple Line will also connect to MARC, Amtrak, and local bus services. To learn more, visit [purplelinemd.com](https://purplelinemd.com), and follow Purple Line on Facebook, Instagram, Threads, BlueSky, X/Twitter and YouTube.

### INSIDE

**Bowie State University Athletics Announces Leadership Change for Football Program**

**Celebrate the Holiday Season with M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County**

**Around the County**, Page A2

**Andrews Federal Credit Union Provides \$10,000 to Fort Washington Boys and Girls Club**

**Maryland Has the Second Highest Commute Time in the US**

**Community**, Page A3

**To Be Equal: Nancy Pelosi's Legacy Exemplifies the National Urban League Pillars**

Nancy Pelosi's service reminds us that leadership is judged not by the offices held but by the lives improved.

**Commentary**, Page A4

**Reduce, Reuse, Rejoice: 5 Holiday Hacks for Eco-Friendly Celebrations**

**Tips for Parents to Minimize Stress and Maximize Joy During the Holidays**

**Holiday Tips**, Page A5



# TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

## Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

### BSU 2025 WINTER COMMENCEMENT

Bowie State University is excited to welcome Rev. Dr. Howard-Johnson Wesley as the keynote speaker for the 2025 Winter Commencement. Dr. Wesley is widely recognized for his dynamic leadership and unwavering commitment to justice, making him an extraordinary voice to help celebrate this year’s graduates. We invite our BSU family and community to join us on Friday, December 19, 2025, at 9 a.m. for a powerful ceremony honoring the Class of 2025.

### CAPITAL WHEEL

Sunday is a Fun Day at The Capital Wheel! Enjoy a \$15 spin overlooking the Potomac River with spectacular views of the city skyline every Sunday until December 28, 2025. Choose your tickets: General admission from 1800, Child (Ages 3–11) from \$14.50, Sunday Funday from \$15.00. The address is 101 MGM National Avenue Oxon Hill, Maryland. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com>.

### POMONKEY HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

“Our goal for 2026 is to start remodeling the inside of the old Pomonkey High School Building. I am often asked, “Do you think we will ever get the building finished?” My response is yes, and we can do it, but we need your help. We can reach more people with the help of the organized graduating classes. I would like to challenge the following classes 59, 62, 64, 65, 66, 67 to send out emails or letters to their classmates with 2026 Membership/Donation Forms and encourage them to join. It is not too late if you are looking for a tax write off for 2025. Remember we are 501c3 and your contributions are tax deductible.”

“We are exploring ways we can stay connected with members. We now have 143 people on our Pomonkey High School Alumni Association Facebook page; we have emails for some of the registered members. If you are not included in the email blast, please contact me with your email at [jacobak@comcast.net](mailto:jacobak@comcast.net).” Information from PHSA NOVEMBER 2025 Newsletter Jacqueline L. Baker, President.

### PRINCE GEORGE’S COUNTY SENIOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

MEDICAL PROGRAM: Senior and disabled County residents may receive transportation for medical purposes, especially dialysis. Residents may call 301-499-8603 up to 7 days in advance to schedule routine appointments. For those seeking on-going or permanent transportation for medical purposes, such as dialysis treatment, you must request these services in writing and send them to: Prince George’s County, Office of Transportation, Attention: Transit Division 9400 Peppercorn Place, Suite 320, Largo, Maryland 20774.

NUTRITION PROGRAM: Senior county residents may receive free transportation to strategically located group sites for nutritional lunch and companionship. Senior residents, who are homebound and cannot attend a nutrition site, may have meals delivered to their residence. Any person who is 60 years

or older may be eligible, as is a spouse of any age when accompanying an age eligible spouse. The Senior Nutrition sites operate Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Note: limited transportation is available. For more specific information, call 301-265-8475.

### CIRQUE DREAMS HOLIDAZE

Saturday December 20, 2025, the movie Cirque Dreams will be showing 4 p.m. at the Theater at MGM National Harbor. Friday, December 12, 2025, at 8 p.m. Earth Wind and Fire.

### A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS LIVE

A Charlie Brown Christmas Live at Harmony Hall Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 6 p.m. From \$37.61. The address is 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Telephone: (301) 203-6040. Tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/a-charlie-brown-christmas-live-at-harmony-hall-tickets-1962574552317>.

### DUAL IN THE SCHOOLS EXPANSION

“For years dual enrollment has helped our high school students earn college credit while still in high school to take those classes without ever leaving the school building. That is about to change. Along with Prince George County Executive Aisha N. Braveboy and the County Council, they announced the expansion of tuition-free college courses to be offered within every PGCPs high school by the 2026–27 school year. The program is growing from five schools to nine this school year and will reach all 25 high schools next school year.

Courses will be taught by PGCPs educators credentialed as PGCC adjunct professors, creating new pathways for professional growth while expanding college learning within our schools. #PGCPSProud. Learn more: <https://www.pgcp.org/inside-scoop-blog/2025-2026/college-courses-coming-to-every-pgcp-high-school-by-202627>.

### HOLIDAYS IN HARMONY

The prince George’s County Harmony Hall is hosting Holiday’s in Harmony: Motown & Soul Holiday Classics on Friday, December 12, 2025, at 11 a.m., featuring the BRENCORE ALL STARS. The address is 10701 Livingston Road Fort Washington, Maryland 20744. Telephone: 301-203-6040. Eventbrite <https://www.eventbrite.com>.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

Members of Pomonkey High School Alumni Association you are invited to a Christmas Party Wednesday December 17, 2025, from 1–5 p.m. at the American Legion Post 170. Address is 4345 Livingston Road, Indian Head, Maryland, 20640. There will be door prizes, music, DJ Jackie, refreshments and a cash bar. A \$5.00 donation at entrance.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Pomonkey High School Alumni Association extend once again to our Scholarship Winner’s as you prepare for the new school year! Wishing you safe travels, the confidence to shine in all that you do, and success in achieving your goals.

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

With Mary McHale, will return soon!

## Andrews Federal Credit Union Provides Treats, Community Connection at Fort Washington Event

By PRESS OFFICER  
Andrews Federal Credit Union

SUITLAND, Md. (Nov. 26, 2025)—Andrews Federal Credit Union recently hosted a Trunk or Treat event to engage with the local community at the credit union’s soon-to-open Fort Washington branch.

The credit union coordinated the Trunk or Treat event as a way for local residents to become more familiar with the credit union and to preview the new branch location (scheduled to open in early 2026). The event was supported by the Radio One team and on-air personality Trey Rainey. During the event, credit union team members provided treats, games and entertainment to community members, as well as introducing them to the credit union and answering questions about financial services.

The Trunk or Treat was one of a series of events designed to create connection and engagement within the Fort Washington community as the credit union prepares to open a new branch in the area early next year. The credit union’s employees have contributed time and energy to connect with the community, including participating in branch events, and playing a key role in sponsoring and supporting events with local non-profit organization Fort Washington Forward.

According to Andrews Federal Chief Operating Officer Damita Robinson, the credit union is committed to supporting growth and financial security in the community. “As we establish the new branch, our goal is to be seen as a resource for our Fort Washington community,” Robinson



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREWS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

**Andrews Federal Credit Union recently hosted a Trunk or Treat event to engage with the local community at the credit union’s soon-to-open Fort Washington branch.**

said. “Andrews Federal is committed to being a partner for our members throughout their lives, and a resource they can rely on whether they are choosing a home or car, or planning for future long-term goals.”

Andrews Federal has served the Maryland community since the credit union’s founding in 1948 at Joint Base Andrews. The new Fort Washington branch will be the credit union’s fifth branch in Maryland, including an on-base location and the credit union’s corporate headquarters. Andrews

Federal also has branches in Washington, D.C., Virginia, New Jersey and on military installations in Europe.

Founded in 1948, Andrews Federal Credit Union has grown to serve more than 147,000 members in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and military installations in central Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands. For more information about Andrews Federal, visit [www.andrewsfcu.org](http://www.andrewsfcu.org).

## Around the County

### Bowie State University Athletics Announces Leadership Change for Football Program

BOWIE, Md. (Nov. 21, 2025)—The Department of Athletics at Bowie State University has made the decision to not renew Kyle Jackson’s contract as head coach of the football program. Bowie State will begin a nationwide search for the next head football coach immediately.

“On behalf of Bulldog Athletics, I want to extend our sincere gratitude to Coach Jackson for the meaningful impact he has made on our football program, both as a player and as a dedicated coach over the last 11 years,” said Clyde Doughty, Jr., vice president for intercollegiate athletics & recreation. “We are grateful for his commitment to our student athletes and the lasting contributions he leaves behind, and we wish him well in his future endeavors. As we look ahead, we believe new leadership will best position the program for its next chapter of sustained excellence. We remain fully committed to investing in our football program and ensuring that our student athletes and the next head coach have the resources and support needed to seize this opportunity.”

Jackson compiled a 19–21 record, including a 10–16 mark in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) Conference. He was named the 10th head coach for the Bowie State University football program in January 2023 after serving in an interim capacity during the 2022 season. He was previously the recruiting coordinator and linebackers coach at Bowie State for five seasons. Prior to his return to BSU, Jackson spent the 2015 season at Division II Emporia State University as a defensive graduate assistant.

For the latest information on Bowie State Athletics and its 14 varsity sports, visit [bsubulldogs.com](http://bsubulldogs.com).

### Celebrate the Holiday Season with M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George’s County

*Free or low-cost Holiday Events for the Entire Family*  
RIVERDALE, Md. (Nov. 24, 2025)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC), Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George’s County, invites the community to celebrate the holidays with free or low-cost events for the entire family. From dazzling light displays, holiday concerts, and visits from Santa the entire family can Live More, Play More this holiday season.

#### Upcoming events include:

**Festival of Lights**  
Friday, November 28–Thursday, January 1, 5–9:30 p.m. nightly  
Watkins Regional Park  
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD  
Experience the magic of the holiday season at the annual Festival of Lights, all from the comfort of your car. Drive through three miles of dazzling lights displays featuring more than 2.5 million lights, the largest show of its kind in the Washington D.C. area. Returning this year, Holiday Hayrides, a festive way to enjoy the sights with loved ones. Advanced registration is required for hayrides.

**The Nutcracker with the National Ballet Company**  
Saturday, December 6, 7 p.m. & Sunday, December 7, 4 p.m.  
Prince George’s Publick Playhouse  
5445 Landover Road, Hyattsville, MD 20784  
Returning to the Publick Playhouse stage, the National Ballet Company revisits the enchanting world of “The Nutcracker,” a holiday classic that has captivated audiences of all ages for generations. The production, with its magical storyline, vibrant costumes, and breathtaking choreography, is set against the backdrop of Tchaikovsky’s iconic score, creating an immersive experience that transports viewers to a whimsical winter wonderland.

**Holiday Jingle Jam** | FREE  
Saturday, December 13, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.  
Southern Area Aquatics and Recreation Complex  
13601 Missouri Ave, Brandywine, MD  
Spend a magical morning of holiday fun with the family. Create your own Elf on the Shelf, enjoy cookies with cocoa, and snap a photo with a special jolly guest. Then, experience the heartwarming children’s show Holiday Block Party at 11 a.m., performed by the Canady Foundation for the Arts Repertory Theatre. Through music, dance, puppetry, and storytelling, journey globally to explore cultural traditions from Diwali to Kwanza, Las Posadas, and more.

**Holiday Craft Fair** | FREE  
Saturday, December 13, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Brentwood Arts Exchange  
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood, MD  
Kick off the holidays at the festive Holiday Craft Fair, where you can shop from over a dozen local artisans showcasing their handcrafted goods. Discover unique gifts, enjoy live music, and sip on seasonal favorites from Maryland Meadworks. Whether you’re searching for the perfect present or simply soaking in the holiday cheer, you’ll find something special for everyone on your list.

**Skate with Santa**  
Saturday, December 13, 2 p.m.–4 p.m.  
Herb W. Wells Ice Rink  
5211 Campus Drive, College Park, MD 20740  
Break out your festive holiday wear and celebrate the season, ice skating and taking photos with Santa. No registration required.



# COMMUNITY

## Around the County from A2

**A Charlie Brown Christmas with the Eric Byrd Trio**  
Saturday, December 20, 2–4 p.m.  
Montpelier Arts Center  
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD  
Christmastime is here! Celebrate the season with an afternoon filled with festive music from the Peanuts’ special. Comprised of pianist/ vocalist Eric Byrd, bassist Bhagwan Khalsa, and drummer Alphonso Young, Jr., the Trio has traveled the world as enthusiastic ambassadors of jazz. Bringing fresh arrangements to these familiar songs, they are sure to put you in a holiday mood.

**In the Water Basketball Showcase**  
Friday, December 26, and Saturday, December 27, 12 noon  
tip off  
The Show Place Arena  
14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD  
In the Water Basketball Showcase brings two electrifying days of high school basketball action to The Show Place Arena. Don’t miss this holiday showdown, featuring the top boys’ and girls’ teams across the DC Metropolitan Area battling it out under one roof in a high-stakes, high-energy atmosphere.  
For more information about upcoming M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation events, visit [pgparks.com](http://pgparks.com).

## Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

## Is Social Security Really a “Good Deal?”

By RUSSELL GLOOR,  
National Social Security Advisor at the AMAC Foundation,  
the non-profit arm of the **Association of Mature American Citizens**

**Dear Rusty:** You’ve said in the past that most people recoup their SS contributions within five years of starting benefits, thus Social Security “is an exceptionally good deal.” Your calculation is correct but misleading; if it were not, SS would have been insolvent long ago. I will, in fact, get “my” contributions back in about five years, but my employer’s contributions will take another five years, and that is money that my employer could have been paying me, so they are really “my” contributions. But even that ignores the time value of money. I did a calculation as if my contributions, along with those of my employer, were invested in an account earning 5% per year. That would provide me the equivalent of SS income for 24 years, approximately what my life expectancy was when I retired. So, it’s not a bad deal, but it is hardly exceptional. It is roughly the equivalent of me investing that money throughout my career and using the total to buy an annuity.

Of course, Social Security does have the advantage of certainty, at least until it goes broke. My portfolio would not earn a steady 5% every year, though that is at the low end of what financial managers would expect over a long period. And it does force people to save, many of whom would otherwise make no provision for retirement. **Signed: Realistic Senior**

**Dear Realistic:** Thanks very much for your feedback on my previous article. I think it’s important to draw a distinction for SS contributions made by an employer, because that is not money the individual personally pays, but rather an obligation for employers to help fund the Social Security program. Without that federal obligation, it is doubtful that employers would, instead, provide employees with equivalent additional compensation, so the thought that these are really your contributions is not a fair assessment. Indeed, they are contributions which happen to be tied to your earnings level (to a cap), for which employers receive relief on their corporate income tax, and likely would not make if not required by law.

As you have noted, Social Security has the advantage of certainty, something which is lacking when it comes to investing the equivalent amounts in the financial markets. And, as you have hinted, there exists a substantial failure by future American retirees to save adequately for their retirement, a problem well known in most financial circles. Thus, the certainty of Social Security makes it a crucial part of everyone’s retirement planning—and it will be there! Despite all the angst attributed to the current financial issues facing the program, there is little doubt that Social Security is here to stay. The question is—what reform is needed to make the program fully solvent for generations of future Americans? The Association of Mature American Citizens (AMAC) has developed a proposal to sensibly reform Social Security and avoid the currently projected 2033 date that the SS Trust Funds are expected to be depleted (which will necessitate an across-the-board cut for everyone). We have little doubt that the reform needed will happen (it would be political suicide for Congress if it did not), and hopefully soon. You can read about AMAC’s proposed solution at this link: [www.amac.us/social-security-guarantee](http://www.amac.us/social-security-guarantee).

Again, thank you for your feedback and commentary. Please know that we very much appreciate your thoughts and are always willing to discuss these issues.

*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](http://amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory)) or email us at [ssadviser@amacfoundation.org](mailto:ssadviser@amacfoundation.org).*

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

## Andrews Federal Credit Union Provides \$10,000 to Fort Washington Boys and Girls Club

By PRESS OFFICER  
**Andrews Federal Credit Union**

SUITLAND, Md. (Dec. 1, 2025)—Andrews Federal Credit Union recently provided a \$10,000 donation to support engagement and physical activity for a local Boys and Girls Club.

Andrews Federal representatives awarded the Fort Washington - Accokeek Recreation Council Boys & Girls Club leadership with a check for \$10,000 to fund sports participation and programs for the council. The check presentation took place at the homecoming event for the Fort Washington - Accokeek Recreation Council Boys & Girls Club Cannons.

This donation was part of a series of contributions and celebrations to increase Andrews Federal’s impact in the Fort Washington community as the credit union prepares to open a new Fort Washington branch in early 2026. The credit union hosted a Back to School Bash earlier in the fall and gave away school supplies and backpacks, as well as celebrating Halloween with a Trunk or Treat event for local residents.

According to Andrews Federal Chief Operating Officer Damita Robinson, these partnerships are designed to emphasize the credit union’s commitment to community support. “Credit unions are focused on people helping people and that’s what we intend to do in service to our Fort Washington community,” Robinson said. “Our Andrews Federal team continues to show



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREWS FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

**Andrews Federal representatives awarded the Fort Washington - Accokeek Recreation Council Boys & Girls Club leadership with a check for \$10,000 to fund sports participation and programs for the council.**

their dedication to service through the ways that we partner with local non-profit organizations and connect with our neighbors. We are looking forward to the opening of the Fort Washington branch, so we can continue to support this community with low-cost, high-value financial products and services.”

Andrews Federal has served the Maryland community since the credit union’s founding in 1948 at Joint Base Andrews. The new Fort Washington branch will be the credit union’s fifth branch in Maryland, including an on-base location at Joint Base

Andrews and the credit union’s corporate headquarters. Andrews Federal also has branches in Washington, D.C., Virginia, New Jersey and on military installations in Europe.

*Founded in 1948, Andrews Federal Credit Union has grown to serve more than 147,000 members in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and military installations in central Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands. For more information about Andrews Federal, visit [www.andrewsfcu.org](http://www.andrewsfcu.org).*

## Maryland Has the Second Highest Commute Time in the US

By SANDRA SMITH  
**Capital News Service**

Marylanders are spending more time on the road: the state’s average one-way commute time increased to 31.5 minutes in 2023—the second longest in the country.

While Maryland’s commute time is still behind New York’s—the state with the longest commute, at 32.8 minutes—the average Maryland commute has increased by more than two minutes from two years prior, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey.

In Baltimore City, commuters typically spent about 29.5 minutes getting to work each way. In Southern Maryland, where many workers travel into the Washington, D.C. region, commute times climbed above the state average. Washington D.C.’s commuters spent about 30.3 minutes on the road as of 2023.

And commute times have likely only gotten worse in the region as fewer people are working from home. Levels of remote and hybrid work have dropped sharply since the pandemic, especially in the last year after President Trump pushed federal agencies to return employees to the office.

Maryland’s commute challenges are also tied to its proximity to Washington, D.C.. The federal return to work policy has returned traffic volumes to near pre-COVID levels.

The return to in-person work policy urges heads of departments and agencies in the executive branch of government to take necessary steps to terminate remote positions. This requires federal employees to return to work in-person at their respective offices on a full-time basis.

A 2024 commuter survey by the National Center for Smart Growth and the Maryland Department of Transportation surveyed 969 Maryland workers. The findings suggested that the portion of workers with hybrid or remote schedules dropped from 34% to 27% between 2023 and 2024.

Almost three quarters of Maryland workers were fully in-person, and only 20% of Maryland workers were hybrid—a decline from the pre-pandemic rate of 24%.

County-level trends show that commute times are longest in Maryland’s northern and southern counties, including Frederick, Carroll, Harford, Calvert, Charles and St. Mary’s.

## Display from A1

Yellow Label and Rosé, perfectly paired with a holiday charcuterie. The picturesque experience continues Fridays and Saturdays from December 5–26, open from 5–10 p.m.

### Cirque Dreams Holidaze

In addition to whimsical décor and holiday treats, Cirque Dreams Holidaze returns to MGM National Harbor for three shows on December 19 and 20. The family holiday spectacular features a world-renowned cast of performers who light up the stage, wrapping a Broadway-style musical infused with contemporary circus artistry into the ultimate holiday gift for

the entire family.

Date: Friday, December 19  
Time: 8 p.m.  
Tickets: [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

Date: Saturday, December 20  
Time: 12 p.m.  
Tickets: [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

Date: Saturday, December 20  
Time: 4 p.m.  
Tickets: [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

*Located in an unrivaled setting, MGM National Harbor offers stunning panoramic views of the Eastern shore of the Potomac River in Maryland. The \$1.4 billion*

## Sculpture from A1

waste and congratulate the student artists on their engagement in such an important issue.”

Contest judges were: Tania Romero, environmental program coordinator, the Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore; John Lewis, writer and former teacher at the Maryland Institute College of Art; Rayne Alexander, intermedia artist and writer

and senior publicist, Johns Hopkins Press; Amanda Johnson, volunteer for SCRAP Baltimore; and Valerie Androutsopoulos, vice president for business development, Electronics Value Recovery.

Since 2001, MDE has celebrated America Recycles Day by hosting the annual “Rethink Recycling” Sculpture Contest. High school students from across Maryland are invited to participate by creating sculptures made of recycled

and reusable materials. The competition is just one way MDE educates and empowers the public to reuse and recycle materials that would have otherwise gone into landfills.

To find out what you can do to reduce, reuse, recycle and buy recycled products, visit MDE’s recycling webpage. The department’s mission is to protect and restore the environment for the health and well-being of all Marylanders.

*LEED® Gold Certified resort sits a short distance from Washington, D.C. to the north and historic sites, including George Washington’s Mount Vernon estate across the river in Virginia. The 24-story, 308-room resort features premier amenities and experiences for locals as well as visitors from around the world including a dynamic two-level casino with over 160,000 square feet of space that includes slots, table games, and poker; a world-class spa and salon; an entertainment theater with flexible seating for up to 3,000; high-end branded retail; 50,000 square feet of meeting space; and restaurants from renowned local, national, and international chefs. Visit <https://mgmnationalharbor.com> or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.*



# COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

## Nancy Pelosi’s Legacy Exemplifies the National Urban League Pillars of Democracy, Diversity, and Economic Opportunity

“When I left home to run for Congress, I had to know why I was doing that. My why was one in five children in America lives in poverty, goes to sleep hungry at night. That was my why.”  
—Nancy Pelosi

If the measure of public service is how deeply one fights for the most vulnerable among us, then Nancy Patricia Pelosi stands among the most consequential leaders of our era. From her early days

in elective office to becoming the first woman Speaker of the House she carried the hopes of working families, children, communities of color, and low-income Americans into the halls of power. She carried them into those halls not as tokens but as rightful partners in shaping America’s future. Her record of legislation is impressive, but what makes her stand out is her willingness to navigate hard moments. When the financial crisis struck in

2008, she led a divided House to approve the rescue package that helped stabilize the economy and protect jobs and incomes in neighborhoods long underserved. When health care reform seemed stalled she marshaled her caucus to pass what became the Affordable Care Act, extending coverage to tens of millions of Americans and laying the foundation for better economic and health outcomes in communities that too often lacked both. But beyond those landmark laws her leadership in defending democracy was equally unyielding. When the right to vote and fair representation came under threat, she refused to accept that silence or delay was an option. She guided her caucus to take on efforts to restore protections for voting rights and ensure that barriers to the ballot were resisted. She said publicly that our democracy is strongest when every voice is heard and every vote is counted. She traveled to schools and colleges and urged young people to exercise their civic power and to believe fully in the promise of equality. In the realm of diversity, her impact was equally clear. Under her leadership the Democratic Caucus in the House grew substantially more reflective of America’s rich mosaic. She remarked with pride that her caucus was “about seventy percent women, people of color, LGBTQ.” She helped ensure that women and people of color gained not only seats but leadership roles, shifting the com-

position of leadership from a narrow group into a broader reflection of the nation. This was not about optics. It was about making sure the people who have bore the burdens of inequality are included in designing the solutions. What makes Pelosi’s legacy powerful for the National Urban League is that she fused all three pillars we champion: democracy, diversity, and economic opportunity. She treated the fight against poverty not as separate from the fight for justice and equality. She treated access to health care, wages that lifted families, education that opened doors, and representation that broadened power as interconnected pieces of the same mission. As she steps away from Congress she leaves us with a living blueprint. Democracy is not self-executing. Inclusion is not automatic. Opportunity is not guaranteed. It requires leadership that refuses to stand down, that believes every child deserves a fair start, and that lifts up people and communities often unseen. Nancy Pelosi’s service reminds us that leadership is judged not by the offices held but by the lives improved. She looked at the long lines of children hungry for opportunity and chose to act. For the National Urban League, legacy is a call to carry on. To defend voting rights, to broaden participation, to open doors of access and to sustain inclusive democracy that works for every American.  
—November 22, 2025

## A Day of Unity, Culture, & Celebration: Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum Presents Its Annual Kwanzaa Celebration on Dec. 13 in Annapolis

Performances by the Performing Arts Center for African Cultures, Cuisine by Swahilli Village, and Black-owned vendors market anchor BDTM’s Kwanzaa celebration

By PRESS OFFICER  
Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Nov. 24, 2025)—The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum invites the public to join us for our unified and joyous Annual Kwanzaa Celebration on Saturday, December 13, 2025, from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. at 84 Franklin Street in Annapolis, MD. Join in immersive cultural experiences, performances, and collective storytelling that invite reflection on Black heritage, resilience, and joy. Experience live performances based in African diasporic traditions, Afrocentric cuisine, interactive art-making, and a Black-owned vendors marketplace with one-of-a-kind jewelry, clothes, books, and thoughtful Holiday gifts. This vibrant all-day celebration of art, music, food, storytelling, and community embodies the Seven Principles of Kwanzaa: Unity (Umoja), Self-Determination (Kujichagulia), Collective Work and Responsibility (Ujima), Cooperative Economics (Ujamaa), Purpose (Nia), Creativity (Kuumba), and Faith (Imani).

**Program Highlights**  
**Adinkra Necklace Workshop:** Led by guest teaching artist Noreen Smith, this interactive art-making and storytelling workshop invites participants to consider their personal and ancestral journeys in creating a one-of-a-kind wearable art piece. While participants make their necklaces, they will also be invited to reflect on the past, present, and future—using West African symbols to ignite memory and creatively preserve history and culture. This workshop will engage participants in a creative process of connecting ancestral wisdom with Afrofuturism, fusing heritage with imagination to express identity, culture, and hope for the future.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Saturday, December 13, 2025  
10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Location:  
Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum  
84 Franklin Street, Annapolis, MD 21401

RSVP:  
<https://bit.ly/2025KwanzaaCelebration>

This event is free and open to the public.  
Registration encouraged.

**Music & Performances:** Enjoy the rhythm and soul of Kwanzaa with performances by the Performing Arts Center for African Cultures, celebrating the spirit and creativity of the African diaspora. The Performing Arts Center for African Cultures brings African music, dances, and storytelling to all who are interested, showcasing the beauty and diversity of various African cultures.  
**Food as Culture:** Indulge in the bold flavors of East Africa provided by Swahili Village, celebrating the vibrancy of Kenyan culture through cuisine. Their commitment to cultural connection transforms each dish into an invitation to honor our roots and celebrate community.  
**Black-Owned Vendors Market:** Support local artisans, makers, and entrepreneurs providing handcrafted goods, jewelry, books, and fashion that celebrate Black creativity and cooperative economics.  
**A Celebration for All Ages:** Filled with activities and discussions for children, teens, and adults,



PHOTO COURTESY BANNEKER-DOUGLASS-TUBMAN MUSEUM

**Enjoy the rhythm and soul of Kwanzaa with performances by the Performing Arts Center for African Cultures, celebrating the spirit and creativity of the African diaspora.**  
The Kwanzaa Celebration is a joyous intergenerational experience honoring the past, celebrating the present, and inspiring the future together. Thank you to our partner, Chesapeake Children’s Museum, for providing activities.  
The Banneker-Douglass-Tubman Museum (BDTM) is the State of Maryland’s official museum of African heritage and culture. It is operated by the Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture. It serves to document, interpret, and promote African American history and culture through exhibitions, programs, and projects in order to improve the understanding and appreciation of America’s rich cultural diversity for all. The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Admission is free. To learn more, visit <http://bdtmuseum.maryland.gov>. Follow us on social media: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube.  
The Maryland Commission on African American History and Culture (MCAAHC) is committed to discovering, documenting, preserving, collecting, and promoting Maryland’s African American heritage. To learn more, visit <https://africanamerican.maryland.gov>. Follow us on social media: Facebook and LinkedIn.

## County Preserves 288 Affordable Housing Units Along the Purple Line Corridor

Department of Housing and Community Development Uses Right of First Refusal Program to Keep Housing Affordable

By PRESS OFFICER  
Housing & Redevelopment, Prince George’s County

LARGO, Md. (Nov. 20, 2025)—The Prince George’s County Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) exercised its Right of First Refusal (ROFR) on Plaza Towers Apartments, a 288-unit multi-family apartment building, located at 6700 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Maryland to keep the units in this complex affordable. According to County Resolution CR-51-2015, the County can exercise its Right of First Refusal (ROFR) where the owner of a multi-family rental facility of 20 or more units intends to sell the building. DHCD has the authority to purchase the property or assign its rights to purchase the property to a third-party, in an effort to stabilize, preserve, and expand housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households and to increase the availability of quality affordable rental housing in designated areas of the County. Property Owners and prospective buyers may request that DHCD approve an exception to the County’s ROFR in accordance with Section 13-1114 of the Code.  
“We believe this is a bold step and the right step to expand affordable housing opportunities in Prince George’s County,” said County Executive Aisha N. Braveboy. “Our strategic use of the Right of First Refusal at Plaza Towers Apartments is a clear demonstration of our unwavering commitment to equitable and inclusive economic growth. The ROFR is a tool that allows us to preserve and protect existing affordable housing while ensuring that residents

have access to high-quality, safe, and stable homes like Plaza Towers - particularly in thriving, transit-oriented communities like the Purple Line Corridor like Plaza Towers which is within a mile of a Metro Rail station and future Purple Line stations.”  
“This acquisition is a major win for Prince George’s County residents,” said Jonathan R. Butler, Director for Department of Housing and Community Development for Prince George’s County. “Our agency fully leveraged the Right of First Refusal Exception tool and worked closely with mission-driven partners, thereby safeguarding housing affordability and neighborhood stability for decades to come.”  
Prince George’s County granted an exception to Horning, the developer of Plaza Towers, and invested a \$3 million ROFR Preservation Fund Loan and a 30-year term County tax deferral in the form of a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT). Horning will designate 100% of the 288 units as affordable and stabilize rent growth for at least 30 years. Planned improvements at Plaza Towers will total approximately \$2.82 million (approximately \$9,800 per unit) phased in over several years. The scope of the work will be determined based on the final Capital Needs Assessment, and is anticipated to include HVAC, plumbing, and structural improvements as well as accessibility improvements to the parking lot and walkways.  
This ROFR agreement furthers the mission of DHCD to preserve or create affordable homes, prevent displacement, advance racial and housing equity, and open greater opportunity for individuals, families, and communities.

Since 2021, the ROFR program has preserved 2,565 units of affordable housing, particularly in high growth and transit-oriented areas.

### The Prince George’s Post

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Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151  
Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260  
Email: [pgpost@gmail.com](mailto:pgpost@gmail.com)  
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# HOLIDAY TIPS

## Reduce, Reuse, Rejoice

## 5 Holiday Hacks for Eco-Friendly Celebrations

FAMILY FEATURES

**H**oliday celebrations bring joy, laughter and lasting memories – but they can also leave behind a sleigh full of waste. From food scraps and empty bottles to wrapping paper and decorations, the season can leave your home full of items that could be reused or recycled.

In fact, household waste increases nearly 25% between Thanksgiving and New Year’s Day, according to survey results from the Center for Biological Diversity. That’s a lot of leftovers, garland and glass that could be kept out of landfills.

To help you cut down on trash and embrace a joyful, less-waste holiday season, the experts at CalRecycle offer these five holiday hacks to help you save cash and protect the planet.

### 1. Plan Meals to Waste Less and Save More

- Shop your pantry first to avoid buying what you already have.
- Buy only what you need and prepare recipes based on guest count.
- Choose local ingredients from sources like farmers markets that minimize packaging.
- Send guests home with leftovers in reusable containers or freeze extras for future meals.

### 2. Recycle Food Scraps

- Not all food can be saved, but it doesn’t have to go in the trash.
- Compost fruit and vegetable trimmings, eggshells, coffee grounds and plate scrapings. Trashed food makes climate pollution in landfills. Recycle it in your green bin instead.
- Most California communities now offer green bin composting. Learn what goes in the green bin by visiting the Curb Your Food Scraps page on [RecyclingReimaginedCA.com](https://www.RecyclingReimaginedCA.com).
- Set out a clearly labeled “food scraps” bin next to your trash, as well as a recycling bin for bottles, cans and other containers so everyone can participate.

### 3. Eat, Drink and Be Eco-Friendly

- Use reusable plates, cups and utensils instead of disposable options.
- Decorate with items you can use year after year or make compostable decor from natural materials.
- Collect empty wine, liquor, juice or other California Redemption Value (CRV)-eligible containers and cash them in once the party is over.
- Serve water in reusable pitchers or carafes instead of single-use plastic bottles.



Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

### 4. Give Greener Gifts

- Choose experiences over stuff, like tickets to events, museum or club memberships, registrations for classes or shared adventures.
- Wrap gifts in fabric, scarves or reusable tins. Or use recyclable paper without glitter or foil.
- Personalize presents with homemade crafts, baked goods or services that reduce packaging.
- Prioritize gifts from local and sustainable businesses that are committed to ethical sourcing, minimal packaging and recycled materials.

### 5. Sort Holiday Waste the Right Way

- After the celebrations, check local recycling rules for how to properly dispose of:
  - o Batteries
  - o Holiday lights
  - o Christmas trees
- Drop off CRV-eligible beverage containers, such as wine and spirit containers, at your nearest recycling site for cash back.

- Donate unwanted gifts or gently used holiday items to local charities or thrift stores.

Make this season joyful and sustainable by finding more tips and recycling locations near you at [RecyclingReimaginedCA.com](https://www.RecyclingReimaginedCA.com).

# Tips for Parents to *Minimize Stress and Maximize Joy* During the Holidays

FAMILY FEATURES

**S**tress and parenting go hand in hand, but during the holiday season, many parents find their stress levels rising to new heights. Between coordinating schedules, shopping, traveling and managing children’s expectations – plus the disruption to the school routine that everyone had finally settled into – the season can feel more like mayhem than merry.

However, by thoughtfully planning and implementing a few practical strategies, parents can protect their well-being and support their families. Early childhood experts from The Goddard School share guidance to help parents stay grounded and make the most of their meaningful family moments this holiday season.

### Clarify Priorities

One of the most empowering steps is to decide in advance what truly matters to your family. Consider:

- Which traditions or gatherings are nonnegotiable?
- Are there holiday events you can skip this year without regret?
- What obligations are you taking on out of habit rather than genuine desire?

By reducing the number of “must-do” activities, you can avoid overextending your family. It’s OK to decline invitations when your calendar is already full.

### Establish a Budget

Holiday spending can weigh heavily on your mind. Create a family holiday budget that includes gifts and activities, then stick to it. Use the opportunity to teach your children about responsible spending and gratitude. Remember, the most meaningful gifts are often those made with time, attention or creativity, not the highest price tag.

### Set Boundaries

Stress often arises when family dynamics, expectations or traditions clash. You can reduce this by setting boundaries and communicating them early. Speak openly with the relatives and friends you’ll see about what’s comfortable for your family and what isn’t (e.g., physical space, travel, topics to avoid). Let your children know what to expect, as the lack of routine during this time can be particularly challenging. Modeling clear boundaries helps your children learn to express their own needs, too.



### Prioritize Your Physical and Emotional Health

Amid the hustle, your own basic care often slips, but your well-being is key to being present for others. Consider establishing routines, such as:

- Sleep: Aim for 7-8 hours per night whenever possible.
- Nutrition: Keep healthy staples in the mix, even if treats abound.
- Movement: A short walk, stretch breaks or gentle exercise may help reset your nervous system. Stepping outside can be especially helpful.

Also, if illness strikes, listen to your body and give yourself permission to pause. Pushing through tends to backfire.

### Design a Stress Rescue Plan

Even the best-laid plans don’t prevent tension or unexpected emotional triggers. Anticipate stress by creating fallback strategies. For example, plan to use a playlist, a quick breathing exercise or a sensory object to help you regroup when your stress escalates. These strategies work for children as well.

If you’re worried about unwanted questions – such as a family member asking about politics or your plans to have another child – rehearse your response in advance with a friend. When these stressful moments arise, having a toolkit gives you a sense of control.

### Unplug and Be Present

Screens are omnipresent. While they serve a purpose, they can be an unwelcome distraction, especially when you’re spending time with loved ones you don’t get to see often. Try to designate screen-free times, such as during meals, after dinner or when gifts are being exchanged. Use screens intentionally, such as video calling out-of-town family members, rather than passively scrolling. Focus on in-person connection by playing games, telling stories, making crafts or taking walks. Remember to lead by example, as your children are watching. Being fully present at key moments is the one gift your family will remember above all else.

As the holidays approach, the pressure to do it all can loom large. By clarifying priorities, setting boundaries and safeguarding your health, you can minimize stress and maximize joy. That said, even with careful planning, things can go off course, and that’s OK. Practice self-compassion and allow for imperfections. Enjoy every laugh, surprise and even the occasional moment of calm.

For more parenting guidance and insights, including a blog and webinar series, visit the Parent Resource Center at [GoddardSchool.com](https://www.GoddardSchool.com).



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EarthTalk®  
Q&A

Revolutionizing Wind Power With  
Bladeless and Other New Tech

By Rachel Berliner | November 21, 2025

Dear EarthTalk:  
What’s new on the horizon for wind energy?  
—R.H.K., Newport, RI

Wind power, a renewable energy source generated from wind turbines, is expected to become significantly more efficient in the coming future. Experts have long been researching, improving and rethinking the structure of wind turbines and wind farms for maximum efficiency.

Recently, a team at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) improved on the Momentum Theory, devised in the 19th century to model how rotors move in an environment. Many factors go into operating a wind farm, like continuously monitoring and changing the direction, angle and rotational speed of the turbines. By advancing this mathematical model, the MIT team devised a tool that allows wind farm operators to make more precise adjustments to maximize energy production. “This is what we’re so excited about, is that it has immediate and direct potential for impact across the value chain of wind power,” says Michael Howland, an Assistant Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at MIT.

Improvements to conventional turbines also show promise. For example, producing turbines with longer blades allows each turbine to capture more energy. Creating taller towers enables generating

electricity from the stronger winds that exist at higher heights. Another feasible development is “wake steering,” which purposefully misaligns turbines with the direction of the airflow in order to generate more energy.

Some companies are innovating beyond the familiar wind turbine, such as Vortex Bladeless, a start-up that has engineered a conical, bladeless wind turbine that utilizes vorticity, an effect that creates a vortex. Vorticity is often avoided because it can cause oscillation, movements back and forth. But David Suriol, a Vortex Bladeless’s founder argues, “why don’t we try to use this energy, not avoid it.”

Another way to generate more energy is to create turbines so they can harness energy in less windy places that don’t have the space for wind farms, like large cities. Some scientists want to harnessing wind power on the ocean with off-shore turbines that float on platforms tethered to the ocean floor.

Although there have been great advancements by researchers, scientists and engineers, there is still strong resistance from people across the country. Policy makers have the important role of developing public knowledge and experience with wind energy, especially in places that are not typically wind-harvesting areas. If you are interested in wind energy’s progression, take the time to educate yourself, friends, family and community about wind energy and the potential it has. In addition, you can contact elected officials to support wind energy legislation in the country.



PHOTO COURTESY EARTHTALK

Vortex Bladeless is pioneering the development of conical, bladeless wind turbines that utilize vorticity, an effect that creates a vortex to convert wind energy to electricity.

CONTACTS: Vortex Bladeless, <https://vortexbladeless.com/>; The Future of Wind Turbines? No Blades, <https://www.wired.com/2015/05/future-wind-turbines-no-blades/>.

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