

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 94, No. 11 March 12 — March 18, 2026

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents

Prince George's County Launches 'Creative Crosswalks: A Ground Mural Safe Streets Pilot Program,' Championing Pedestrian Safety and Vibrant Spaces With Bold Asphalt Art

A dynamic partnership between the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council, Department of Public Works & Transportation, and the Office of County Council Member Jolene Ivey will introduce striking, colorful ground murals to five community sites across Prince George's County.

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council

LARGO, Md. (March 3, 2026)—The Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC), the Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T), and the Office of County Council Member Jolene Ivey today announced the launch of Creative Crosswalks: A Ground Mural Pilot Program, a bold, collaborative public art initiative designed to make streets safer, energize public spaces, and celebrate the County's vibrant diversity.

This pilot program will transform five key roadways and pedestrian spaces into vibrant works of asphalt art, designed and created by local and regional artists. Ground murals are recognized nationwide as visual interventions for traffic calming, community engage-

ment, placemaking, and neighborhood revitalization.

Pilot Program Locations

The Ground Mural Pilot Program will activate the following five roadways across Prince George's County:

- **Columbia Park Community Center:** 901 Kent Village Drive, Landover, MD
- **Prince George's Ballroom:** 2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover, MD
- **Riverdale Elementary School:** 5006 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, MD
- **Hillcrest Heights Community Center:** 2300 Oxon Run Dr., Oxon Hill, MD
- **Glassmanor Community Center:** 1101 Marcy Avenue, Oxon Hill, MD

The project partners include M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County, the Neighborhood Design Center, Prince George's County's Bee Seen, Bee Alert,

Bee Safe program, and Maryland's Department of Labor Apprenticeship Office.

The Neighborhood Design Center will lead data collection to produce a Prince George's County community resource, The Made You Look: Art in the Right of Way Tool Kit, and support community engagement to ensure the program is responsive to community needs and that its outcomes are documented and shared to inform future public art and ground mural investments across Prince George's County.

"Public art is an infrastructure. It builds community identity, signals investment, and invites people to engage with their surroundings in a completely new way. Ground murals have been proven to slow traffic and make our streets safer for the people walking them



PHOTO COURTESY PRINCE GEORGE'S ARTS AND HUMANITIES COUNCIL

Creative Crosswalks: A Ground Mural Pilot Program is a bold, collaborative public art initiative that will transform five key roadways and pedestrian spaces into vibrant works of asphalt art, designed and created by local and regional artists.

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Youth Showcase Highlights Student Talent and Awards Prizes and Scholarship

By PRESS OFFICER
The Society, Inc.,
Harbor City Maryland Chapter

On Sunday, March 22, 2026, The Society, Incorporated Supporting the Arts, Harbor City Maryland Chapter (HCMC) will host its biannual Youth Showcase at the Harmony Hall Regional Arts Center, Concert Hall, 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, MD, from 2:30–5:00 p.m.

This year's Showcase is co-produced by former participant, dance phenom and 2023 award recipient Matthew Crittenden and is inspired by the theme, "Ignite the Future: Soaring in Creative Excellence." Special guests include professional musician Cherie "Sweet Cherie" Mitchell-Agurs, Dr. Tuliza Fleming, and Bowie State University social media influencers Taylor J and Ray J.

Eighteen students in grades 8–12 will compete in five artistic categories: instrumental, vocal, performing (dance), literary (poetry, spoken word), and visual arts (drawing, painting). First-place winners in each category will receive monetary prizes. In addition, Dr. Tuliza Fleming, Curator of American Art at the National Museum of African American History and Culture at Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, will present the top award, a \$4,000 Dr. David C. Driskell Achievement Scholarship to an outstanding graduating senior. The scholarship honors the legacy of the late Dr. David C. Driskell, a former resident of Prince George's County and renowned visual artist, curator, and Honorary Friend of The Society, Incorporated, Supporting the Arts.

Guest musician Sweet Cherie, musical director of the all-female band Be'la Dona and former keyboardist for the Godfather



Guest musician Cherie "Sweet Cherie" Mitchell-Agurs



Speaker Dr. Tuliza Fleming



2023 award recipient Matthew Crittenden



ALL PHOTOS COURTESY THE SOCIETY, INC., HARBOR CITY MARYLAND CHAPTER
2024 Showcase Winners



Artistic Future—The 2024 Showcase Winner Photo

See SHOWCASE Page A3

EVENT DETAILS

The Society, Incorporated Supporting the Arts, Harbor City Maryland Chapter (HCMC) Biannual Youth Showcase

Date and time: Sunday, March 22, 2026 from 2:30–5:00 p.m.

Location: Harmony Hall Regional Arts Center, Concert Hall, 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, MD

Get Tickets: On Eventbrite

PGCPS Partners With League of Women Voters for Student-Led Voter Registration Drive

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (March 6, 2026)—Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), in partnership with the League of Women Voters of Prince George's County (LWVPGC), is launching a districtwide voter registration drive this March that challenges high schools to register the highest number of eligible student voters.

This effort is a collaboration between LWVPGC, the PGCPS Social Studies Office, and Prince George's Regional Association of Student Governments (PGRASG). Open to students ages 16 and older, the drive transforms civic education into real-world action by giving students hands-on experience with the voter registration process while encouraging peer-to-peer engagement.

"Conducting voter registration in Prince George's County high schools is work the Prince George's County League of Women Voters has always done and thoroughly enjoys," said Joyce Duckett, President of the Prince George's County League of Women Voters. "We're excited to work directly with the PGCPS Student Government Association (SGA) on the voter registration contest and we salute them for the idea because it brings attention to the importance of voting and makes it exciting and fun."

To encourage participation, prize money will be awarded to Student Government Association executive boards at the schools that register the most students: 1st Place: \$5,000; 2nd Place: \$3,000; 3rd Place: \$2,000; and \$1,000 for the school with the most creative social media and flyer campaign.

PGCPS is also encouraging students to serve as election judges to see the democratic process in action. Participating students can earn \$50 for training and \$300 for each day served at a polling place.

"Voting is the most fundamental way for our students to transition from learning about history to actually making it," said Interim Superintendent Dr. Shawn Joseph. "By engaging our young people now, we are cultivating lifelong citizens. It is vital that our students understand their voices carry immense weight in shaping the future of their communities and their country."

To ensure their school receives credit for the competition, students must use an official QR code found on posters throughout their school.

• **Online Registration:** Requires a Maryland ID, driver's license or learner's permit and the last four digits of a Social Security number.

• **Paper Option:** Students without a Maryland ID can use a paper application, available in multiple languages. Students should check the "No ID" box and return the form to a teacher or volunteer for delivery to the Board of Elections.

Funding for the voter registration drive contest is provided by a donation to the League of Women Voters of Prince George's County.

Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is nationally recognized for college and career-readiness programs that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including dual enrollment and language immersion.

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

Brandywine-Aquasco by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

WE SING, REVELATION BY MELAINA TRICE

"I came into the world singing ripped from the safety of the womb into the cold, hard, world, that often feels so alone, I sing. My first breaths were a song. A song of resistance insisting on existence. To all the world it sounds like cries when in fact they were songs. I sang when I stumbled my first steps. I sang when that bully said I was not enough. I sang in the grays of my 'hood. I sang with skinned knees and tear-stained cheeks. I sang through birthing pangs. I sang through rejection and love denied. I sang the song Jesus gave me to sing even when my breath grew faint. Because in singing, I proclaim faith. Proclaiming hope in the next breath. And the next. In the next fall to rising. Sweet, sweet, Spirit, who breathes hope and perfect love. Hope that I sing not alone but harmonize with a multitude. Those who sing from the field. Those who sing from a cell. Those who sing from barren places and empty wells. Those who sing wearily from sanctuaries. Singing from steel graves. We were born singing. Carrying a promise in our songs. We are not forgotten. We are not forsaken. We are not alone. We are not yet finished. For one day we will all be free. Our song is revelation, a vision of hope and love that refuses to be buried and insists on rising. Hagar sang it at the well. Prophets preached it to nations. Christ sang it on the cross. Paul sang it behind prison walls. John sang it from Patmos. Our ancestors hummed it while chained. Jarena Lee preached it along dusty roads. Martin sang from a Birmingham jail. Street prophets rapped it in cyphers. Now we carry on the song. Today, we sing Revelation. Today we sing Revolution. Today we sing Resistance. Today, we sing love." Poem submitted by Rev. Melania Trice, Pastor at Clinton United Methodist Church in Clinton, Maryland.

RIDGELEY ROSENWALD SCHOOL MUSEUM

Learn the story of Black Education and Community in Prince George's County with a free visit to our historic school. Engage with local history. Learn the story of how the Ridgley family and community, along with the help of the Rosenwald rural school program, fought to stake their claim in Prince George's County and establish a school that would last for generations. Free and interactive tours. Our skilled museum educators tailor the museum tour to the personal interests of visitors or the topics being covered in the classroom for school group visits. Our tours integrate multi-modal learning techniques and activities as requested throughout to ensure a dynamic experience. Small group and classroom-size visits available upon request. If you plan to visit with a group of 6+ or outside of the normal operating hours, please contact us at least two weeks in advance at the email RidgeleyRosenwald@pgparks.com. Museum hours are

Thursday–Saturday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. 8507 Central Avenue, Capitol Heights, Maryland 20743. This program is brought to you by Parks & Recreation M-NCPPC. Live more, play more pgparks.com. The Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities. Register a minimum of two weeks prior to the program start date to request and receive a disability modification. Customers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, call Maryland Relay 7-1-1. Language interpretation is available at all facility front desks. Please ask for assistance. For more information, email us today at RidgeleyRosenwald@pgparks.com

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

"From the first settlers who came to our shores, from the first American Indian families who befriended them, men and women have worked together to build this nation. Too often the women were unsung and sometimes their contributions went unnoticed. But the achievements, leadership, courage, strength and love of the women who built America was as vital as that of the men whose names we know so well. President Jimmy Carter's message designating March 2–8, 1980, as National Women's History Week. Fifty-one famous women in history changed the world. Women's History Month this year is celebrated Sunday March 1, 2026–Tuesday, March 31, 2026." Wikipedia

RUTH BADER GINSBURG

"Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1933–2020) made history as the first Jewish woman to be appointed to the Supreme Court. Her entire career was highlighted with pivotal moments in American history. Consistently standing up for gender equality and civil rights, she helped pass historic rulings on topics ranging from the Affordable Care Act to the legalization of same-sex marriage before her death at age 87." Wikipedia

MAYA ANGELOU

"Maya Angelou (1928–2014), from her powerful poetry to her moving autobiography "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings", Angelou forever changed the literary world and opened doors for Black authors everywhere. Her love of books started as a child, when she struggled with selective mutism for five years. Beyond writing, she was also an actor, singer, screenwriter, and civil rights activist." Wikipedia

KAPPA FOUNDATION

Kappa Foundation of Fort Washington (KFFW) has scholarships available for High School Seniors/Young Men in our South County service area (Fort Washington, Temple Hills, Oxon Hill, Camp Springs, and Clinton). Young men may apply using the following link: <https://www.kffw.org/scholarship-application/> Please feel free to forward this email to other contacts.

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

Clinton Hardware for sale

On Saturday, February 28, Clinton Hardware on Woodyard Road posted a "for sale" sign.

Clinton Hardware, an area institution, was founded 80 years ago, and David Billman's family bought it in 1963. David, the current owner, has worked at the store for forty-five years.

As he said in a video posted on Facebook, "I've known your grandparents, your parents, your kids." Now, David has decided to retire.

The business is for sale, as is the property. They currently are in discussions with other hardware stores, hoping to find a way to keep a hardware store at that location.

I, too, hope they keep a hardware store there, but it won't be the same. I have been going to Clinton Hardware for decades, and I will be sorry to lose them.

Their staff is always friendly and helpful, and even though the store doesn't look very big, they somehow always have exactly the tool or part that I need.

As they say in the announcement, they're planning to stay open as long as possible. "We're still here. Still open. Still ready to help you till the next chapter starts."

So now is your chance to stock up on bolts and duct tape, or get a set of screwdrivers, or figure out how to patch your window screen, or have a key cut, or get advice about your sump pump, or...

Morningside Seniors Celebrate St. Patrick

The Seniors' St. Patrick's Day Luncheon is coming up March 16, 11:30 a.m. at the Morningside Town Hall. The meal will include ham, potatoes, cabbage, carrots, rolls, drinks, and cupcakes.

I also hear there'll be bingo. I won a round at the Senior Thanksgiving luncheon. I'll have to see if I can keep my lucky streak going.

Morningside seeking new officers

Two Morningside Police officers recently moved on to jobs elsewhere, leaving the department with only eight officers.

They are actively seeking to fill the two positions, but it will require some schedule adjustments in the meantime.

Shooting incident

At about 5:30 p.m. on Friday, February 27, there was a shooting incident in the parking lot of the Morningside Municipal Center. Details are scant at this time, but it sounds like the shooter, and the victim, may have known each other.

When last reported, the victim was in the hospital in critical condition. The shooter remained at the scene after the incident, and police have him in custody.

4th of July coming

Morningside is preparing for their annual Fourth of July Celebration. There'll be the traditional parade, followed by a Family Fun Day with food, vendors, and a DJ. The evening, of course, will be capped by the always-spectacular fireworks display.

Any food trucks, vendors, or parade marchers interested in participating, please call 301-736-2300. Morningside would love to have you help make this semiquintennial (that's the technical term for 250 years) celebration extra special.

My grandson Michael Gallegos accompanied me to the Morning-

side fireworks last July 4th. We had a fantastic time. We found a good watching spot near the Town Hall. Michael lives in Fairfax, and he was impressed by both the friendly community and the fireworks, which he enjoyed photographing. I look forward to going again this year. Maybe Michael will be available to come again.

Therese here from Texas

By the way, I just had a nice a three-week-long visit from Michael's mother, my daughter Therese Gallegos, who lives in Brownsville, Tex.

While she was in town, we didn't do much because of the weather, but we did keep a jigsaw puzzle going at all times. And we also had a lot of visitors. Her daughter Naomi Gallegos (and her dog Kiedis) drove up for a long weekend visit. At the same time, another grandchild, David McHale, stayed with us. While they were in town, lots of local family came over to see them. It made for some very noisy days and nights at my house. Fortunately, my hearing isn't as good as it used to be, so I was still able to nap whenever I wanted to.

I was particularly grateful to have Therese around when I received a notification from the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission about work scheduled for February 25. We had been noticing signs going up along Skyline Drive, but they weren't in front of my house, so we hadn't given it a lot of thought.

Evidently, this was part of the huge Morningside/Skyline sewer rehabilitation project WSSC Water

Around the County

Opportunities Bloom This March With M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County

Discover ways to grow, connect, and celebrate through camps, careers, showcases, and community recognitions

RIVERDALE, Md. (March 4, 2026)—Spring into March with exciting opportunities, career connections, youth showcases, and community celebrations hosted by M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County. From summer camp registration and seasonal job opportunities to spotlighting talented teens and honoring centenarians, residents of all ages can connect, grow, and celebrate throughout the month.

Upcoming events include: Summer Camp Registration

Registration for Summer Program & Camps begins Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 9 a.m. for Prince George's County residents and Wednesday, March 18 for all other jurisdictions. Camps offer a wide variety of themed experiences, including sports, arts, nature, theatre, technology, and more for all ages. Programs run June 15 through August 21. Parents and guardians are encouraged to create a Parks Direct account ahead of registration to secure spots. Fee assistance and flexible payment scheduling are available.

Park Police Citizens Academy

Tuesdays, March 10–May 5, 6:30–9 p.m.

Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD 20785

Get an inside look at how Park Police serve and protect the community during this free 9-week educational academy. Attendees will receive a behind-the-scenes look at park law enforcement operations, including patrol procedures, criminal investigations, K–9 demonstrations, emergency response, and community policing strategies. Engage directly with officers and gain a deeper understanding of how Park Police work to keep parks and communities safe.

Teen Vocal Showcase

Saturday, March 21, 6–9 p.m.
Prince George's Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Hyattsville, MD 20784

Calling all rising stars! The Teen Vocal Showcase highlights talented vocalists ages 10–18 as they take the stage to compete for cash prizes and community recognition. Support young performers as they showcase their skills in an exciting evening of live entertainment.

Annual Seasonal Career Fair

Saturday, March 28, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.
Kentland Community Center
2413 Pinebrook Avenue, Greater Landover, MD 20785

Looking for a rewarding seasonal job? Attend the Annual Seasonal Career Fair to explore a variety of part-time opportunities. Learn about available positions and take the first step toward gaining valuable work experience while serving the community. Applicants are encouraged to come prepared to discuss their interests and availability.

Centenarian Luncheon Celebration—Registration Deadline

Registration Deadline: Friday, March 27

Celebration Event: Friday, May 1
Martin's Crosswinds
7400 Greenway Center Drive, Greenbelt, MD 20770

Prince George's County residents age 100 and better are invited to register to be honored at the 2026 Centenarian Luncheon Celebration. This special event recognizes seniors born in 1926 or earlier for their remarkable milestone and contributions to the community. Eligible honorees may attend with guests. Advance registration is required by March 27.

For more information about upcoming M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation events, visit pgparks.com.

PGCPS: FY27 Requested Operating Budget Unanimously Approved By Board of Education, Advances to County Council

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Feb. 27, 2026)—The Prince George's County Board of Education has advanced a \$3 billion fiscal year 2027 operating budget request that includes \$150 million in targeted reductions to stabilize the workforce and accelerate student outcomes amid the largest single-year adjustment in district history. Termed a "stabilization budget," the plan is designed to restore predictability, protect classroom instruction, and address urgent legal and operational needs.

Interim Superintendent Dr. Shawn Joseph and the Board of Education considered input from many stakeholders through engagement including a diverse budget advisory group, meetings with district union partners, and public events. Following the district's first State of the Schools address in a decade, held in January, the Board conducted three public budget hearings and work sessions in February before adopting and submitting the request.

Reflecting this community-driven approach, the Board amended the request to remove a \$1.925 million investment in AI-enabled security cameras, redirecting those funds toward academic programs. The Board will also request an additional \$50 million in county funding above the required minimum to restore financial stability and fully fund these accelerants.

"This is a year of recalibration," said Dr. Joseph. "We are making these reductions with discipline and intention, focusing on teaching and learning, identifying efficiencies, and prioritizing the investments that deliver the greatest impact for students."

Dr. Joseph emphasized that difficult budget decisions were made through the lens of equity, ensuring the budget is a strategic tool to move the district from isolated pockets of success to systemic opportunity for all.

The FY27 budget prioritizes five strategic accelerants designed to move the needle on student success:

Special Education (\$27.2 million): Stabilizing supports and strengthening staffing for the district's most vulnerable learners.

Safety and Security (\$2.3 million): Strengthening school safety through a shared community effort and modern school design.

Professional Development (\$1.1 million): Reimagining job-embedded professional learning models to support continuous staff improvement.

Reading and Mathematics (\$1.2 million): Accelerating achievement for every early learner across the district.

AI Literacy (\$1.3 million): Modernizing classrooms with future-ready tools and ensuring responsible, equitable AI integration.

The district's 'Big Rocks' include:

- Mathematics and Literacy
- Improving outcomes for multilingual learners and students with disabilities
- Reducing chronic absenteeism
- Expanding dual enrollment and internships
- Organizational Culture

To ensure long-term fiscal health and academic integrity, the Board has established two budget-related strategic working groups:

90-Day Strategic Realignment Workgroup: Launching March 1 to develop a forward-looking strategy to align resources and explore new revenue options.

2026–27 Academic Program Continuity Working Group: Tasked with safeguarding and monitoring educational rigor in schools affected by program changes.

Following approval, the Board will transmit the Operating Budget Request to the County Executive by March 1. The request will undergo review and reconciliation before a final version is approved and adopted in June.

Visit the FY27 Budget Portal

COMMUNITY

Showcase from A1

of Go-Go Chuck Brown, will celebrate 50 years of go-go music while sharing its history through her performance.

The Society, Incorporated, Supporting the Arts, Harbor City Maryland Chapter, is a 501©3 organization located in Prince George's County with a mission to support, mentor, showcase, and expose youth to the arts. It is one of 36 chapters of The Society, Incorporated Supporting the Arts, chartered in 2017. President Marion Flamer com-

mented that "HCMC is focused on exposing youth to high-quality experiences and opportunities in the arts, so they are equipped to engage, compete, and excel in the literary, visual, performing, instrumental and vocal arts."

The community is invited to attend and support these talented young artists. Tickets are available via Eventbrite at: 2026 HCMC Youth Showcase

To learn more about Harbor City Society and donate to the mission to support youth in the arts visit <https://www.harborcitymidsociety.org/>

Mural from A1

every day. Through this groundbreaking partnership with DPW&T and Council Member Ivey's office, Prince George's County is planting seeds of transformation, five locations at a time," said Rhonda Dallas, CEO & Chief Curator of the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council.

DPW&T will provide technical guidance and infrastructure support to ensure the durability and safety of each installation, while PGAHC will lead artist engagement, curatorial oversight, and community outreach. Council Member Ivey's Office will serve as a key convener, facilitating community input and ensuring equitable representation across the County's diverse neighborhoods.

"This project is especially meaningful to me because I've been working toward bringing ground murals to Prince George's County for years. To finally see this vision taking shape, through collaboration, community voice, and the talent of our local artists, is incredibly exciting," said Council Member Jolene Ivey. "These murals will do more than brighten our streets; they will tell our stories, honor our neighborhoods, and create opportunities for residents to shape the places they call home. I'm grateful to our partners for helping make this long-held goal a reality."

"We are grateful for the opportunity to work alongside PGAHC and Council Member Ivey to help bring artistic vision into public spaces with the same level of care and attention we apply to every project," said DPW&T Director Michael Johnson. "This partnership ensures that every installation meets the highest standards of safety while celebrating the creativity and culture of Prince George's County communities."

M-NCPPC will provide site location support, demonstrating the Commission's ongoing commitment to parks and recreation and fostering vibrant environments where the arts and community intersect.

"We are excited to collaborate with PGAHC, DPW&T, and Council Member Ivey to bring vibrant artwork to our sites and share these creative expressions with the community," shared Darius A. Stanton, Director of M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation. "At M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, we remain deeply committed to cultivating spaces that inspire, uplift, and bring people together—places where imagination flourishes and the arts help spark new possibilities for all."

Next Steps & Opportunities for Engaging

Exciting updates on artist opportunities, community engagement events, and installation timelines are coming soon. We invite residents, artists, and community organizations to stay connected by following the Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council and project partners online for the latest news and ways to get involved.

The Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) is the county's legislative arts agency, dedicated to enhancing the county's diverse creative economy through sustainable and equitable programs, advocacy, education, and financial support. Through strategic invest-

ments, cultural preservation, and innovative programs, PGAHC supports a thriving creative community and makes sure the arts are part of everyday life. Learn more at www.pgahc.org.

Council Member Jolene Ivey is Council Member At-Large for the Prince George's County Council. Her office is committed to advocating for community investment, equity, and quality public services for all Prince Georgians. Council Member Ivey has been a champion for arts, culture, and community development throughout her tenure.

The Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T) is responsible for providing the County with well-maintained, safe, and innovative public works services and transportation options that connect communities, support economic development, and promote sustainability and equity for residents. Creative Crosswalks strategically aligns with Prince George's County's Bee Seen, Bee Alert, Bee Safe program, led by DPW&T's Bike and Pedestrian Program. Together, these programs form a unified platform that enhances alternative modes of transportation such as walking, biking, skateboarding, and scootering, while also addressing ADA accessibility and promoting a culture of safety, visibility, and inclusion for all ages. Gain more information by visiting DPW&T's website.

With over 29,000 acres of parkland, trails, athletic fields, playgrounds, and more, the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County provides an award-winning park system through progressive, quality, innovative leadership and a commitment to its community and environment. The Department delivers first-class recreational activities and programs for people of all ages and ability levels. It strives to improve the quality of life for Prince George's County residents and the communities in which they live, work, and raise families. The Department's Formula 2040 Plan establishes a framework that will ensure the Department can meet future parks and recreation programmatic and facility needs, fulfilling its mission to determine the combination of land, facilities, and programs that will provide appropriate experiences for Prince Georgians in the future. To learn more, visit www.pgprks.com.

The Neighborhood Design Center (NDC) is a nonprofit organization committed to providing design assistance and community development services to low-income neighborhoods and communities across Maryland. With over five decades of experience and more than 4,000 completed projects, NDC has earned a distinguished reputation as a partner in enhancing community environments. For more information, please visit www.ndc-md.org.

The Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council (PGAHC) Maryland Registered Public Art Apprenticeship Program, the first of its kind, is a paid, hands-on workforce initiative that launches emerging artists into public art careers. Aligned with state and national standards, the program combines on-the-job training with expert artists and classroom instruction in design, fabrication, community engagement, and arts policy. Apprentices master the skills to create impactful public art for Prince George's County.

ICE Wants More Detention Centers, But Leaders Are Fighting it Hard

Residents fear expanding ICE facilities, such as one in Hyattsville, could be used as detention centers as hundreds of similar efforts by the agency transpire nationwide.

By WILL HAMMANN
Capital News Service

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (March 4, 2026)— Battles over Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention centers are raging across the state this month.

Howard County fought off a facility in Elkridge. Maryland is taking ICE to federal court over a Washington County warehouse. After reports of an office expansion in Hyattsville, Prince George's is also on the frontlines.

Currently a legal office of the agency, ICE's Hyattsville location lies just blocks away from two churches, a child care center and the Mall at Prince George's. Local leaders, advocates and residents fear the plan to expand it could entail its use as another detention center yet, and have taken to the streets to show what kind of fight they feel needs to be fought.

"It is gonna take the leadership of our federal government to be bold, to be unapologetic, to be loud, to be fierce in this moment," said Prince George's County Council Chair Krystal Oriadha. "So that people like my father can go to the store, can pick up his grandchild, walk without the fear that they will snatch him because he looks different and he talks different."

"That is the fear of so many immigrant families," she added, her voice cracking as she spoke.

She spoke at a rally in Hyattsville on Feb. 19, joined by other lawmakers, advocates and residents, where Rep. Glenn Ivey (Democrat-Md.) led a march in



PHOTO: WILL HAMMANN/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Lawmakers like Prince George's County Council Chair Krystal Oriadha rally Maryland residents Feb. 19 2026.

protest of what could mean intensified immigration enforcement operations in the town.

The Metro One building, where ICE has its office, loomed over the rally as Oriadha and others spoke to protesters.

"We have seen [ICE] gun down the people that they say they are trying to protect—that is the reality. We have seen babies running because they're so fearful of being snatched up," she said.

"The reality is that they used to snatch other children," Oriadha said, referencing American slavery and the prominent role of slave-catchers, "and auction them off on blocks."

Ivey harkened back to history as well.

"We've got a lot to get done, but we've seen how it can work. We saw it in Minneapolis, but not only that, we saw it in Selma and Birmingham," he said to the crowd. "We know we can win because we've won before."

But racial bias and state-sanctioned violence didn't end with the 1965 marches at Selma, and, according to immigration advocacy organization CASA Executive Director George Escobar, weren't reborn with the inauguration of President Trump.

He noted that ICE, funded by taxpayer

See FIGHTING Page A6

Thrive Prince George's Hosts Drive-Up Grocery Giveaway for Local Families

By PRESS OFFICER
Thrive Prince George's, UCAP

Thrive Prince George's, a program of United Communities Against Poverty (UCAP), recently hosted a Drive-Up Grocery Giveaway to support individuals and families across Prince George's County. During the event, volunteers distributed free, pre-packaged grocery baskets to approximately 60 households, helping to ease food insecurity and ensure families have access to essential items.

Participants remained safely in their vehicles as volunteers loaded groceries directly into their trunks, creating a streamlined and welcoming experience for community members.

The event reflects Thrive Prince George's continued commitment to strengthening the community by meeting immediate needs with dignity, compassion, and care.

The giveaway was made



PHOTOS COURTESY THRIVE PRINCE GEORGE'S, UCAP

During the event, volunteers distributed free, pre-packaged grocery baskets to approximately 60 households.

possible through the generous support of food sponsor Faith United Ministries – Extended Hands LLC and community partner Gaylord National Harbor, whose volunteers helped make the day a success.

Town Announces Phase II Preparatory Work on Blackhawk Lane Improvement Project

By PRESS OFFICER
Town of Forest Heights

FOREST HEIGHTS, Md. (March 3, 2026)—The Town announces the start of Phase II preparatory work for the Blackhawk Lane infrastructure improvement project. This phase focuses on advance planning and site preparation activities ahead of full construction, which is anticipated to begin in the Spring of 2027.

At this time, Blackhawk Lane will remain fully open to all vehicular and pedestrian traffic. No road closures or traffic detours are expected during this preparatory phase.

Residents and businesses in the area may observe minor disturbances associated with preconstruction activities, including survey work, environmental and engineering assessments, and coordina-

tion with utility providers. Surveyors, engineers, and utility companies may be present along the roadway and within adjacent rights of way as part of required planning and utility verification efforts.

These activities are necessary to ensure that the upcoming construction phase proceeds efficiently, safely, and in coordination with all relevant agencies and service providers. The Town will continue to provide advance notice to residents prior to any changes in traffic patterns or the start of active construction.

Phase II represents a critical step in delivering long term infrastructure improvements on Blackhawk Lane, building on earlier planning and design work completed under Phase I. The project is intended to improve roadway conditions, drainage, safety, and overall functionality for residents and visitors.

The Town appreciates the community's patience and cooperation during this planning phase and remains committed to keeping residents informed as the project progresses.

Incorporated in 1949, the Town of Forest Heights, Maryland, is a vibrant and diverse community located in southern Prince George's County, just minutes from the Nation's Capital. The Town is committed to promoting sustainable growth, fiscal responsibility, and strong community engagement. Forest Heights continues to lead in innovative municipal initiatives—ranging from environmental sustainability and infrastructure modernization to public safety and resident services—while maintaining a deep sense of community pride and partnership among residents, businesses, and local leaders.

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Nashville, an Epicenter of Resistance Against Authoritarianism, Will Be the Scene of National Urban League's 2026 Conference

"Nashville prepared me. If it hadn't been for Nashville, I would not be the person I am now."
—Congressman John Lewis

Nashville's streets have long carried the echoes of America's most disciplined and courageous civil-rights activism. It was here, in 1960, that students from local colleges launched a sit-in campaign so strategic and unwavering that it became a national blueprint for nonviolent resistance. Their actions not only made Nashville the first major

Southern city to desegregate its lunch counters—they shaped the moral and tactical core of the civil-rights movement and helped forge the leadership of icons like John Lewis and Diane Nash. Nashville's history is not just remembered; it is lived, embedded in the city's identity, and carried forward by every new generation confronting injustice.

This enduring legacy was powerfully present when I visited Nashville this week to announce that the city will host this summer's National Ur-

ban League Conference. The annual gathering—one of the country's most influential convenings on civil-rights, economic empowerment, and racial justice—will bring thousands of leaders, advocates, and changemakers to a city whose past and present make it uniquely positioned to shape the nation's democratic future. Nashville is not simply a venue; it is a living testament to movement building itself.

Today, the city continues to stand at the crossroads of democracy and civil rights. Tennessee has become a testing ground for voter suppression, and Nashville has been central to pushing back. It was Nashville's own dynamic young legislator, Justin Jones, who—along with Justin J. Pearson of Memphis and Gloria Johnson of Knoxville—drew national attention to the intertwined crises of gun violence and racism by leading a gun-safety protest directly on the House floor. Local activists have fought tirelessly against gerrymandering schemes that fracture Black political representation. And when state lawmakers attempted to slash Nashville's Metro Council in half, the city took the battle all the way to the Tennessee Supreme Court, where the fight for fair governance continues.

It is this spirit of resistance, courage, and collective determination that will energize the thousands attending the National Urban League Conference. As leaders confront an ongoing assault on racial justice and equal opportunity, they will

do so in a place where ordinary citizens have repeatedly reshaped the national conversation through their willingness to stand up—and stand together.

Nashville's example is reflected in cities across the country. In Minneapolis, residents braved tear gas, pepper spray, and subzero temperatures to protest lawless immigration enforcement. In New York City, home the National Urban League's headquarters, leaders continue to mount a multi-front pushback against federal overreach, from unlawful militarization to crackdowns on immigrant communities, while strengthening sanctuary protections and reaffirming commitments to diversity and inclusion.

Taken together, these local efforts form a national mosaic of democratic resilience. Each city—through lawsuits, organizing, public-policy innovation, and mass protest—has played a vital role in defending voting rights and upholding the rule of law.

In an era defined by rapid political shifts and escalating threats to democratic norms, the future of American democracy does not rest in Washington alone. It lives in cities like Nashville, where history meets activism, and where the work of building a more just and equitable nation persists—one protest, one policy, one gathering at a time. This summer's National Urban League Conference will honor that legacy and propel it forward.
—February 28, 2026

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Is There Income Tax on Social Security Benefits?

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

Dear Rusty: The Trump Administration is saying that now there will be no taxes on Social Security benefits. Since we're getting ready to start our 2025 income tax return, can you explain how this all works? **Signed: Confused Taxpayer**

Dear Confused Taxpayer: You are obviously referring to the so-called "one big, beautiful bill" and how that bill affects income tax on your Social Security benefits. And this is because of the publicity surrounding the so-called "one big, beautiful bill" (OBBB) enacted last year, which claims to "eliminate income tax on Social Security benefits." Well, that bill did, yet technically didn't, fully eliminate income tax on benefits." Allow me to explain.

The OBBB does eliminate income tax on most SS benefits, but it does so in a somewhat unique way—by providing an additional \$6,000 (per person) deduction to your federal taxable income as reported to the IRS. Thus, you will pay less total income tax when you file your taxes with the IRS because of that additional deduction to your taxable income. The extra deduction is available to those over age 65 and is meant to offset the income tax which will still be levied by the IRS on the SS benefits you received in 2025.

Essentially, the rules governing income tax on Social Security benefits have not changed. The IRS will still levy income tax on your SS benefits if your combined income from all sources (known as your "provisional income") is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly, or more than \$25,000 if you file as an individual. If your provisional income is below the threshold for your IRS filing status, you will pay no income tax on your received 2025 SS benefits. But if your provisional income exceeds the threshold for your IRS filing status, then somewhere between 50% and 85% of your received SS benefits will be taxed (how much SS income to be taxed depends on your combined income in 2025).

By now, you should have received form 1099-SSA which advised of your 2025 Social Security income, including any income tax you had withheld from your SS benefits. This income should be reported when submitting your 2025 income tax return. If your "provisional income" is over \$32,000 as a married couple filing jointly (or over \$25,000 as an individual filer), then your 2025 SS benefits will still be taxed by the IRS. But when completing your 2025 Income Tax Return, you will also be able to

claim an additional \$6,000 per person (\$12,000 if you file jointly), which will likely offset any income tax you must pay due to the SS benefits you received in 2025. If you use a tax preparer (or tax preparation software), they will guide you through this calculation. Note, too, that the \$6,000 per person deduction amount will be less if your combined taxable income is more than \$150,000 as a married couple (or more than \$75,000 as a single filer).

Be aware, though, that the OBBB is temporary tax accommodation which expires after tax year 2028. And that's because the process used to pass the bill in Congress (a "budget reconciliation" process) didn't actually change SS law; rather it provided a way around it to offset income tax paid on SS benefits.

So, to recap, the IRS can still levy income tax on your received Social Security benefits but, because of the OBBB, you will likely also (depending on your provisional income level) receive an extra deduction which offsets any taxes calculated on your Social Security benefits.

Finally, be aware that if your first husband also predeceases you, you will then become eligible for a surviving ex-spouse benefit from him, even if he has remarried.

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.

Bob Hall Beverage Company General Manager, Dan Hoose, Elected Chairman of Anheuser-Busch Wholesaler Advisory Panel

By PRESS OFFICER
Bob Hall Beverage Company

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (March 2, 2026)—Bob Hall Beverage Company, a 92-year-old family-owned beer and beverage distributor serving Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's counties, is proud to announce that Dan Hoose, General Manager and Operating Partner, has been elected by his wholesaler peers to serve as Chairman of the Anheuser-Busch Wholesaler Advisory Panel, beginning end of February 2026.

In this role, Hoose will lead a panel of 25 Anheuser-Busch Wholesalers who represent the entire A-B Wholesaler system, working directly with Anheuser-Busch senior leadership to help guide strategic initiatives, strengthen partnerships, and support the continued success of the wholesaler network. He joins a prestigious group of Chairmen who have served in this leadership position over the past 62 years.

"I'm honored by the trust my fellow wholesalers on the Panel have placed in me," said Hoose. "I look forward to working collaboratively with our partners at Anheuser-Busch and across the network as we continue to strengthen our relationships, support our communities, and help shape the future of our industry. It's a privilege to represent the Wholesaler Panel, Bob Hall Beverage Company, and the incredible team behind everything we do."

Bob Hall Beverage Company has served Southern Maryland for more than 90 years, building strong partnerships with retailers, suppliers, and the community. Hoose's election reflects both his leadership within the industry and the company's long-standing commitment to excellence and collaboration.

Bob Hall Beverage Company is a 92-year-old family-owned beer and beverage distributor serving Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's Counties. Its portfolio in-



PHOTO COURTESY: BOB HALL BEVERAGE COMPANY

Dan Hoose, Bob Hall Beverage Company General Manager and Operating Partner, has been elected by his wholesaler peers to serve as Chairman of the Anheuser-Busch Wholesaler Advisory Panel.

cludes the Anheuser-Busch InBev and Constellation families of beers, along with leading craft and non-alcoholic beverages. Bob Hall is deeply committed to corporate social responsibility, environmental stewardship and supporting the communities where its customers

and employees live and work. Learn more at www.bobhallbeverage.com.

Anheuser-Busch's purpose is to create a future with more cheers. For more than 165 years as a leading American manufacturer, they have delivered a legacy of brewing great-tasting, high-quality beers that have satisfied beer drinkers for generations. As the nation's top brewer, one of the fastest growing spirits companies, and an insurgent force in energy drinks, they drive economic prosperity nationwide through investments in our people, facilities, and communities. They are the only alcohol company that invests in the U.S. at this scale. Anheuser-Busch is guided by their commitment to the communities they call home and to the 65,000 hardworking Americans who bring their products to life. That's who they are. For more information, visit www.anheuser-busch.com or follow Anheuser-Busch on LinkedIn, X, Facebook, and Instagram.

The Prince George's Post

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Contents © 2026, The Prince George's Post

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Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association.
The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15209 Marlboro Pike, Suite 209, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.
Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2.
Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790.
Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20773.

ENVIRONMENT

EarthTalk® Q&A

Climate Change Linked to Skyrocketing Food Prices

By Marium Zahra | February 26, 2026

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the link between climate-fueled weather extremes and the skyrocketing cost of many foods?

—M.B., via email

Over the past five years, food prices have increased drastically across the globe. The U.S. alone has seen a 35 percent increase in food costs since 2020. There are many reasons for this, including conflict, greater demand and COVID. Climate-fueled weather extremes have also increased food costs. As climate disasters increase, food systems, especially those serving the poor, are left vulnerable. Many food price spikes across over 18 countries can also be linked to weather disasters like heatwaves and floods. And recent droughts have also caused the price of crop staples to increase worldwide.

In April 2024, California and Arizona underwent an 80 percent increase in vegetable prices due to the West African heatwave. In Europe, the price of olive oil increased by 50 percent after extensive droughts. In South Korea, cabbage rose 70 percent following an earlier heatwave. In Mexico, vegetables and fruits spiked almost 20 percent after some of the most severe droughts it faced in the past decade. From Japan to Ghana and the Ivory Coast, food prices are on the rise everywhere due to the rapidly warming planet.

The surge in food prices poses a significant threat to the health of low-income communities in the Global South and beyond. Fast food tends to cost less money, time and effort to consume than healthy produce. In turn, it becomes an attractive option for families that can no longer afford the rising prices of fruits, vegetables, and other healthier food groups. Over time, this lack of a healthy diet can contribute to health complications like malnutrition, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Moreover, as political and social upheavals dominate world affairs, experts say food prices will be affected. Tim Benton, a professor of population ecology at the University of Leeds in England, told CNN in 2025 that “Shortfalls in supply inevitably impact on markets, driving up prices for those people who buy the food. Sadly, this impact on food prices is exacerbated by a tenuous, more contested world, where global trade is already under stress from conflict or trade disputes.”

Weather and climate shocks are only increasing; researchers calculate that they will cause food prices to increase by .3 percentage points annually in the next 10 years. The rise in inflation serves as a wake-up call to the necessity of sustainably produced food and limiting climate stressors.

CONTACTS: Extreme weather is fueling higher food prices around the world, ehn.org/extreme-weather-is-fueling-higher-food-prices-around-the-world.

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

Olszewski, Rosen Push Bipartisan Bill to Strengthen U.S. Mining Workforce

Lawmakers propose a workforce training and exchange program, citing retirements and China's mineral dominance.

By STEPHEN LOTZ
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (March 3, 2026)—Amid rising global demand for critical minerals, Rep. Johnny Olszewski (D-Md.) and Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-Nev.) are pushing to increase U.S. mining production and reduce U.S. reliance on foreign suppliers through the training and recruitment of miners.

The two lawmakers have introduced a bipartisan bill that seeks to bolster education and workforce development in the critical minerals sector, arguing that rebuilding the workforce is key to competing with China's dominance in mineral processing.

Olszewski said the measure is designed to address what he described as a looming workforce crisis in the mining industry.

“More than half of the mining workforce in this country—over 200,000 people, 221,000 is the estimate—are going to retire by 2029, and we do not have any sort of sufficient talent pool to fill those gaps,” he said in an interview with Capital News Service.

“When you talk about almost a quarter of a million jobs that are high quality and high paying and that meet a critical national security interest, it's good not just for Marylanders, but it's good for our country,” he added.

The United States currently graduates roughly 300 mining engineers per year, far short of what would be needed to replace retiring workers. The number of mining engineering programs nationwide has declined from 25 in 1982 to 14 in 2020.

The legislation, titled the Critical Mineral Mining Education Act of 2026, would establish two new programs: one to send U.S. undergraduate and graduate students overseas to study mining and mineral processing, and another to send foreign academics and professionals to U.S. institutions to build and strengthen current programs. The legislation would also commit \$10 million annually for the next 10 years to the two exchange programs.

See MINING Page A6

LOCAL WARMING: CLIMATE CHANGE IN MARYLAND

What Provides the Power at This Cecil County Farm? The Cows

By MARA K. BELL
Capital News Service

The farm that Alice and Caleb Crothers inherited in 2015 was, like many dairy farms nationwide, struggling—but now, cow manure is helping to keep it going.

Last fall, the Crothers started up a system—made up of a 60-foot-wide, 14-foot-deep container and special bacteria—that captures fumes from cow poop to generate electricity.

That container, called a digester, produces enough energy to power their entire farm; a solution rare in Maryland and much of the U.S., but not so rare in California.

Their decision became one that not only helped Long Green Farms' finances but made their farm one of only two in Maryland that operate anaerobic dairy digesters, systems that capture the methane released from their cows' manure. Those digesters are the dairy-farm version of the system the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission's Piscataway Bioenergy Project uses to reclaim natural gas from human waste.

The addition of those machines was financially crucial because in the dairy business, farmers can't control their income, Alice Crothers said. That's because dairy prices vary widely based on market conditions.

“So, I have to control my expenses,” she said. “As warm and fuzzy as it sounds to talk about a methane digester, the reality of it is, we pursued this to eliminate the electric expenses.”

This approach, often an expensive one, had to make good business sense—“or there's no point for us to consider it,” she said.

The move also made sense for the environment, as it made productive use of animal waste tied to climate change.

“You have to ask yourself, ‘What is good for my business?’ Not just, ‘What is good for the environment?’” Crothers said about their farm. “All of the decisions we've made have financially benefited our farm or have been a net neutral.”

Cows as Polluters

In switching how they run their farm, the Crothers addressed a problem that cows create all across the globe: methane emissions.

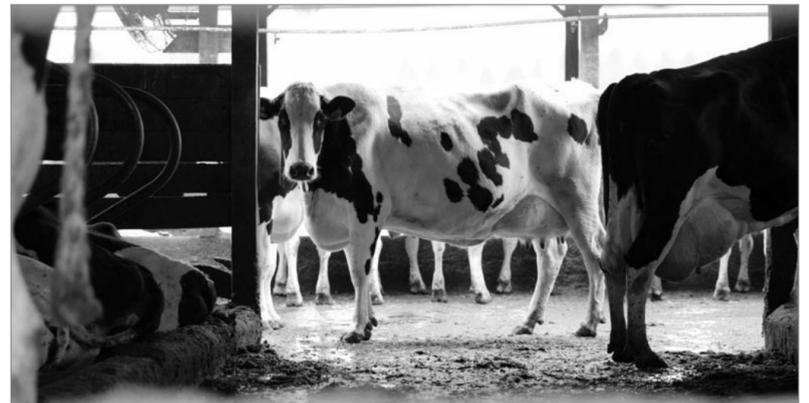
Within the last 10 years, American dairy consumption has steadily increased, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The rise in consumption demands more cows to produce milk, which means more manure.

That manure is usually stored in large basins called lagoons, where it produces methane due to a lack of oxygen, said Stephanie Lansing, a researcher in waste energy at the University of Maryland.

Without proper management, the methane dissipates into the atmosphere.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, dairy farms account for only 2% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions—mostly methane and nitrous oxide—while passenger cars and lighter trucks alone produce around 18%.

However, methane alone is



SAM GAUNTT/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

A dairy cow peeks out through the fence of its enclosure at Long Green Farms on Nov. 21, 2025.

more than 28 times as potent as carbon dioxide at heating the planet, according to the EPA.

“It's not like these lagoons are lighting on fire, but methane is a powerful greenhouse gas, so it has the ability to warm the planet when it's there,” Lansing said.

From Manure to Energy

What dairy farms can do is cover these lagoons and capture the methane to reuse through a process called anaerobic digestion.

Inside a container called the digester, naturally occurring microbes break down waste material and produce gas. The gas, mostly made of methane, can be processed and then used to heat homes, fuel trucks and power neighborhoods.

“As soon as we use that methane, it's no longer going into the atmosphere,” Lansing said.

It's an attractive solution for environmentalists. Yet, only a tiny fraction of the nation's 24,000 dairy farms use them, and they're almost all in California.

California has passed legislation calling for a 40% reduction in emissions from the dairy and livestock sectors by 2030, said Michael Boccadoro, the executive director of Dairy Cares, a sustainable dairy nonprofit in California.

“Digesters have become one very important tool for us to accomplish that,” he said.

Earlier this year, the organization announced the state's dairy sector reached the annual reduction of 5 million metric tons of methane in dairy farms statewide.

As of the beginning of this year, 168 farms in California have operating digesters, with 75 more in development.

The state's approach involves an initiative called the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, which incentivizes dairy farmers to capture methane using digesters and use the resulting gas to fuel the transportation sector, specifically heavy-duty trucks and buses.

“Without a doubt, this is where it makes the most economic sense. And it makes the most environmental sense, too,” Boccadoro said. “The air-quality benefits are tremendous for a state like California, where we have bad air quality.”

California's lesson for other states hoping to reach similar methane reduction goals is to incentivize their farmers instead of regulating them, he added.

“They've got to be economic to make them work. Otherwise, they won't stay in operation,” Boccadoro said.



SAM GAUNTT/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Alice Crothers, who runs Long Green Farms with her husband Caleb, points to a row of cows on Nov. 21, 2025.



SAM GAUNTT/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Long Green Farms' anaerobic dairy digester on Nov. 21, 2025.

A Limited Solution

For now, at least, the solution the Crothers embraced is a rare one in Maryland's dairy country.

Asked how many of the state's roughly 300 dairy farms installed digesters, Lansing held up two fingers. The two farms are Kilby Farms and Long Green Farms, both in Cecil County, Maryland.

“It's the shortsightedness of Maryland's cost-share program,” said Jeff Semler, a food and animal science researcher at the University of Maryland's Western Maryland Research and Education Center.

The reason why Maryland legislators are behind on this technology, he said, is that it's expensive.

“They would rather fund the cheaper practices. In their minds, more bang for their buck,” Semler said.

The Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share Program offers farmers grants that cover up to 100% of the costs to develop environmentally friendly measures on their farms, according to the program's website. But dairy digesters are ineligible for the grant program, and Semler said that's a mistake.

“It would incentivize the practice, which would certainly help,” Semler said.

Tyler Hough, director of government relations for the Maryland Farm Bureau, said the biggest barrier to installing digesters is the high costs.

“Digesters require significant investment, and financing options can be limited,” he said.

Hough said the bureau should continue pushing for cost-share support in Annapolis and make sure the public and

lawmakers understand how digesters support sustainability and energy independence.

Making the Call

Crothers and her husband, Caleb Crothers, said the conversation about sustainable practices for their farm began the year they moved in because they knew it could potentially reduce expenses and help their business.

It did just that. The methane digester at Long Green Farms now powers the entire farm, which uses a significant amount of electricity.

“[Take] a milking parlor, that cooling tank in there has to stay on 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year,” Alice Crothers said. “In the summer, we have fans on all of our cows to keep them from overheating. There are lights in the barns. Even the silos that we use require electricity.”

Crothers said for other dairy farms in the state aiming to be more sustainable, the first thing they should do is talk to the staff at their local soil conservation district.

“They intimately know what programs they have available,” she said. “They introduced us to a lot of people and kind of helped us get the ball rolling.”

However, Crothers said when it comes to making decisions that benefit the farm both environmentally and financially, it's up to the business owners themselves.

“At the end of the day, it's a business,” she said. “They can tell you what programs are available and what might be a good fit for your farm, but you have to decide if it's going to help you.”

