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Lawmakers Seek Tighter Phone Kiosk Regulations

Stolen Phones Attraction Might Outweighed the Good

By MIKE DENISON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - The premise seems simple: drop off an unwanted phone at a recycling kiosk, receive instant cash and keep precious metals out of landfills. Consumers and the environment both win.

But, according to some politicians, so do phone thieves. This fear has led some Maryland lawmakers to push for tighter restrictions or even outright bans on these machines.

This fall, Baltimore prohibited cash-for-phone kiosks in the city. Baltimore City Councilman Bill Henry, who initiated the measure, said the kiosks' tendency to attract stolen phones outweighed the good done by businesses like San Francisco-based ecoATM, which has 10 kiosks in Maryland.

The issue is set to expand, as Delegate Mary Washington, D-Baltimore, is authoring legislation to increase restrictions on ecoATMs and similar kiosks statewide. Her bill would require the kiosk operator to submit records of all transactions to law enforcement officials within 48 hours and to withhold payment for 48 hours.

However, Ryan Kuder, ecoATM's director of marketing, argues that the kiosks are designed for maximum security.

"There's a lot of misperceptions about the way that the machine works,"

said Kuder. "It doesn't make any sense why the company who does more than anyone else would be targeted."

The process of selling a phone at an ecoATM is simple; a machine scans a customer's driver's license, analyzes the model and condition of the phone, and offers a price. If the customer accepts, the phone is eventually recycled.

Many recycled phones are sold again. Others are harvested for usable parts, keeping materials within the phones - including precious metals and toxic chemicals - out of landfills, according to Kuder.

"Our mission is to get as many people as possible to participate in e-waste recycling," Kuder said.

He added that ecoATM has many security measures in place, including requiring customers to scan a valid driver's license. With the help of cameras on each kiosk, every transaction is personally monitored by ecoATM staff.

"A fraction of a percent" of phones recycled at ecoATMs are later subject to police inquiries, Kuder said.

In fact, he said that these cameras are often helpful for police. If a phone is reported stolen, the cameras on and around an ecoATM can offer high-resolution pictures of suspects. Additionally, ecoATM holds all phones for 30 days, or longer if state law re-

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O'Malley's State of the State Address Governor Urges Passage of Minimum Wage Increase

By MEGAN BROCKETT
Capital News Service



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY AMANDA SALVUCCI

Gov. Martin O'Malley, in his final State of the State speech to the legislature reflected on his administration's accomplishments - including highly-ranked schools and low college tuition increases.

ANNAPOLIS - In his final State of the State address, Gov. Martin O'Malley urged members of the Maryland General Assembly to come together and pass legislation increasing the state's minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour, telling lawmakers Thursday that a thriving middle class is the key to a thriving economy.

O'Malley touted the "measurable progress" made statewide during his tenure, highlighting advances both social and economical, but he was critical of the fact that Maryland has lagged behind other states in moving to increase a minimum wage that he said is no longer one that anyone can live on.

"This is not how our economy should work," he said. "No person who works full time and plays by the rules should be forced to raise their family in poverty."

O'Malley has pushed a minimum wage increase as his main priority this session and formally came out in support of a bill earlier this week that would gradually raise the wage from the federally set rate of \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour by 2016. The bill would also begin indexing the minimum wage to inflation in 2017 and increase the base rate for tipped workers from 50 to 70 percent of the minimum wage.

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Legislative Agenda Focuses On Business Development

By ETHAN BARTON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Senate President Thomas V. "Mike" Miller Jr. and House Speaker Michael E. Busch announced their joint legislative agenda on Friday, which focused on promoting economic and business development.

The package includes legislation to assist universities and their surrounding communities with tax credits and endowments, a seed fund for cybersecurity start-ups and a reformation of the estate tax.

"This is a proposition to move our state forward in the area of creating a better business climate and taking advantage

of an innovative economy, such as cybersecurity," Busch said.

For any money universities receive from the private sector for research, the state will provide matching funds.

"This is a package of bills that, when coupled with the strength of our academic institutions, is going to make Maryland the global leader in the innovation economy," said Brit Kirwan, chancellor for the University System of Maryland.

When fully rolled out, the public and private funds would make \$100 million available for endowed professorships and chairs, said University of Maryland President Wallace D. Loh.

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Retroactive Health Care Bill Questioned

By PATRICK FARRELL
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - During a question and answer session on the House floor Friday, Delegate Peter Hammen, D-Baltimore, admitted the state's plan for retroactive health care coverage is "not a perfect system," as lawmakers questioned various aspects of the bill.

A chief concern among delegates was the lack of an official number of individuals eligible for the proposed retroactive coverage. The emergency legislation would give individuals another opportunity to enroll in health care under the Maryland Health Insurance Plans if they missed the deadline.

As of Friday, officials say that number could stretch from as little as a few hundred citizens to as many as 5,000.

Hammen, who serves as Chairman of the Health and Government Operations Committee, argued that despite this, it is time to "step on the accelerator."

"We want a fully functional exchange so the citizens of Maryland can take full advantage of it," he said.

Hammen cited cases where individuals incurred significant expenses, and through no fault of their own, were unable to get insurance or were misled about their coverage due to technical glitches.

For individuals who attempted to sign up, but later found they lacked coverage due to problems with the state's health exchange website, there should be records of the attempts that will qualify those individuals for retroactive coverage, Hammen said.

That will not always be the case, however. Hammen says there is a pos-

sibility some individuals will not have records, which would require citizens to sign an affidavit before claiming retroactive coverage.

Skeptics believe this will introduce the possibility for what one delegate called "gaming the system."

With retroactive coverage, eligible individuals could theoretically sign up to receive aid only to drop their plan a few months later.

Other lawmakers questioned the implications for hospitals and insurance companies citing credit-rating firm Moody's downgrade of the U.S. health insurance sector from stable to negative on Thursday.

Speaker of the House Michael Busch said the House would vote on the bill as soon as Tuesday. The Senate passed the measure, 38-8, on Jan. 21.



PHOTO COURTESY OF TIFFANY BEROID.

Laurel Wal-Mart employee Tiffany Beroid and her one-year-old daughter, Ameyah, attend a New York rally pushing for an increase of the minimum wage.

County Makes the Difference in Minimum Wage Debate

By MEGAN BROCKETT
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - America's wealthiest state, and one of its most expensive to live in, is primed for a battle between lawmakers who are pushing a statewide increase of the minimum wage and others who believe that one comprehensive hike doesn't make sense in economically disparate Maryland.

Gov. Martin O'Malley earlier this week announced his support of a bill that would gradually increase Maryland's minimum wage from the federal standard of \$7.25 an hour to \$10.10 an hour by 2016, indexing it to the cost of living starting in 2017 and rais-

ing the base rate for tipped workers from 50 to 70 percent of the minimum wage.

"The minimum wage in Maryland is no longer a wage that anyone can live on," O'Malley said during his State of the State address Thursday.

"Raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 is going to create more and better customers for Maryland businesses. And that is why raising the minimum wage in Maryland is not only good for the hundreds of thousands who will see a boost in their paychecks, it is good for every Marylander, because it is good for economy."

While Maryland's median household income of more than \$71,000 ranked first in the nation in 2012 according to U.S. Census

Bureau data, a report released last month by the Economic Policy Institute, a non-profit, left-leaning think tank based in Washington, D.C., said that the wages of more than 1 in 10 workers — roughly 306,000 people in all — would be directly affected by the governor's proposed increase.

A minimum wage hike has widespread support among Democratic lawmakers, but some Republicans argue that a raise would hurt businesses, lead to job losses and ultimately harm the economy.

But advocates for raising the minimum wage say that an increase is long overdue.

See WAGE Page A5

INSIDE

Anniversary of Fair Pay Act

Sens. met with fair pay activist Lilly Ledbetter to mark the five-year anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act being signed into law. Lilly Ledbetter was a guest at the State of the Union address where President Barack Obama renewed calls to reduce income inequality and ensure equal pay for equal work.

Community, Page A3

Affordable Rental Housing

Sens. Ben Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski joined Sen. Jack Reed and 30 other Sens. in sending a letter to Mel Watt, the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency urging him to end the suspension of contributions to the National Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund.

Commentary, Page A4

Jobs in Maryland

Gov. O'Malley announced a month of job growth in Maryland at Domino Sugar, an iconic Maryland business. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics preliminary survey data, Maryland created 7,300 total jobs in November. Businesses created 7,000 jobs and the public sector gained 300 jobs.

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "Ride Along"

2014 will definitely see movies that are worse than "Ride Along" — that prophecy will probably be fulfilled before the end of the month. But it's unlikely to produce any that are more formulaic and uninspired than this action comedy. (which means that there's a lot of gunfire and exploding cars.)

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that climate change is responsible for killing whitebark pine trees and thus impacting mountain ecosystems?

-- Dale Livingstone,
Salem, OR

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Laubach Literacy tutor and organizer June Hall dies at 90

June M. Hall, 90, formerly of Skyline, a Laubach Literacy tutor who helped spread the movement in Southern Maryland, died Jan. 3 in Jacksonville, Fla.

She was born in Colorado. In the 1940s she met Edwin Hall at a USO dance in Oroville, Calif., and in June 1944 they were married in Reno. Ed served in Germany during WWII, and when peace came, the Halls moved to Ed's native Washington and he joined Riggs Bank from which he retired as vice president in 1978. They moved to Clayton Lane in Skyline in 1956.

One tribute to her mentions: "June's love for Jesus Christ was the cornerstone of her life; she had a giving, serving spirit." Among her passions was volunteering with the Laubach Literacy Council locally, and she was instrumental in starting a Council in St. Mary's County in 1979. In addition to teaching others to read and write, June was a tutor trainer and effective in recruiting volunteers.

She was fearless. I recall during the riots following the assassination of Martin Luther King, she regularly drove into the city, through the rioting, to take people home. Her friend Helen Michalco told me that June often took her to interfaith services at the Women's Correctional Institution in Jessup and at St. Elizabeths.

The Halls were members of Bells United Methodist Church, and before that, of Bradbury Heights Methodist. In 1966 they moved to Camp Springs, then to Hollywood, Md., in 1978 and to Florida in 1998.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 42 years, Edwin

L. Hall and granddaughter Bonnie Stachurski. Survivors include daughters Barbara Drayson and Amanda Hall, two granddaughters, nine great-grandchildren, two great-great-grandchildren, and three siblings. Internment will be at Cheltenham at a later date.

Warm cars stolen

On the morning of Dec. 30 four people around the area left their cars warming up while they went back into their houses. The cars were stolen. We know it's been cold, but if you want to heat up your car, stay with it.

Coming up

Morningsiders, mark your calendar. The Town has two meetings coming up: Tues., Feb. 11, planning session, and Tues., Feb. 18, 7 p.m. general meeting.

Skyline Citizens Association will meet Wed., Feb. 19, 7 p.m., probably at Skyline School.

Neighbors

Bobby Lyle (301-922-0682) says on his calling card: "Let me be your one man band." I met him at Mama Stella's Restaurant one night and enjoyed his keyboard playing—my kind of music. For six years he's been playing there every 1st and 3rd weekend, Friday and Saturday nights.

Dwight Holloway, of Skyline, suffered a recent stroke and is in rehab at Stoddard Baptist Nursing Home in Washington. He turned 94 on Jan. 13, and reports are that he can now walk 100 feet, using a walker, with weights.

Marie Aley, formerly of Temple Hills, turned 90 recently and was honored with a surprise party at Our Lady Help of Christian Church Hall in Waldorf.

Several columns ago I wrote about a beautiful old church in Washington that was torn down and its parts sold, some reportedly to a Camp Springs family for use in building a log cabin. I wondered where in Camp Springs there's a log cabin. Well, I think I have the answer: Ray Wockley emailed some great photos of a handsome log cabin on White Oak Avenue. Thanks, Ray.

May they rest in peace

I'm saddened by the news that Bill Shaughnessy, formerly of Temple Hills, died Jan. 21. I'll pay tribute to him in a future column.

Helen Holmes Goddard, 100, of Clinton, died Dec. 18. She was born Feb. 20, 1913 in St. Mary's County to James Walter Norris and Annie Elizabeth Raley and grew up in Resurrection Manor, the second oldest house in Maryland. She moved about 1940 to Clinton where she was a member of St. John's Parish. Husbands Jesse Goddard and Frank W. Holmes, daughters Patrice Holmes and Diane Fitzgerald preceded her in death. Survivors include her children, Gloria Shaddock, Shirley Saushock, Frank Holmes, Phillip Holmes and Carolyn Webb, 13 grandchildren and 13 Great-grandchildren.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Theo Carter, Rita Beall and J.B. Thomas, Feb. 7; Jesse Ritter and my great-granddaughter Molly McHale, Feb. 8; Connie Waby, Feb. 9; Mary (Stakem) Crane, Feb. 9; Ginny Call, Dawn Withrow and David Chambers, Feb. 11; Angie Miller, Katelyn Duding and Pat Miller, Feb. 13.

Neighborhood Events

Baker, III to Host 3 Public Hearings on 2015 Budget

Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III to Host 3 Public Hearings on Fiscal Year 2015 County Operating Budget

Upper Marlboro, MD — Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III announced he will host a series of three public budget hearings to present residents with an overview of the proposed FY 2015 Prince George's County budget. Residents are encouraged to voice their feedback and recommendations for consideration and incorporation into the overall budget during the public hearings. The three locations conveniently encompass the northern, southern and central points of the County to ensure that residents county-wide have date and location options.

Citizens interested in testifying are encouraged to pre-register by calling (301)952-4547 or may go on line and register here.

We would like to hear from as many citizens and businesses as possible. Comments will be timed and limited to three (3) minutes per person. All Budget Hearings will be streamed live on the County's website at www.princegeorgescountymd.gov on the dates scheduled below.

Schedule of FY 2015 Budget Hearings
Wednesday February 12, 2014

Laurel High School
Spartan Hall
8000 Cherry Lane Laurel, MD
7:00 p.m.

Edwards: New State Analysis Highlights Growing Number of Marylanders without Unemployment Insurance

Washington, DC — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) highlighted a new report showing that by the end of the week 1.6 million Americans, including 27,285 Marylanders, will be left without unemployment insurance. Nationwide, an average of nearly 72,000 people are losing unemployment insurance each week—adding to the 1.3 million Americans who lost their unemployment insurance on December 28th.

"The new report highlights how unconscionable it is for Republicans to continue blocking an extension of unemployment insurance," said Congresswoman Edwards. "By the end of the week, 1.6 million Americans and 27,285 Marylanders will be without a vital lifeline and proven economic stimulus. We know that for every dollar spent on unemployment benefits, \$1.63 is put back into our economy. It is time Republicans put partisan politics aside and joined Democrats in helping people across our country make ends meet while looking for work."

High School Juniors and Seniors Earn Nationally Recognized Certifications & College Credits Now!

UPPER MARLBORO, MD — Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is now accepting applications for entry into the Technical Career Academy Programs. Technical Career Academy Programs offer students the opportunity to earn nationally recognized certifications, dual enrollment

college credit and/or articulated college credit. There are four general qualifications for entry into a Technical Career Academy Program:

Students cannot transfer into the Technical Career Academy Programs; an approved application is required.

The student must, at the time of entering the program, be enrolled in a Prince George's County public school and in the grade required for the chosen program specialization and have at least a 2.0 GPA.

The student and parent/legal guardian must sign the "Career Academy Student/Parent/Guardian Agreement" on the reverse side of the application.

The student must be eligible to complete the Technical Career Academy Program and meet all high school graduation requirements. Some of the program specializations have math or science prerequisites (applicants should have successfully completed math or science prerequisites with a minimum grade of "C").

Academies of available study include: Auto Body Repair, Automotive Technician, Barbering, CISCO Academy, Cosmetology, Culinary Arts, ProStart, Electrical, Carpentry, HVAC, Masonry, Nursing, Health Professions, and Publishing & Graphics.

Students accepted into a Technical Career Academy Program receive transportation to the accepted location. To apply for entry into the program students should schedule an appointment with their professional school counselor. To review the application for admission and further program requirements click here. For specific questions about available programs please contact the Career Academy Programs Office at 301-669-6012.

About PGCPS: Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS), one of the nation's 25 largest school districts, has 204 schools, approximately 125,000 students and nearly 18,000 employees. With an annual budget of \$1.6 billion, the district serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities. PGCPS is nationally recognized for its innovative programs and initiatives, including the expansion of Advanced Placement courses and partnerships with businesses and institutions of higher learning.

Marlow Heights Community Center will host a

Black History Exhibit

Temple Hills, MD — Everyone is invited to Marlow Heights Community Center (2800 St. Clair Drive, Temple Hills 20748) for a special Black History exhibit. Stop by and honor black culture by paying tribute to the generations of African Americans that have paved the way to promoting the identity of African Americans. The exhibit will feature African Americans who provided vital support and services that impacted not only the United States but the entire world. Participate in interactive puzzles and



Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker

games as you complete your journey through the exhibit.

The FREE exhibit will be open during the following times: Friday, February 21 from 9 am to 5 pm; Saturday, February 22 from 9 am to 3 pm; Sunday, February 23 from 11 am to 3 pm. We are in celebration of the history, culture, education, heritage and arts that embrace and promote the rich traditions and zestful spirit of African-Americans. Learn more about the legacy of these "Unsung Pioneers" as you explore their service and participation. For more information, contact staff at 301-423-0505.

For more on classes and activities offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation, see www.pgparcs.com and stay connected on facebook.com/pgparcs and twitter.com/pgparcs.

Café Groove: City Sounds and National Rhymes with Alfred Duncan

Landover, MD — On Friday, February 7, 2014, youth (ages 10-17) are invited to a Café Groove program to experience City Sounds and National Rhymes with Alfred Duncan, member of the celebrity band Mambo Sauce. Stop by for an evening of performances and hands-on interaction, learn the history of Go-Go music, and experience the elements that make music from the Washington Metropolitan area so unique. Following the performance, there will be open mic opportunities and refreshments will be served.

Café Groove will be held at Columbia Park Community Center, located at 1901 Kent Village Drive, Landover 20785. This event begins at 7:30 pm. The fee is \$3/person; reservations are not required. For more information, contact staff at 301-446-3244.

For more on classes and activities offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation, see www.pgparcs.com and stay connected on facebook.com/pgparcs and twitter.com/pgparcs.

Pretty in Pink Night at Lake Arbor Community Center

Mitchellville, MD — Girls ages 10-13 are invited to Lake Arbor Community Center (10100 Lake Arbor Way, Mitchellville, MD 20721) on Saturday, February 8, 2014 for Pretty in Pink. Stop by for a special night of spa treatments — sit down for a manicure, get your makeup done and enjoy a stress-relieving massage! After being pampered, there will be a chance to walk the runway. Photographs will be taken, so dress to impress!

This FREE event begins at 7 pm. Reservations are not required. For more information, contact staff at 301-333-6561. For more on classes and activities offered by the Department of Parks and Recreation, see www.pgparcs.com and stay connected on facebook.com/pgparcs and twitter.com/pgparcs.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
Abraham Lincoln
February 12, 1809



Brandywine-Aquasco

by Ruth Turner 301 888 2153

COLLEGE & CAREER EXPO

Saturday February 22, 2014 from 9:00 AM-2:00 PM there will be a free College and Career Expo at Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School. The school is located at 12650 Brooke Lane, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. There will be free onsite admissions, Military and Trade School Representatives, and interactive workshops.

MARTIN LUTHER KING CELEBRATION

Dr. Patricia Turner Mitchell, daughter of Mrs. Ruth Turner of Brandywine, Maryland, was the keynote speaker for the Martin Luther King celebration, Monday, January 20, 2014 held in Rio Vista, California. Dr. Mitchell spoke about the importance of keeping Dr. King's legacy alive by living a life with principles, a life of service and committed engagement to social and spiritual transformation.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Life Line Screening is coming to Clinton United Methodist Church (CUMC) on March 19, 2014. Register for a Wellness

Package which includes four vascular tests and osteoporosis screening from \$149 (\$139 with our member discount). All five screenings take 60-90 minutes to complete. In order to register for this event and to receive a \$10 discount off any package priced above \$129, please call 1-888-653-6441 or visit www.lifelinescreening.com/community-partners. The church is located at 10700 Brandywine Road Clinton, Maryland.

PRESENTATION IN HONOLULU, HAWAII

Dr. Patricia Turner Mitchell, daughter of Mrs. Ruth Turner of Brandywine, Maryland presented her research at the 12TH International Hawaii Conference on Education in Honolulu, Hawaii, January 5-8, 2014. The presentation titles were: Collaboration and Peak Performance: A Multidisciplinary Perspective for Emerging Leaders and Building Intergenerational Relationships Capacity in Higher Education: "A Call to Action".

JOHN ISABELLE ACRES FARM, INC

John Isabelle Acres Farm, Inc. in Brandywine, Maryland

has hay for sale. Contact Frank Deville, Manager for reasonably priced quality hay for horses, cow and goats at 301-466-8360.

PRINCE GEORGES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Join us for our Annual Dance Showcase Saturday February 22, 2014 6:30 PM-8:30 PM. The Dance Showcase will be at Charles H. Flowers High School 10001 Ardwick- Admore Road Springdale, Maryland 20774.

The cost is \$10.00 for adults, \$5.00 for students five and older, and younger are free. Grades 6 through thru 12 are participating. For more information please contact Anita Lambert at 301-808-2317.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Body Recall has resumed and will meet every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday at 9:00 AM unless the Church Office is closed or school is on a delayed opening schedule. Our address is 10700 Brandywine Road Clinton, Maryland 20735. Office number is 301-868-1281.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Rule Changes Tighten Reverse Mortgage Eligibility

Reverse mortgages have become increasingly popular in recent years, as cash-strapped seniors seek ways to keep pace with rising expenses — not to mention cope with the pummeling their retirement savings took during the Great Recession.

But the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) noticed that borrowers increasingly have been opting to withdraw most or all of their home equity at closing, leaving little or nothing for future needs. Consequently, by mid-2012 nearly 10 percent of reverse mortgage holders were in default and at risk of foreclosure because they couldn't pay their taxes and insurance.

That's why Congress authorized HUD to tighten FHA reverse mortgage requirements in order to: encourage homeowners to tap their equity more slowly; better ensure that borrowers can afford their loan's fees and other financial obligations; and strengthen the mortgage insurance fund from which loans are drawn.

Here are the key changes:

Most reverse mortgage borrowers can now withdraw no more than 60 percent of their total loan during the first year. Previously, borrowers could tap the entire amount on day one — a recipe for future financial disaster for those with limited means.

The first-year limit may be waived for certain homeowners whose "mandatory obligations" (e.g., upfront insurance premiums, loan origination fees, delinquent federal debt, etc.) exceed the 60 percent amount; but they'll have to pay a higher upfront mortgage insurance premium — 2.5 percent of the home's appraised value instead of the normal 0.5 percent. (Note: Credit card debt isn't considered a mandatory obligation, so those with significant credit card debt may not be able to withdraw enough to pay off their debt.)

Generally, borrowers can take the money either as a lump sum at closing (with a fixed-rate loan), or as an ongoing line of credit or monthly payments (adjustable rate loan). However, lump-sum payments are now subject to the 60 percent mandatory obligations test, so to withdraw more than that you'll have to go the line-of-credit route, at least for the first year; after that, you can tap the remaining balance if you wish.

Under previous rules, almost anyone with sizeable home equity could take out a reverse mortgage. Now, potential borrowers must undergo a detailed financial assessment to ensure they'll be able to meet future tax and insurance obligations.

Lenders are required to review the borrower's credit history. They also must analyze all income from earnings, pensions, IRAs, 401(k) plans or Social Security, and weigh it against the borrower's likely living expenses, including other outstanding debts. Those who come up short (i.e., are more likely to default) may be required to set aside money from their reverse mortgage to cover future obligations — thereby lowering the amount of equity they'd be able to tap.

The new regulations also reduce the maximum amount of home equity that can be borrowed against — 10 to 15 percent less than before, on average. Generally, the older you are, the more equity you have and the lower the interest rate, the more you'll be able to borrow. Note: The age component of this calculation is based on the youngest party listed on the loan.

Because reverse mortgages are so complicated, potential borrowers are required to consult an HUD-approved counselor before being allowed to apply. Do preliminary research at helpful sites sponsored by HUD (www.hud.gov), the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (www.cfpb.gov) and AARP (www.aarp.org). Also check with an accountant, financial planner or lawyer specializing in elder law to make sure a reverse mortgage is right for you.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.

To Follow Jason Alderman on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney



Mikulski, Senate Women Mark Anniversary of Fair Pay Act with Pay Activist Lilly Ledbetter

By PRESS OFFICER
Sen. Barbara Mikulski's Office

Mikulski led fight in Senate for Fair Pay Act signed into law on January 29, 2009, has introduced Paycheck Fairness Act to build on promise of equal pay for equal work

Women earn just 77 cents for every dollar a man earns; costs women, men & families \$434,000 over a woman's career

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Dean of the Senate women, along with Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) met with pay equity activist Lilly Ledbetter to mark the five-year anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act being signed into law. Lilly Ledbetter was a guest at the State of the Union address Tuesday, where President Barack Obama renewed calls to reduce income inequality and ensure equal pay for equal work.

"Five years ago today, President Obama signed his first law as President. It was the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which overturned the 180-day statute of limitations



PHOTO COURTESY OF FIRE CHIEF MARC BASHOOR

On Tuesday, January 28, 2014, Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.), Dean of the Senate women, was joined by (from left to right) Senators Murray, Cantwell, Baldwin, Warren, Hirono, Stabenow and Klobuchar, and pay equity activist Lilly Ledbetter in the U.S. Capitol to mark the five-year anniversary of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act being signed into law by President Obama.

for women to contest pay discrimination. I led the charge in the Senate for this important downpayment in helping end the pay gap and keeping the courthouse doors open," Senator Mikulski said. "Today, women still make 77 cents for every dollar a man earns. In his State of the Union address, the President renewed the call to build on the promise of equal pay for equal work, and I couldn't agree more. That why

I've introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act to stop wage discrimination from happening in the first place and end the policies that keep women uneducated and un-equipped when it comes to fighting for their fair share. I will continue to fight for them. It's not just for our pocketbooks. It's about the family checkbooks and getting it right in the law books."

Senator Mikulski led the floor fight for Senate passage of the

Fair Pay Act in 2009, which is named after Lilly Ledbetter who along with the Senate women has fought for equal pay for equal work. Senator Mikulski and Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.) have introduced the Paycheck Fairness Act, legislation that would build on the promise of the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and help close the wage gap between women and men working equivalent jobs.

Cell Phones A1

quires; Maryland requires secondhand-goods dealers, such as pawn shops, to hold purchased items for a minimum of 18 days and a maximum of 75 days.

Henry agreed that ecoATM has a sterling track record of cooperating with police, but he believes a more proactive approach is necessary.

"Nobody has said anything but [that] they are 100 percent cooperative," said Henry. "While that's nice behavior on their part, regulated secondhand-goods dealers are required to report to the police every day every single item that they've purchased."

For some lawmakers, the most blatant problem with ecoATM and its competitors is the promise of instant cash. Henry says that considering ecoATM's identification requirements, the kiosks should have enough information to mail the seller a check. Washington's bill would require providers to pay sellers with a check.

"The ability of individuals to collect phones...and receive cash without any information being collected, that is what the public safety problem is," said Washington. "There are all kinds of ways for the value of these cell phones to be provided to the seller without cash."

However, Kuder says that the promise of cash is a huge incentive to customers and "a critical



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY MIKE DENISON

Shaenice Crowdy, a retail worker from Annapolis, prepares her smartphone for examination by an ecoATM, an electronic recycling kiosk that offers users instant cash, in the Westfield Annapolis Mall. EcoATMs and similar kiosks are hot topics among Maryland lawmakers, many of whom say the kiosks attract phone thieves.

component" of his company's business model.

The consumer response to ecoATM in Baltimore County was "fantastic," according to Kuder. He said that over 20,000 phones and devices have been recycled there so far. When Baltimore city allowed ecoATMs, "there were people lined up to use the machine."

Despite this response, Baltimore County Councilman David Marks said in a press release last month that General Growth Properties, the owner of three malls in the county, would voluntarily remove the kiosks.

EcoATM has at least one kiosk in the following locations: Westfield Annapolis Mall, the Marley Station Mall and Centre in Glen Burnie, Security Square Mall in Woodlawn, TownMall of Westminster, St. Charles Towne Center in Waldorf and Harford Mall in Bel Air.

Understandably, some Marylanders are opposed to the idea of a ban.

"I think it would be a bad idea, because [ecoATM is] keeping a lot of waste out," said Shaenice Crowdy, a retail worker in Annapolis.

Even those who favor stricter regulation admit that ecoATM may be on to something.

"This is going to become something that other businesses are going to model," said Washington. "We want to keep the ability to recycle."

Henry said that he would support putting ecoATM's technology in the hands of pawn shops and other secondhand-goods dealers. This would allow for the convenience of the kiosk while facilitating human reporting and monitoring.

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Agenda from A1

One proposal would give tax credits to universities, along with their surrounding communities, in order to support economic development.

Another measure would set up a fund to invest in private cybersecurity start-ups. The fund would be financed by private investors who would receive tax credits in return for their contribution, according to a press release.

Also this session, lawmakers will examine estate taxes.

"We're going to propose a reformation of the estate tax laws," Miller said. "It will not be eliminated."

Busch announced at the press conference that a commission to review the economic and business climate would be launched as soon as its members were appointed.

"[The commission] will initiate and look at all the economic development tools that we have all," Busch said. "All the programs, all the taxes used, all the initiation that we can take and put together."

The commission would produce a report that would be presented to the governor and the General Assembly next year and would include suggestions on how to create a better business environment in Maryland, Busch said.

The proposed commission would be led by former Lockheed Martin CEO Norman Augustine, and would also have members from the university system and two members from both the Maryland House and Senate.

This is the first time the two had jointly proposed a legislative package, Miller said.

REAL ESTATE AUCTION
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COMMENTARY

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S POST

A Community Newspaper for Prince George's County

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin, Mikulski Urge Greater Federal Focus on Affordable Rental Housing

WASHINGTON, DC — In an effort to strengthen our economy and increase the supply of affordable rental housing across the country, Senators Ben Cardin and Barbara A. Mikulski (both D-Md.) joined Senator Jack Reed (D-RI) and 30 other Senators in sending a letter to Mel Watt, the Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), urging him to end the suspension of contributions to the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the Capital Magnet Fund (CMF) within all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

In December of 2013, the U.S. Senate confirmed Mel Watt to lead FHFA as the country's top housing regulator, overseeing more than \$5 trillion in funding for the U.S. mortgage market.

In 2008, overwhelming majorities in Congress passed the Housing and Economic Recovery Act to help stabilize America's housing market. Created by that legislation were the National Housing Trust Fund and the Capital Magnet Fund that sought to address the shortage of affordable rental housing. However, neither the National Housing Trust Fund nor the Capital Magnet Fund have been consistently funded as intended. As the FHFA's newly confirmed Director, Mr. Watt has the power to lift the suspension and the Senators noted:

"The affordable rental housing crisis that prompted Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to create the NHTF and CMF has only gotten worse in the last five years. Since passage of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act in 2008, the number of homes that are affordable to renters with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income decreased by more than 1 million units," the Senators wrote. "The time is long overdue to lift the current suspension of contributions to the NHTF and CMF, and we ask your full and fair consideration of this request."

Full text of the letter follows. Additional signatories include: Senators Barbara Boxer, Elizabeth Warren, Bernie Sanders, Richard Blumenthal, Carl Levin, Jeff Merkley, Chris Murphy, Ed Markey, Jeanne Shaheen, Debbie Stabenow, Tim Kaine, Kirsten Gillibrand, Cory Booker, Al Franken, Ron Wyden, Mazie Hirono, Dick Durbin, Tammy Baldwin, Amy Klobuchar, Tom Harkin, Sherrod Brown, Sheldon Whitehouse, Dianne Feinstein, Bob Menendez,

Chuck Schumer, Brian Schatz, Patty Murray, Patrick Leahy, Bob Casey and Mary Landrieu.

January 23, 2014

The Honorable Mel Watt

Director

Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA)

400 7th Street, SW

Washington, DC 20024

Dear Director Watt:

We write first to congratulate you on being confirmed and sworn in as Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). We also share your concern about the need for more affordable rental housing in this country and ask that you end the suspension of contributions to the National Housing Trust Fund (NHTF) and the Capital Magnet Fund (CMF), in a manner fully consistent with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations.

The affordable rental housing crisis that prompted Congress, on a bipartisan basis, to create the NHTF and CMF has only gotten worse in the last five years. Since passage of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act in 2008, the number of homes that are affordable to renters with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income decreased by more than 1 million units. According to the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, there is currently a national shortage of nearly 5 million units affordable and available to extremely low-income renters. Funding the NHTF and CMF would help ameliorate this crisis.

We are all committed to reforming the mortgage finance system and do not believe Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac should be returned to their previous form. However, directing much needed funding for affordable rental housing should not wait until Congress and the President are able to agree on a new system. The time is long overdue to lift the current suspension of contributions to the NHTF and CMF, and we ask your full and fair consideration of our request.

We look forward to hearing from you in a timely fashion and working with you as FHFA Director on this and other important matters.

Sincerely,



Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League

Charlotte Schuster Price, Mother of Former NUL CEO Hugh Price, Dies at 101

Charlotte Schuster Price died peacefully at the age of 101 on December 22, 2013 at Sunrise Senior Living in Columbia, Maryland. She was the mother of Hugh B. Price, who served as President and CEO of the National Urban League from 1994 until 2003. Mrs. Price attended every NUL annual conference during Hugh's tenure. A former activist in Washington, DC, and political science major at Howard University, she delighted in attending the keynote and plenary sessions, workshops, speakers' lunches, gala dinners and concerts.

The daughter of Alfred Ernest Schuster and Cora Hawley Schuster, Mrs. Price was born on October 6, 1912, in New Haven, Connecticut. She grew up in nearby West Haven. In 1935, she married Dr. Kline A. Price, Sr., who would go on to become only the second African-American physician in the United States to earn certification from the American Board of Urology. They spent their entire married lives in Washington DC.

During World War II after her sons reached elementary and nursery school age, she returned to Howard University to earn a B.A. degree. Her professors at Howard included renowned histo-

rian John Hope Franklin and Ralph Bunche, who subsequently won the Nobel Prize for Peace.

Mrs. Price lived a vigorous life of service to the causes of equality, opportunity and civil rights in the District of Columbia. In the 1940s, she belonged to an organization of African-American parents, known as Consolidated Parents, which fought for school desegregation in DC. She and her husband provided financial support for the litigation brought by their neighbor, Charles Hamilton Houston of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, which steadily laid the legal foundation for the landmark Brown v. Board of Education ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954 that outlawed segregated public schools. As a member of the League of Women Voters, Charlotte fought for voting rights for DC residents. She was very active in the Americans for Democratic Action and served as vice president of the Washington chapter. In her mid-50s, she transformed herself from activist to archivist by earning a Master's Degree in Library Sciences from Catholic University. She then worked with her good friend and famed librarian Dorothy Porter at the Moorland Room at Howard University.

Open to the Public



Northampton Plantation

From the 1600's to the mid-1800's, large tobacco plantations dominated the economic and social life of Prince George's County. One of the most prominent plantations in the county was Northampton. Today, all that remains of Northampton are the ruins of the main plantation house, outbuildings, and two slave quarters.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



It's Time to End Child Poverty in Rich America with Urgency and Persistence

"Unfortunately, many Americans live on the outskirts of hope — some because of their poverty, and some because of their color, and all too many because of both. Our task is to help replace their despair with opportunity. This administration today, here and now, declares unconditional war on poverty in America. I urge this Congress and all Americans to join with me in that effort. It will not be a short or easy struggle, no single weapon or strategy will suffice, but we shall not rest until that war is won. The richest Nation on earth can afford to win it. We cannot afford to lose it."

President Lyndon Johnson, 1964 State of the Union Address

"...[T]hey have become great and rich...they do not judge with justice the cause of the orphan, ... and they do not defend the rights of the needy...shall I not bring retribution on a nation such as this?"

— Jeremiah 5:27-29

"A population that does not take care of the elderly and of children and the young has no future, because it abuses both its memory and its promise."

— Pope Francis

Poverty, the United States is still not a fair playing field for millions of children afflicted by preventable poverty, hunger, homelessness, sickness, poor education and violence in the world's richest economy with a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$15.7 trillion.

Every fifth child (16.1 million) is poor, and every tenth child (7.1 million) is extremely poor. Children are the poorest age group and the younger they are the poorer they are. Every fourth infant, toddler and preschool child (5 million) is poor; 1 in 8 is extremely poor. A majority of our one- and two-year-olds are already children of color. In five years children of color who are disproportionately poor, nearly 1 in 3, will be a majority of all children in America and of our future workforce, military and consumers. But millions of them are unready for school, poorly educated and unprepared to face the future. Nearly 60 percent of all our children and more than 80 percent of our Black and nearly 75 percent of our Latino children cannot read or compute at grade level in fourth and eighth grade and so many drop out of school before graduating. Seventy-five percent of young people ages 17-24 cannot get into the military because of poor literacy, health or prior incarceration.

The greatest threat to America's economic, military and national security comes from no enemy without but from our failure, unique among high income nations, to invest adequately and fairly in the health, education and sound development of all of our young.

We call on President Obama and America's political leaders in

every party at every level to mount a long overdue, unwavering, and persistent war to prevent and eliminate child poverty and finish the task President Johnson and Dr. King began. Two- and three-year-olds have no politics and we must reject any leaders who for any reason play political football with the lives of millions of our children and our nation's future. If America is to lead in the 21st century world, we must reset our economic and moral compass.

While remembering that children do not come in pieces and that hunger, homelessness, violence, and parental attention all affect childhood well-being, building on best practices and sound research about the crucial importance of early childhood development, the first step to prevent and alleviate indefensible and costly child poverty is to build a quality early childhood continuum of care from birth through age 5 so that every child, regardless of the circumstances of birth or lottery of geography, is ready for school and has a fair chance to reach their God-given potential. We know if we properly support children in their early years of rapid brain development, not only will they benefit, but so will all America. This is not only the just but the smart and cost-effective thing to do. Nobel laureate economist James Heckman estimates a lifelong economic rate of return of 7 to 10 percent each year for every dollar invested in quality early childhood programs. Former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke told CDF conference attendees in 2012: "Very few alternative investments can promise that kind of return. Notably, a portion of these economic returns accrues to the children them-

selves and their families, but studies show that the rest of society enjoys the majority of the benefits, reflecting the many contributions that skills and productive workers make to the economy." And MIT Nobel laureate economist Robert Solow in his foreword to a 1994 CDF report *Wasting America's Future* was prescient when he wrote: "For many years Americans have allowed child poverty levels to remain astonishingly high — higher than for American adults; higher than for children in nations that are our competitors; higher than from the entire period of the late 1960s and 1970s, a period when we had less wealth as a nation than we do now; and far higher than one would think a rich and ethical society would tolerate. The justification, when one is offered at all, has often been that action is expensive: 'We have more will than wallet.' I suspect that in fact our wallets exceed our will, but in any event this concern for the drain on our resources completely misses the other side of the equation: Inaction has its costs too...As an economist I believe that good things are worth paying for; and that even if curing children's poverty were expensive, it would be hard to think of a better use in the world for money. If society cares about children, it should be willing to spend money on them."

If America's dream continues to fade for millions of poor, near poor and middle class children and families; work and wages continue to decline; and education and basic survival needs — including adequate food and housing — continue to be ravaged to protect the powerful interests of the top 1 percent that

See WATCH, Page A8

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Getting Your Kids To Do Their Chores Is A Good Thing

Should children be assigned tasks to do around the house — their family “chores”? While most parents would say yes, it often becomes such a hassle to get kids to do what's asked of them that parents just let it slip. They shouldn't.

Getting your kids to do assigned chores can be an important factor in helping them develop in positive ways. Chores are a way for a child to feel part of the family, and to gain a sense of contributing toward the family good. They provide early life lessons that make it easier for a person to feel like an active, contributing member of society later in life.

Chores are also a means for learning about responsibility and meeting expectations, skills necessary for success in school and, eventually, the workplace. Household chores may involve simple activities, like making a bed daily or helping with the family pet, but the lessons derived from successfully completing family chores carry over into later life.

Getting chores completed successfully, however, does require planning and work on the part of parents. It's especially important to assign chores that are appropriate for a child's age and abilities. You want to create the opportunity for successful completion and a positive experience.

You also want to keep your expectations realistic. Act the perfectionist and find reason to criticize how every chore is completed and you're setting your child up for failure, unable to meet your expectations. At the same time, letting your child get away with little or no effort only teaches him or her to have low expectations and about his or her ability to perform.

Talk with your child about setting up a chore system. Make it clear what the child's responsibilities are and what will be a measure of successful completion. Then develop a system of rewards for work well done that has met the agreed upon expectations. Take the time to monitor chore activities and to offer honest praise when work is done well. Don't make the mistake of only offering criticism for efforts that fall short.

When a child can successfully complete chores and receive positive re-enforcement for doing the work well, it helps to build self-esteem and self-confidence. Start your child early in life to accept chores and do them well, and the result will be a confident, responsible child with stronger life skills.

"Counseling Corner" is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACA-corner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at: www.counseling.org

Business Spotlight

Free Tax Preparation Offers Assistance to County Residents

LARGO, MD — Receive free tax preparation assistance from Prince George's Community College's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, now through April 12 at the Largo campus. County residents with basic income tax returns and maximum household income of \$52,000 can schedule an appointment by visiting www.pgcc.edu/go/vita. Services are offered by appointment only, Tuesdays, 6-9 p.m. and Saturdays, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. in the Center for Advanced Technology. Tax services will include free electronic filing and the opportunity to purchase savings bonds. For additional information, call 301-583-5254.

“Services provided through the VITA program saved seniors and low-income residents nearly \$ 125,000 in tax preparation fees,” said Betty Habershon, director of PGCC's Community Financial Center. “The VITA program trained more than 85 volunteers, who are certified by the Internal Revenue Service as Volunteer Income Tax Preparers. The quality of our tax preparation is supported through extensive training and an established review process.”

Last year, the VITA program prepared more than 2,000 federal and state tax returns, which resulted in more than \$1,300,000 in federal and Maryland tax refunds. Residents saved more than \$125,000 in tax preparation fees and received free electronic filing of state and federal tax returns and refunds.

Taxpayers receive free electronic filing of state and federal tax returns, and refunds are issued within 7-10 days with direct deposit. Taxpayers making appointments will need to bring social security cards for themselves and any dependents; prior year tax returns, if available; a check for refund direct deposit information; and their W2, Social Security statement, 1099s and all other tax documents.

Prince George's Community College is a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Two-year Education designated by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security (2010-2015). Established in 1958, Prince George's Community College provides transfer and career programs that help students transfer to four-year colleges and universities and prepare them for the workforce. Each year, 40,000 students take part in more than 200 academic programs and workforce development and continuing education courses. Located in Largo, Maryland, Prince George's Community College has additional sites at Joint Base Andrews, University Town Center in Hyattsville, Laurel College Center, Skilled Trades Center in Camp Springs, and Westphalia Training Center in Upper Marlboro. For more information, visit the college website at www.pgcc.edu, follow on Twitter,

Maryland Gained 7,300 Jobs in December 2013

State Businesses Created More Than 7,000 Jobs Over-the-Month

By PRESS OFFICER
Sen. Barbara Mikulski's Office

BALTIMORE, MD (January, 2014) — Governor O'Malley announced another month of job growth in Maryland at Domino Sugar, an iconic Maryland business and the largest marketer of refined sugar in the United States. According to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) preliminary survey data, Maryland created 7,300 total jobs in November. Maryland's businesses created 7,000 jobs and the public sector gained 300 jobs.

“I'm pleased to announce this latest round of jobs gains on the grounds of the Domino Sugar refinery, an iconic symbol of American ingenuity lighting our harbor for almost 63 years. Maryland is now one of a handful of states to have recovered more than 100 percent of the jobs lost during the recession with over 34,000 jobs created in 2013. While we continue to make tremendous progress, there's still more work to be done. The North Star of the O'Malley-Brown Administration has always been

strengthening and growing our middle class, building our economy from the middle out, creating quality, family-supporting jobs, and expanding more opportunities to hard working moms and dads across our great State,” said Governor O'Malley.

“Working together to expand opportunity and spur new economic development opportunities, we are building a stronger, increasingly-diverse middle class,” said Lt. Governor Brown. “By making smart decisions during the toughest economic climate since the Great Depression over the last seven years, we have made Maryland the best place to live, work and raise a family.”

This report reflects a steady uptick in job creation rates with significant gains in both November and December of 2013. This December recorded the highest number of private sector jobs for the month since before 2003. In fact, the private sector added 34,100 jobs in 2013—a gain of 1.6 percent over the previous year.

Maryland's unemployment rate has been driven down to 6.1 percent in December's prelimi-



PHOTO BY OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
The big "Domino Sugars" sign, literally the size of a basketball court, stand on the refinery rooftop in Baltimore, MD.

nary report, significantly below the national rate of 6.7 percent.

“Maryland's economic recovery is why the O'Malley Administration continues funding job training programs that provide Marylanders with the skills they need to succeed in the 21st century workforce,” said Secretary Leonard Howie.

According to the data released today, the Professional, Scientific

and Technical Services subsector gained 2,100 jobs and the Administrative and Support Services subsector added 500 jobs. The Leisure and Hospitality Sector saw the most private sector growth in December 2013, adding 2,900 jobs. The Accommodation and Food Services subsectors added 3,700 jobs.

STATE-OF-STATE from A1

But a potential increase, which has widespread support from Democratic lawmakers, faces broad opposition from Republicans in both the House and Senate, and Senator David Brinkley, R-Frederick, dedicated a portion of his Republican response to addressing concerns that a hike would hurt businesses and lead to job losses.

“If I, as a business owner, have only so much to allocate to payroll, and I wish to continue to stay open for business, two things are going to happen,” Brinkley said. “Fewer people will be on my payroll and I will

look longer and harder at accelerating automation for my operation, perhaps putting ... less-skilled workers out of work.”

But O'Malley, pounding his fist on the podium and urging lawmakers to act swiftly, said that an increase would bolster the middle class and invigorate the state's economy.

O'Malley also addressed the failures of the state's health care website, calling the site's botched launch “a source of great frustration” and pledging improvement.

“We learn from both success and failure,” O'Malley said. “Sometimes failure kicks the deepest spur.”

It was one of just a few moments in O'Malley's address that were markedly somber, a departure from the jovial and nostalgic tone that defined much of the governor's optimistic speech, which included his reflections on his seven years in office.

O'Malley recounted early challenges brought on by the recession and praised the state's recovery, touting Maryland's status as one of only 17 states that has recovered all the jobs that were lost during the economic downturn.

“Not only is Maryland stronger than before,” he said, “Maryland is cleaner, smarter, safer, healthier, more entrepreneurial and more competitive

than she was before the recession hit.”

O'Malley, who is widely believed to be considering a run for president in 2016, recalled landmark legislation passed during his tenure, including a law permitting gay marriage, sweeping gun control reform and a repeal of the death penalty. He also commended what he said have been laudable advancements in restoring the Chesapeake Bay, reducing childhood hunger and lowering infant mortality rates.

O'Malley also told lawmakers that establishing universal pre-kindergarten and stronger domestic violence laws should be considered priorities for the session.

Wage from A1

Had it kept pace with inflation since peaking in value in 1968, the federal minimum wage today would be more than \$10.70 an hour, according to Matthew Hanson, campaign director for Raise Maryland.

In a state where 17 out of 23 counties have cost of living indexes that are higher than the national average, supporters of a hike say an increase is all the more critical.

Tiffany Beroid, who works as a customer service manager at Wal-Mart in Laurel, lives with her husband and two children in Prince George's County, where the cost of living is 10 percent higher than the national average.

Beroid, 29, earns above the minimum wage, making \$10.70 an hour, but she said her family still struggles with money, even with the income from her husband's full-time job.

Beroid went from working full time to part time last year after the birth of her daughter because she wasn't making enough money to afford child care, she said.

Her family pays \$1,300 a month for their Laurel apartment.

“I know if I [were] a single mother or elderly or widowed, I wouldn't be able to afford that by myself,” Beroid said. “And it's not like it's a high-end apart-

ment with all these great amenities. It's just a regular apartment with regular amenities.”

A member of OUR Walmart, a union-backed group that advocates for employees' rights and a higher minimum wage, Beroid said a minimum wage hike would directly benefit many of her colleagues who make less than \$10.10 an hour. But she suspects it would also affect her paycheck. As a supervisor, she said her hourly rate would likely get a boost if Wal-Mart had to start paying more entry-level workers \$10.10.

Researchers at the Economic Policy Institute have a similar prediction. In its December report, EPI estimated that 140,000 Maryland workers would be “indirectly affected” by a minimum wage increase in this way, bringing the total number of affected workers to 446,000.

Prince George's County recently voted to raise its minimum wage to \$11.50 by 2017, becoming the second Maryland county to do so after Montgomery County, which has the highest cost of living index in the state. The location of both counties, which neighbor Washington, D.C., puts them in direct competition with the nation's capital, where the minimum wage is \$8.25 an hour.

But of the four states that border Maryland, none have a minimum wage above the federal

level, and opponents of a raise say that a statewide increase would put Maryland's outer counties at a competitive disadvantage. That's one reason why some members of the General Assembly are pushing for legislation that would give individual counties the power to set their own minimum wage rates rather than having one statewide rate set by a bill like the one supported by O'Malley.

“I think we can all agree that one shoe doesn't fit all of Maryland,” Delegate Neil Parrott, R-Washington, said. “The economy is completely different in western Maryland, say Garrett County, as compared to Montgomery County.”

Parrott and Sen. Barry Glassman, R-Harford, are co-sponsoring a bill that would allow counties to choose their own minimum wage rates, which would be enforced by the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation.

Parrott said a \$10.10 minimum wage “just doesn't make sense” in an area like Garrett County, where the cost of living is significantly lower than in Montgomery County and where businesses must compete with West Virginia, Virginia and Pennsylvania.

Sen. Richard Colburn, R-Dorchester, is sponsoring another, nearly identical, bill that would

give the counties autonomy in deciding their minimum wage rate.

“This is a very complicated issue, and I certainly agree with [Senate] President Mike Miller ... that one size doesn't fit all, and let our counties raise the minimum wage as they see fit,” Colburn said. “Give that jurisdiction to the local government, where it belongs.”

Colburn said that while an \$11.50 minimum wage might work for Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, a rate that high would close many businesses on an Eastern Shore still recovering from the recession. He added that an increase would be “devastating” to counties like Caroline, Dorchester and Wicomico, which border Delaware, where there is no sales tax.

Hanson said Raise Maryland remains focused on establishing a fair base rate statewide.

“If other counties, where there's a higher cost of living, like Prince George's County or Montgomery County, want to go higher, I think that's great,” he said. “But that said, we're fighting this campaign because we think that no matter where you live, if you live in western Maryland or if you live on the Eastern Shore or southern Maryland or central Maryland, and you're working, you deserve to make at least \$10.10 an hour.”

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK
Movie Review
"Ride Along"

Ride Along
Grade: C-
Rated PG-13, moderate
profanity, some vulgar sexual
references, a little violence
1 hr., 40 min.

2014 will definitely see movies that are worse than "Ride Along" — that prophecy will probably be fulfilled before the end of the month, actually — but it's unlikely to produce any that are more formulaic and uninspired than this flat action comedy. ("Action comedy," of course, means that there's a lot of gunfire and exploding cars.)

Written by a committee and directed by Tim Story ("Think Like a Man"), the film stars Ice Cube as gruff Atlanta cop James Payton and motormouth-du-jour Kevin Hart as Ben Barber, his squirrely, cop-wannabe almost-brother-in-law who goes on a ride-along with him. Seeking to dissuade Ben from becoming a police officer as well as from marrying his sister (Tika Sumpter), James takes Ben on the weirdest, most annoying calls, then stands back and watches while the over-eager putz screws it up. Ben even shoots a guy at one point, but only in the shoulder, and by accident, so James doesn't care and there's no paper-work or anything.

Why does a civilian on a ride-along have a gun? Because it's a stupid movie, that's why.

Mr. Cube isn't bad as a straight man (he's certainly no comedian), but the film relies



A Kevin Hart and Ice Cube lead the lineup in *Ride Along*, the new film from the director and the producer of the blockbuster comedy *Think Like a Man*. When a fast-talking guy joins his girlfriend's brother—a hot-tempered cop—to patrol the streets of Atlanta, he gets entangled in the officer's latest case. Now, in order to prove that he deserves his future bride, he must survive the most insane 24 hours of his life. For the past two years, high-school security guard Ben (Hart) has been trying to show decorated APD detective James (Cube) that he's more than just a video-game junkie who's unworthy of James' sister, Angela (Tika Sumpter). When Ben finally gets accepted into the academy, he thinks he's earned the seasoned policeman's respect and asks for his blessing to marry Angela. Knowing that a ride along will demonstrate if Ben has what it takes to take care of his sister, James invites him on a shift designed to scare the hell out of the trainee. But when the wild night leads them to the most notorious criminal in the city, James will find that his new partner's rapid-fire mouth is just as dangerous as the bullets speeding at it. John Leguizamo and Laurence Fishburne join the cast of the action-comedy directed by Tim Story. *Ride Along* is produced by Will Packer (*Think Like a Man*), alongside Ice Cube, Matt Alvarez (*Barbershop*) and Larry Brezner (*Good Morning, Vietnam*). (C) Universal

entirely on Hart's shtick for its laughs, of which there are a few but not enough. It doesn't help that every detail of the plot is a retread of other buddy-cop movies — from the blustery lieutenant (Bruce McGill) to the rival cops (John Leguizamo and Bryan Callen) who might be up to no good, to the girlfriend who gets dragged into things by the bad guy (Laurence Fish-

burne). There's not a thing to see here that you haven't seen before, so unless you're a huge Kevin Hart fan, you might as well wait for the film to go into rotation on TNT.

We Survived the Snowstorm Now Comes the Hard Part

Black Ice Is Public Enemy Number One During Evening And Morning Commutes

By PRESS OFFICER
AARP

WASHINGTON, D. C. (Wednesday, January, 2014) — As it turns out, it's "one and done" (a one day event, that is), just like the weather forecasters foretold. Now that all that snow is on covering the ground and coating secondary roads, the hard part begins: coping with the thousand and one little imps left behind in the snowbanks and on streets and sidewalks to vex and stall motorists and commuters.

With daytime temperatures scarcely in the teens and nighttime temps down in the single digits, black ice — invariably it is almost invisible to the naked eye — will become a real pervasive threat to area commuters until the long-awaited thaw occurs in the region, warns AAA Mid-Atlantic. Keep in mind black ice is "one of the deadliest of all winter driver hazards," OSHA officials supposedly advise.

"If the road looks slick, it probably is. Even if it doesn't, black ice could still be lurking there, dangerously and imperceptibly by the eye," said John B. Townsend II, AAA Mid-Atlantic's Manager of Public and Government Affairs. "Mark well, it's also called 'glare ice,' and that's telling. That's because it is nearly transparent ice that often looks like a harmless puddle. Or it is often entirely overlooked, and that's the problem. So, test the traction with a smooth brake application or a slight turn of the wheel."

In the winter storm's aftermath, untold numbers of motorists across the region found themselves coping with frozen windshield washer fluid reservoirs and lines, dead bat-

teries, flat tires, frozen doors and locks, and vehicles with little or no pick up and go. As a result, the switchboard to AAA Mid-Atlantic's Roadway Assistance has been inundated with telephone calls from stalled and stranded drivers. By 3:00 O'clock this afternoon, the auto club had already fielded approximately 6,530 SOS messages from motorists and members across its footprint, including 1,744 calls from motorists in Maryland. It also responded to 1,098 calls from drivers in Virginia, and 176 pleas from car owners in the District.

As winter storm Janus set his silvery and icy spoors across the area yesterday, AAA Mid-Atlantic received a total of 7,917 roadside assistance calls. That tally includes 2, 975 calls for tows, 2,629 distress calls for dead batteries, and 1,226 requests for flat tire assistance. In the wake of the hoary-headed storm system, the motor club also assisted 659 motorists who locked out of their cars and it also rescued 138 motorists who ran out of fuel, and aided 68 members grappling with 68 frozen locks and doors.

Then there's the task of safely reaching your destination in the face of freezing temperatures and gingerly negotiating the frozen tundra, landscape and street-cape to avoid injuries and ward off accidents. So here are the rules of the road in the wake of the arctic blast: anticipate problems, reduce your speed, look well ahead to spot trouble spots, watch out for black ice and icy conditions, steer with smooth and precise movements, and brake with maximum efficiency. On top of that, leave yourself plenty of room to stop, make sure you can see and be seen by using your headlights



PHOTO BY THE WEATHER CHANNEL
Along the leading edge of the invading polar blast, accumulating snow will spread from the Midwest to the East Coast on Tuesday.

and by being visible to other highway users, and allow at least three times more space than usual between you and the vehicle in front of you.

Preparing Your vehicle:

- Clear all snow and ice from the vehicle's windows, roof, hood, trunk lid and any other covered areas. This will reduce risk, because it enhances your visibility. Additionally, drivers around you won't be blinded by snow blowing off your vehicle.
- Use an ice scraper to remove snow and ice from your windshield and all windows, including side and rear windows. This will improve your ability to see other roadway users that may move into your path of travel.
- To optimize visual clarity, clean the outside and inside of your windshield at least once a week. Frequent cleaning is even

- more important if you smoke.
- Keep your car's windshield washer reservoir full and use an anti-icing windshield washer fluid which protects against freezing down to -30°F.
- If not, simply, add 16 ounces of rubbing (isopropyl)
- Keep your car's windshield and rear-window defrosters in good working condition.
- Keep your windshield wiper blades fresh. Many drivers change them every six months.
- Run the air-conditioner. In order to remove condensation and frost from the interior of windows, engage your air-conditioner and select the fresh air option. It's fine to set the temperature on "hot." Many cars automatically do this when you choose the defrost setting.
- Keep your windshield washer reservoir full and use an anti-icing windshield washer fluid which protects against freezing down to -30°F.

See SNOW, Page A7

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Israel, Palestine, Pinochet ... and a Soccer Jersey?

A new sports uniform has been accused of "fomenting terrorism" as well as inspiring "violence and hatred" and no, it's not the Knicks' hateful new bright



orange duds. The accused team is a Chilean soccer club called Palestino (Club Deportivo Palestino) and their offense was incorporating an image of historic Palestine on their jerseys.

The controversy is, on the face, bizarre. The Seattle Seahawks have a picture of a bird on their helmets. The Denver Broncos have a horse. Of course, Palestino, an esteemed first-division club that has been around for almost a century, would picture Palestine. But, alas, in this day and age when Israel, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are divided by a crisscross of concrete barriers, barbed wire fences and armed check points, the vision of an undivided country provokes rage among those who have a vested interest in walls.

To understand the controversy engulfing the Santiago-based soccer club, it is first worth knowing that there is no country in the Western world with a closer connection to the Palestinian territories than Chile. With over half a million residents of Palestinian origin, Chile was the primary destination for those fleeing the Middle East both before and during the wars that surrounded the founding of the state of Israel in 1948.

In 1920, Palestinian émigrés started a soccer club to rally around called Palestino. (The club's creation in 1920 is a rather inconvenient truth for a segment of Israeli hardliners who claim that a Palestinian identity did not exist until decades after Israel's founding.)

Over the last ninety-four years, Palestino has represented the Palestinian national colors, held moments of silence during periods when the Gaza Strip was being bombed and engaged in numerous charitable efforts to alleviate the suffering of refugees. It is a team that has consciously positioned themselves over the years as a symbol of historic remembrance. In line with this history, they changed the number 1 on their uniforms to look like the shape of historic Palestine and the uniting of the current Israeli and Palestinian territories.

It is for this that the team was charged by the Simon Wiesenthal Center with "fomenting terrorist intent." Gabriel Zaliashnik, the former president of the Chilean Jewish Organization, said that the shirt incites "violence and hatred" and has pledged go to FIFA to get them banned.

In response, the most well known of Chilean soccer stars of Palestinian origin, Roberto Bishara, replied, "I hope they [leaders of the Chilean Jewish community] don't go to FIFA because this is a question of football. So I wish that instead of worrying about a jersey, they worried about the children that die day after day in Palestine."

Bishara is not alone. Many Chilean players of Palestinian origin have played for the Palestinian National Team and are taking this opportunity to come forward and speak about why the shirts are not only appropriate but also admirable.

Former coach of the Palestinian National Team, Nicola Hadwa Shahwan, had a letter ipublished in the Chilean daily La Tercera. People should read the impassioned piece in its entirety. In part, it reads:

The gesture of Club Deportivo Palestino putting on its shirt the map of the country from which they come, and whose colors they defend, can only annoy those who want to appropriate the territory by force, without respecting the freedom of the people. Peace must be based on justice.... Sports, arts, culture and science are not oblivious to the reality of the people; on the contrary, they are the expression of the feelings and historical experiences of them. Therefore, Club Deportivo Palestino interprets the most sensitive feelings of the Palestinians and all who raise the banner of justice, peace and freedom.... I give my sincere congratulations and support to the club's leadership and call sports fans to support this noble initiative.

There is another aspect to this as well, revealed to me by a Chilean colleague of Palestinian origin who asked to be referred to only as Hector. Hector said to me that sympathies to Chile's Israeli community would be less than robust. He pointed out that the country's dictator Augusto Pinochet, who ruled Chile with an iron fist from 1973-90, bought military hardware from Israel for years, even when much of the world, particularly the Carter administration, would not sell the dictatorship weaponry and had deemed Pinochet a pariah due to his egregious human rights violations. Hector said to me, "Pinochet left power twenty years ago but his imprint is still strong. We remember who was on our side and who wasn't. There were Jews in Chile who heroically fought the General [Pinochet] and Jews who supported hm. There were also Palestinians who fought the General and also many who supported him. But there was never a question about what side Israel was on. I can't be offended by a jersey. I'm more offended by that history."

This is really less a fight about shirts than about memory. It is about the memory of who stood and who did not stand with Chile in their darkest moments. It is also about an aspiration among masses of Palestinian-Chileans that is not rooted in hate but in the dream that a land defined by walls could be one united country with equal rights for all. The question is less about the appropriateness of a shirt and more about why anyone would find that idea threatening.

Calendar of Events

February 6 — February 12, 2014

First Tuesdays At Abraham Hall

Date & Time: Monthly, First Tuesdays
Description: Abraham Hall, constructed in 1889, is the best example of an African American benevolent society lodge in Prince George's County. Located in the community of Rossville, it is the first African American historic site in the county to be fully restored using public funds. Home of M-NCPPC's Black History Program, please call the number listed below for more information about the First Tuesday program.
Ages: All ages
Location: *Abraham Hall*
 7612 Old Muirkirk Road, Beltsville 20705
Contact: 240-264-3415; TTY 301-699-2544

Senior Days

Date & Time: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays, 8 am-12 noon
Description: Seniors (Prince George's County residents only) are allowed FREE use of both the fitness center and pool during these times.
Cost: FREE
Ages: 60 & up
Location: *Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex*
 8001 Sheriff Road
 Landover, MD 20785
Contact: 301-583-2400; TTY 301-583-2483

Valentine Shrinky-Dink Workshop

Date & Time: Saturday, February 8, 2014 1-4 pm
Description: The DIY arts and crafts icon from the 80's is back! And nothing says love like a hand-made, pre-shrunk Valentine. Families are invited to create beautiful jewelry, key chains, and other Valentine's Day gifts for their loved ones. Children will receive their first 2 sheets of blank Shrinky Dinks free, additional sheets will be available to purchase for 50 cents each.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: *Brentwood Arts Exchange Gateway Arts Center*
 3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood 20722
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-446-6802

Step, Cheer and Dance Fest!

Date and Time: Friday, February 7, 2014 7-9 pm
Description: Come out to watch step teams from local schools and colleges, churches and community organizations perform in the electrifying spirit of the African American experience!
Cost: Resident \$5; Non-Resident \$6
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: *Potomac Landing Community Center Park*
 12500 Fort Washington Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-292-9191; TTY 301-203-6030

Puppet Show

Date & Time: Saturday, February 8, 2014 2-3 pm
Description: Take your children to a seasonal puppet show where they can have a blast and meet live animals! Don't forget, advance reservations are required.
Cost: Resident \$2; Non-Resident \$3
Ages: 2-10
Location: *Watkins Nature Center*
 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro 20772
Contact: 301-218-6702; TTY 301-699-2544

Celebrate Black History – Negro Leagues

Date and Time: Saturday, February 15, 2014 2-3 pm
Description: Celebrate Black History Month with a living sports figure! Former Negro League baseball player, Luther Atkinson will provide a poignant account of his story, from overcoming obstacles such as racism to finding success on the baseball field as a professional player. Stick around for a film screening, view famous photographs and get a baseball signed!
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: *Fort Washington Forest Community Center*
 1200 Filmore Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-292-4300; TTY 301-203-6030

No Longer Forgotten

Date & Time: Thursday, February 27, 2014 7-9 pm
Description: What happens to African American children when they go missing? Are there differences in how missing cases are handled according to race? Is the legal system treating black youth any different today than they did with the Scottsboro 9, Emmett Till, the Jena 6 or Trayvon Martin? Join us in an exhibition and open discussion about the disparities in color and demographics in keeping black youth safe and on the right path. Advanced registration suggested for this free event.
Cost: Free
Ages: 18 & up
Location: *Newton White Mansion*
 2708 Enterprise Road, Mitchellville 20721
Contact: 301-249-2004; TTY 301-446-6802

Black History Month: African-American Heroes & Advocates Costume Contest

Date & Time: Friday, February 28, 2014 6-9 pm
Description: Join us for a costume contest as we close out Black History Month! To celebrate, dress as one of your favorite African American heroes, recite a speech and/or share a story that pertains to the Civil Rights Movement. Awards will be presented to the best dressed and for the most enthusiastic speaker!
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: *Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex*
 8001 Sheriff Road, Landover 20785
Contact: 301-583-282; TTY 301-583-2483

EARTH TALK ... "Global Warming and the loss of whitebark pine trees"

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that climate change is responsible for killing whitebark pine trees and thus impacting mountain ecosystems?

-- Dale Livingstone,
Salem, OR

Whitebark pine trees are a "keystone" species in high-altitude ecosystems across the American West, meaning they play an important role in maintaining the natural structure of many of our most iconic mountain regions. Wildlife from grizzly bears to songbirds are dependent on whitebark pine seeds for nourishment, while forest stands of the trees stabilize and shade the snowpack in winter, which helps reducing avalanches and helps extend snowmelt flows into the dry summer months. "This slow melting process not only keeps rivers cool for trout and other aquatic wildlife but also helps maintain sufficient water resources for the people living in the arid American West," reports the non-profit Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a leading U.S. environmental group.

Given how important the iconic tree is to Western mountain ecosystems, it's no wonder that NRDC and other green groups are distressed by its recent decline due to changing environmental conditions. "White pine blister rust, a lethal disease accidentally brought to

the continent on imported seedlings, has wiped out roughly 50 percent of the whitebark pine in the Rocky Mountains since its arrival in the early 20th century," reports NRDC. "In some areas such as Glacier National Park, it has killed 85 to 95 percent of the whitebark pine. Infected trees can take a long time to die, but the disease can also cause their cone production to drop significantly, affecting grizzlies and other wildlife."

And now a newer threat, expanding populations of mountain pine beetles, is exacerbating the effects of blister rust. These small insects bore into mature pine trees, killing them by eating critical tissue under the bark. "Cool year-round temperatures and freezing winters once kept this beetle confined to low-elevation forests, where native lodgepole pines evolved natural defenses against beetles," reports NRDC. "Global warming, however, has allowed the mountain pine beetle to expand its range into high-elevation forests, where the whitebark pine is virtually defenseless against this newcomer and its explosive attacks."

NRDC fears that this one-two punch—beetles attacking mature whitebark pines and blister rust killing smaller ones—could have a devastating impact on high-altitude forests across the American West. In late 2008 the group petitioned the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Serv-



CREDIT: FRANK D. LOSPALLUTO/FICKR

Whitebark Pines, already under siege by a lethal disease brought to the continent on imported seedlings, now face a new threat from mountain pine beetles, which have expanded into high-elevation forests due to warmer temperatures brought on by climate change. Pictured: a Clark's Nutcracker sits atop a Whitebark Pine in Crater Lake National Park, Oregon.

ice to protect the tree under the Endangered Species Act. A year and a half later the agency indicated that the tree might be worthy of endangered species status, although the case is still under review.

"Endangered Species Act protections could help federal agencies focus their whitebark efforts and could bring increased resources for research, conservation, and restoration efforts," adds NRDC.

Everyday people who live in or near whitebark pine territory can help the cause by taking photographs and writing down observations about the changing health of high-altitude forests and the prevalence of Clark's nutcrackers, red squirrels and grizzly bears, each of which depends on the trees for sustenance. The

Whitebark Pine Citizen Scientists Network, a project sponsored by NRDC and TreeFight.org, coordinates this research and synthesizes the findings to give researchers and policymakers more information so they can make sensible land management and species protection decisions.

CONTACTS:

NRDC, www.nrdc.org;
 Treefight.org,
www.treefight.org.

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earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Snow from A6

alcohol to every gallon of windshield washer fluid to keep it from freezing.

Winter Driving do's:

- Make sure your headlights are on. In fact, it is a good idea to turn on your headlights any time you drive, because you will be more visible to other drivers in any conditions.

- Slow down. When the roads are icy, allow extra time to reach your destination. Rushing creates risk.

- Use major routes. After it snows, major roads are cleared and treated first. Avoid secondary roads and be careful on infrequently traveled roads, which may not be cleared as often as other roads.

- Be aware of possible icy areas. Be especially careful on bridges and overpasses, which freeze sooner than roads. And even at temperatures above freezing, if conditions are wet, you might encounter ice in shady areas or on exposed roadways like bridges.

- Dress as if you were going to be stranded. It can get very cold in a car on the side of the road waiting for help. Be sure to have extra blankets and insist that children who may be traveling with you have some, too.

- Use low gear to get out of tough spots. You need steady pulling and moderate power when traction is poor. The best remedy when wheels are stuck

is to put the car in low gear and apply power slowly. Keep the wheels pointed straight ahead so the vehicle can move in a straight line. If you can't go forward, try backing out while steering in the vehicle's tracks. Traction is greatest just before wheels start to spin.

Winter Driving Don'ts:

- Avoid slamming on brakes. Minimize brake use on very slippery, icy roads and hills; if further speed reduction is needed use a gentle and slow brake application.

- Avoid changing lanes. On a four-lane highway, stay in the lane that has been cleared most recently. Changing lanes over built-up snow between lanes may cause you to lose control of the vehicle.

- Never use cruise control. When driving on any slippery wet, icy surface cruise control prevents you from having total control over your vehicle.

- With ABS brakes, don't pump the brake pedal. Apply steady, firm pressure.

- Do not drive in four-wheel-drive. It will get you going faster and easier but it does not provide an advantage in stopping. • Do not panic. If your vehicle skids out of control, steer in the direction you want the front of the vehicle to go.

Leaving The Roadway:

- If you must pull off the road, wait for conditions to improve and pull off the road as far as you can, preferably past the end of a guardrail.

- It is best to pull into a rest area or parking lot, rather than on the road's shoulder.

If You Are Struck In The Snow:

- Don't panic.
- Use your shovel to clear snow away from all four wheels and the car's tailpipe.

- Throw sand in the path – front and back – of your drive wheels for traction.

- Then start the car, put it in reverse, and back up a little.

- Next, put it in drive and creep forward.

- Rock the car back and forth this way, without gunning the engine, and you might just find yourself unstuck.

- If you can't get out, use your cellphone and call AAA Roadside Assistance.

If You Are Stranded, the National Safety Council makes the following recommendations:

- You may feel helpless, stuck in the snow in a lonely place - but there are things you can do to survive until help reaches you.
- Stay in the vehicle. Don't wander and get lost or frostbitten.

- Run the engine for heat about once every hour, or every half hour in severe cold. Clean snow from around the end of the tail pipe to prevent carbon monoxide buildup. For extra heat, burn a candle inside a coffee can - but don't set the can on fabric. Make sure the vehicle is NOT air tight, by opening a window a little.

- Clear outside heater vents. That's the grill under the windshield.

- Avoid alcohol. It lowers body temperature and will cause you to become drowsy.

- Leave one window cracked open. Freezing winds and driving, wet snow can quickly seal a vehicle.

- Signal to other motorists that you're stranded by using flares or flashlights, or by tying a piece of brightly colored cloth to the radio antenna.

- AAA urges motorists to be equipped with winter weather driving kits:

- Blanket.
- Ice scraper.
- Flares or reflective triangles.
- Flashlight with extra batteries.
- Jumper cables.
- Bag of abrasive material, such as cat litter.
- Shovel,
- Cloth or paper towels.
- Cell phone with a full charge.

AAA Mid-Atlantic advocates on behalf of its nearly four million members in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. It provides a wide range of personal insurance, travel, financial and automotive services through its 50-plus retail branches, regional operations centers, and the Internet. For more information, please visit our web site at www.AAA.com.

Two Totally Prince George's Miracles

Two miracles of woodlands preservation in Prince George's were celebrated by Prince Georgians at the annual, mid-winter Fort Washington/Broad Creek Historic District "Friends of History" gala.

Starting in January, the largest undeveloped, old-growth forest on the Potomac River – more than 70-acres – officially has been donated by mega-developer Milt Peterson to the Conservancy of Broad Creek in Prince George's. The remarkable gift, which will be used as a hiker/biker/equestrian trail and as a site for future archaeological digs, took five years to complete. The agreement involved Peterson, his attorney Andre Gingles, and historic preservationists Dave Turner and Dick Krueger.

The second miracle, the rescue of a 20-acre tract called Tent Landing from becoming a housing subdivision, was the heartfelt goal of Ms. Dawn Davit. Tent Landing is near her home in the Riverview section of Fort Washington. Davit's superb community organization skills led to victory when Prince George's newest County Park was located on the 20-acre Tent Landing slave graveyard and Indian archaeology site. For their civic accomplishments, Davit and Peterson were awarded trophies and a rare old County map by the Broad Creek Historic District at a gala event hosted at Mieza Farm in Fort Washington.

Pictured in the photo is Milt Peterson (center, red jacket) surrounded by (l to r) June W. Dil-



Photo by Dave Cook

lard of the African American Heritage Preservation Group, County Councilman Obie Paterson (District 8), County Councilmember Karen Toles (District

7), State Delegates Kris Valderamma and Aisha Braveboy, Broad Creek's Chairman Dick Krueger, and state delegate Jolene Ivy.

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Watch from A4

has cornered 22 percent of the nation's income, then America will miss the boat to the future. More importantly, we will miss a great opportunity to show the world a living and just society in a majority non-White and poor world desperately in need of moral example.

To those who claim our nation cannot afford to prevent our children from going hungry and homeless and prepare all our children for school, I say we cannot afford not to. If the foundation of your house is crumbling you must fix it. Education is a lot cheaper than ignorance. Preschool education is a bargain compared to prison and we should be ashamed that America is the largest incarcerator in the world. And consider how many good jobs a quality universal early care system would provide at a time of rampant unemployment and declining wages. A quality universal pre-K system (and I hope kindergarten system) is a win-win for everyone.

After Dr. King's assassination riots and looting broke out in cities across America including Washington, D.C. where I had moved from Mississippi to help prepare for Dr. King's Poor People's Campaign. I

went into schools to talk to children to tell them not to loot and jeopardize their futures. A young Black boy about 12 looked me in the eye and said "Lady, what future? I ain't got no future. I ain't got nothing to lose."

The Children's Defense Fund has spent the last 40 years trying to prove that boy's truth wrong in our economically and militarily powerful and spiritually poor nation. And we will never stop until we succeed. It's time to give him and the 16.1 million poor children like him today a fair chance to succeed and to keep Dr. King's dream — America's dream — for him and the millions like him alive.

See CDF's new report, *The State of America's Children*® 2014.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund whose *Leave No Child Behind*® mission is to ensure every child a *Healthy Start*, a *Head Start*, a *Fair Start*, a *Safe Start* and a *Moral Start* in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. For more information go to www.childrensdefense.org.

Mrs. Edelman's *Child Watch* Column also appears each week on The Huffington Post.

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