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Moms Ask Congress to Pass Tougher Gun Control

By Brian Compere
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON — Touting a report showing 44 school shootings nationally in the past 14 months, Maryland moms joined others on Capitol Hill Wednesday morning urging lawmakers to take action on gun control.

The event, sponsored by Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America and Mayors Against Illegal Guns, featured an analysis of school shootings since the tragedy at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Conn., in 2012.

The report documented 28 deaths and 37 non-fatal injuries in school shootings since Sandy Hook.

It also said that in the first six weeks of 2014 alone there were 13 school shootings, including one eight-day period in which there were four shootings in K-12 schools.

The groups want to tighten background check loopholes and give law enforcement more tools to combat gun trafficking.

Jennifer Pauliukonis, chapter leader for Maryland's Moms Demand Action, who brought cupcakes and Valentine's cards for lawmakers, said Wednesday's event was inspiring and she is optimistic that Congress will pass gun control laws.

"Change is going to come, maybe not with this Congress. We might need some people

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President Barack Obama speaks to Prince George's County crowd Wednesday in Lanham.

Obama Promotes 2014 Agenda in Speech at Lanham Costco

By Justine McDaniel
Capital News Service

LANHAM — President Barack Obama called for a higher federal minimum wage and more economic opportunities for ordinary Americans in a speech at the Costco in Lanham Wednesday morning, reiterating messages from his State of the Union address the night before.

"I'm choosing this to be a year of action, because too many Americans are working harder than ever just to get by, much less get ahead," Obama said, in the 20-minute-long address.

Speaking just 12 hours after his annual address to Congress, Obama used the backdrop of a company that he has frequently praised for its higher wages and health benefits to bring home

points about rewarding hard work with a living wage.

Congress must decide whether "they're going to waste time creating new crises for people and new uncertainty, like the shutdown, or are we going to spend time creating new jobs and new opportunities?" Obama said.

Continuing the theme of strong executive action he presented in Tuesday's speech, Obama laid out the "opportunity agenda" he says can bring concrete change in the coming year.

His four-part plan includes creating more new jobs, training workers to give them necessary skills for employment, and giving every child access to a "world-class" education, in addition to raising the minimum wage.

He repeatedly mentioned the need for Congress to take up these issues, but focused on what he will do without their help.

"America can't just stand still if Congress isn't doing anything. And I'm not going to stand still either," he said.

Nena McNeil, a Prince George's County employee who supports Obama's proposals, said she was so excited to see the president she was shaking.

"A lot of people these days are really struggling. Even if you have two family household members that are currently working, it's still hard to make it," McNeil said.

Obama will soon issue an executive order increasing the minimum wage in future federal contracts to \$10.10 per hour, a move he announced in the State of the Union that won't require approval from Congress.

On Wednesday, he asked citizens to call on Congress to "give America a raise" and

See **Obama** Page A3

Boosting Security in a Cyber World

By Lyle Kendrick
Capital News Service

"All of this growth in the cybersecurity field will need an educated workforce," said Patrick Gallagher, director of the National Institutes of Standard and Technology.

Mikulski said Maryland's federal assets, community colleges, public university system and Johns Hopkins University are among the reasons Maryland would make a strong national center for cybersecurity.

Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive, signed the agreement and said it is a highly important partnership for creating jobs in Montgomery County.

The signing comes after high-profile cybersecurity incidents, like last year's cyberattack on the retailer Target. Hackers stole about 40 million debit and credit card numbers from the company's servers, according to Target officials.

Mikulski said hacks like the one on Target, as well as cybersecurity breaches on retailer Neiman Marcus and Michael's, an arts store chain, are national disasters for the corporations and their credit holders.

"We have to protect dot com," Mikulski said.

O'Malley said that civilization has worked to control land, water and air, and cybersecurity is the next domain the state plans to increase its investment in.

In addition to signing funding for the center, O'Malley has also proposed increasing the cybersecurity tax credit which are available for cyber start-up businesses from \$3 million to \$4 million for the next fiscal year.

Lack of Manpower at Food Bank Slows Flow of Donations to Pantries

By Megan Brockett
Capital News Service

A shortage of volunteers has left the Maryland Food Bank struggling to distribute generous holiday-season donations fast enough to meet increased demand at pantries around the state.

The Maryland Food Bank has put out a call for groups of volunteers to help sort the 500,000 pounds of food sitting in its Baltimore County headquarters. The Food Bank's other two locations, in Washington and Wicomico Counties, have also reported shortages of help.

"The food pantries are waiting for us to give the product, and we just don't have the manpower among our small staff to be able to get it out fast enough," said Yvonne Terry, director of development at the Eastern Shore branch in Salisbury. "We need to get it out. We don't want it sitting here. The food bank is supposed to be ... a clearinghouse, and our goal is to get the food in, get the food out."

According to Kate Sam, director of communications in Baltimore, an average group of 15 to 25 volunteers can sort approximately 10,000 pounds of food in one 3-hour shift, and pantries will have it claimed in a matter of hours.

Demand for the food has been high this winter, with colder than normal temperatures driving up heating costs and families facing food stamp cuts that came in November with the end of a 2009 stimulus package provision that offered a boost to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Sam said the Food Bank receives daily calls from some of their partners requesting more supplies to meet the growing need.

At Fishes & Loaves Pantry in Baltimore, the number of monthly clients has doubled to 3,200 since the food stamp cuts went into effect, according to Rev. Andre Samuel, the pantry's director.

See **Manpower** Page A5

Acidic Levels in the Chesapeake Bay Water Could Threaten Oysters

By Brian Compere
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK — As the world's oceans get more acidic, Chesapeake Bay oysters could be at risk.

A more acidic bay could make it more difficult for mollusks, such as oysters, to build their shells through a process called calcification. But it could help crustaceans, such as blue crabs, build their shells more quickly, said Justin Ries, a professor at the Marine Science Center at Northeastern University in Boston.

This could disrupt the evolutionary balance of the two, Ries said, because blue crabs prey on oysters.

Ries reached these conclusions after growing oysters and blue crabs under lab conditions of high carbon dioxide (higher than found in nature now). This research doesn't mimic nature, Ries said, but it does provide clues to how increased acidification in the bay could affect the two organisms in the future.

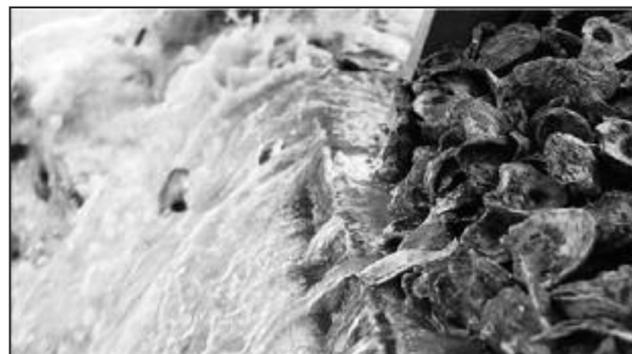


PHOTO BY SARAH WALKER

Baby oysters produced at the UMD Horn Point Laboratory Oyster Hatchery and planted by the Oyster Recovery Partnership into Harris Creek Sanctuary.

Typically, about 30 percent of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is absorbed into oceans, where it becomes carbonic acid and makes the water more acidic. As carbon dioxide becomes more prevalent in the atmosphere, more of it ends up in the ocean as well.

Atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide have increased by about 36 percent — from about 280 parts per million to 400 ppm — in the past 200 years,

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INSIDE

Bill Would Legalize Maryland Sale of Raw Milk

Every day at 4:30 a.m. and again 12 hours later, Eric and Holly Foster round up and milk all 60 of their brown and white Jersey cows at Chapel's Country Creamery, where most of the milk goes to a tank, to be collected later by a co-op and pasteurized

Community, Page A3

New York to End Stop-and-Frisk Policy As We Know It

New York's new mayor, Bill de Blasio, announced an agreement to reform the stop-and-frisk practice of the city's police department, tactics which have disproportionately targeted African American and Latino young men for years.

Commentary, Page A4

Officials Sign Agreement to Further Develop National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

"We're standing up for the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence to protect America's ideas and innovations from cyber terrorists, spies and thieves," said Senator Mikulski

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "12 Years a Slave"

Chiwetel Ejiofor stars as Solomon Northup, the New York State citizen who was kidnapped and made to work on a plantation in New Orleans in the 1800s. Steve McQueen (Hunger) directs from a script he co-wrote with John Ridley, based in part by Northup's memoir.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the latest prognosis for wind energy to command a larger piece of the renewable energy pie?

— Peter M.,
Akron, OH

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

From Italian immigrant to Nick's Supermarket

Nicola J. "Nick" Ferrante, Sr., founder of Nick's Supermarket in Clinton, died Feb. 16 at his home in California, Md. He was 93.

A native of Castel Frentano, Italy, he immigrated to the United States in 1920 when he was 13. He became a citizen and served in World War II. After the war, he worked at several jobs; one of which may have been at Fleischman's Village.

In the '70s he opened his own business, Nick's Supermarket, in Clinton, where you could get great meat, sandwiches, and Italian food. (One of the butchers was Lou, who had worked for years at G.I. Market in Morningside.)

A few years ago Nick's moved to St. Charles Parkway in Waldorf where it is now Nick's of Clinton.

Nick was known as a great chef, a ruthless card-player, and a good storyteller.

He was the husband of the late Marie DeCesaris Ferrante; father of Donna Wrenn, Marco, Nicholas, Rick and the late Joseph Ferrante; brother of the late Ida Marinucci; grandfather of 15 and great-grandfather of 16. Mass of Christian Burial was at Holy Rosary Church in Washington with burial at Ft. Lincoln Cemetery.

Neighbors

Francesco Marlett, of Upper Marlboro and formerly of Skyline, is now Officer Marlett of the Prince George's County Police. He graduated from the police academy on February 18 and is assigned to Police District IV. He is a Crossland 2007 graduate, and also a graduate of Skyline Elementary School where I shook hands and congratulated him during the Skyline Citizens' meeting Feb. 19.

Glaubitz Circle in Morningside is sporting a much bigger, beautiful, new American flag atop its flagpole.

I had a call this week from Nancy Stacey who lives in Palm Coast, Fla. She used to live in Forestville and served as a Deputy Sheriff for 24 years. She still gets a County newspaper and reads this column. She says, "There are lots of Marylanders down here."

On the Dean's List at Towson University: Cierra Kenney, daughter of Cherry Kenney, and Leah Mudd, my granddaughter. We're proud of these hard-working students.

La Reine alumnae celebrate 50th

La Reine High School, class of 1964, is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a Reunion Dinner on April 5 at the Doubletree Hotel in Annapolis. Contact Brenda Ferrante, 410-757-2949, or brenfer46@yahoo.com, or Toni Aluisi, 202-543-8112.

Coming up

St. Philip's is remembering Shrove Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, with a Pancake Supper, March 4, from 5 to 7 p.m. Tickets are \$6 for adults; \$3 for ages 5-10, free for 4 & under. Or bring the whole family for \$20. For information, call Theresa Roberson, 301-868-2652, or Karin Yeatman, 301-899-7784.

Clearwater Nature Center at Cosca Park in Clinton is hosting a live animal show Saturday, March 1, 10 to 11 a.m. You can touch a snake, turtle, toad and who knows what else. Admission is \$2 for age 2 and up.

Remember the Big Chair?

Back in 1959 Curtis Brothers Furniture commissioned Bassett Furniture Company to build a 19 1/2-foot replica of a Duncan Phyfe model chair as a promo-

tional ploy to draw customers to the family's furniture showroom at what was then Nichols Avenue and V St. SE. I know it drew the McHales, who bought a sofa there. We also visited the site several times in August 1960 when a woman lived six weeks in a 10" X 10" apartment built on the seat of the chair.

Curtis Brothers closed its store years ago and the site has changed hands several times. In 2010 the Big Chair Coffee & Grill opened with a lot of hype and enjoyed popularity for a time before closing last November. It reopened in December but is struggling to gain customers.

However, the Big Chair is still there, inviting.

Suitland High grad dies

Claude W. Gillespie, 66, a graduate of Suitland High School who worked for Apollo Distribution until moving in 1989 to Orlando, died Feb. 15. Survivors include his wife of 25 years, Cheryl, five children and other family.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Gerry Joliffe who would like to celebrate his Feb. 29 birthday—he'll have to wait till 2016.

Happy birthday to Father Bernard Ihrle, Feb. 23; Larry Miller, Feb. 24; Kevin Gray and Sibly Deily, Feb. 25. Angela Hutchinson and Thomas "TJ" Flaherty, Feb. 27; Terrence Flaherty, Feb. 28; Winifred Lanehart, March 1; Karen (Elborne) Stern and Harold Titus, March 2; Jennifer Vilky, March 3; Amy Schlor and Matthew Flaherty, March 4; and Roy Derrick, March 6.

Happy anniversary to Clifford and Nancy Lantz on Feb. 26; Freda and Michael McDonald, their 34th on Feb. 28; Tom and Sarah Shipman, their 55th on March 4; and Larry and Susan Frostbutter, March 5.

Life Member Plaques were presented to Gwendolyn Deville and Audrey Johnson residents of Brandywine Maryland during halftime program at the Bowie State University vs Lincoln University (Home) Alumni Day on February 8, 2014.

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 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.

CLINTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Happy Wedding Anniversaries to Florella and Wendell Wallace, Stephen and Denise Bouyer Carter who are Clinton United

Methodist members celebrating their Wedding Anniversaries during the month of February.

Happy Birthday to Clinton United Methodist Church members Doris Lee, Brandon Freeman, Vincent Glee, Jean Brown, Rom Escanilla, Joachim Neckere, Conrad Carter, Mavis Turnbull, Patricia Ann Weaver, Rachel Cain, Marvies Davies, Gloria Garrett, Emmanuel Oghogho, Shela Sedgwick, Ronald Davis, Jean Noel, Malcolm Terry, Frank Johnson, Matthew Oghogho, Maleke Glee, Lynn Harper, Jose Rojas, Lawrence Oghogho, and Romonia Pinkney who are celebrating birthdays during the month of February.

ANNUAL PANCAKE SUPPER

Please join us for our Annual Pancake Supper on Tuesday, March 4, 2014 from 5:00 PM-7:00 PM at St. Philip's Church, Baden Parish. The address is 13801 Baden Westwood Road Brandywine, Maryland 20613-8426. Adults pay \$7.00, children \$5.00 (12 years and under), children-FREE (5 years and under). Benefit is for St. Philip's Church Baden Parish. Contact number is (301) 888-1536.

Neighborhood Events

Prince George's County Repairs Potholes on County Roadways

LARGO, MD — With the latest winter storm behind us, the Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation will focus their efforts on filling potholes caused by the cold weather, salt and snow.

"Beginning Thursday, February 20, 2014, staff from DPW&T's Office of Highway Maintenance will be out in full force to repair potholes on County roadways," said Acting DPW&T Director Darrell Mobley. "Through this concentrated effort, Prince George's County roadways will be safer, more accessible and easier to travel."

Motorists are advised to stay alert and be aware of the trucks and crews working on the roadways. Keep safe and slow down as you approach a work zone.

To report potholes, please call CountyClick at 311 or visit the County's website at www.princegeorgescountymd.gov to submit your information online.

Hoyer Announces 33rd Annual Fifth District Congressional Art Competition

Invites High School Students to Participate for Chance to Display Work in U.S. Capitol
WASHINGTON, DC — Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) encourages high school students who reside in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District — which includes Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties, and parts of Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties — to participate in the 33rd Annual Congressional Art Competition for a chance to have their artwork displayed in the U.S. Capitol for one year.

Through the annual Congressional Art Competition, Members of Congress showcase the artistic talent of high school students within their districts. The winner of each district competition earns a display space in the main corridor connecting the House of office buildings with the U.S. Capitol — a walkway through which millions of visitors to the Capitol travel each year.

"I'm pleased to announce the annual Fifth District Congressional Art Competition, which highlights the talent and creativity of students from across the Fifth District," stated Congressman Hoyer. "Each year, I'm impressed by the exceptional artwork submitted. I encourage students to participate and I look forward to proudly displaying their work in the U.S. Capitol and in my Waldorf and D.C. offices."

Click here for a full list of competition guidelines and contact Stefanie Carey Barone in Congressman Hoyer's Waldorf District Office at 301-843-1577 with additional questions. All artwork must be delivered to one of Congressman Hoyer's district offices located in Waldorf or Greenbelt by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23, 2014. Congressman Hoyer's Waldorf office address is: 401 Post Office Road, Suite 202, Waldorf, MD 20602. The Greenbelt address is: U.S. District Courthouse, 6500 Cherrywood Lane, Suite 310, Greenbelt, MD 20770.

After entries have been submitted by the required date, a panel comprised of members of the Fifth District arts community — including art teachers and professional artists — will review the

artwork and select one piece to represent the Fifth District in the U.S. Capitol, where it will hang for one year. All other entries will be displayed in Congressman Hoyer's Waldorf District Office and rotated in his D.C. Office for a one month period the following year. The judging is scheduled to take place during the week of April 28, 2014.

Once a winner is selected, he or she will be invited to attend a reception in Washington, DC, in June of this year.

Congressman Hoyer also sent letters to all of the high schools throughout Maryland's Fifth District announcing the competition and outlining the rules for artwork submission.

Last week, Congressman Hoyer announced the first annual Congressional science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) academic competition, the House Student App Challenge, for high school students in Maryland's Fifth Congressional District.

Van Hollen Announces Annual Art Competition for High School Students

Rockville, MD — Today Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen opened the 33rd annual Congressional Art Competition for submissions. High school artists who live or attend school in the Eighth Congressional District are invited to submit work for the Competition, sponsored by Congressman Van Hollen.

The winning entry will be displayed in the U.S. Capitol for one year and runners-up will be displayed in Congressman Van Hollen's congressional offices. A juried exhibition of submitted artwork will be on display at Washington ArtWorks in Rockville from April 7 — April 24, 2014. Washington ArtWorks is located at 12276 Wilkins Avenue in Rockville.

To participate, students must complete and submit an entry form, which they can get by going to www.vanhollen.house.gov or by calling 301-424-3501. Entry forms need to be signed by the student and a faculty member and faxed to the Congressman's office at 301-424-5992 or emailed to Karen.McManus@mail.house.gov by Monday, March 24, 2014.

Artwork may be delivered to one of three drop-off locations, either on Friday, March 28, 2014 from 2:30 — 5:30 pm or Saturday, March 29, 2014 from 10:00 am — 12 pm.

Washington ArtWorks, 12276 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville

Congressman Van Hollen's office, 205 Center Street, Mount Airy

Carroll County Arts Center, 91 West Main Street, Westminster (drop-off hours on Friday are 2:30 — 4:30 pm)

Congressman Van Hollen will host an Arts Celebration and Awards Reception to showcase the exhibit, honor all participants and announce awards at Washington ArtWorks on Sunday, April 6, 2014 from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm.

For more information, contact Karen McManus in Congressman Van Hollen's office (301-424-3501 or Karen.McManus@mail.house.gov) or Linda Pepper, Congressional Art Competition coordinator (301-657-8650 or pepper461@aol.com).

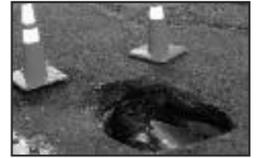


PHOTO BY DAVID SHANKBONE WIKIMEDIA

Damaging Potholes.

Cardin Says Congress Is Upholding Our Nation's Commitment To Our Veterans

U.S. Senator Ben Cardin lauded Senate passage today of a measure that will restore cuts to the Cost of Living Adjustment for military retirees that were made in the recent omnibus appropriations. The restoration applies to current retirees and active duty military that began their service prior to January 1, 2014.

"A true marker of our Nation's worth is our willingness to serve those who have served us. As we continue to wind down our military engagements, after a decade of war, we need to gear up our commitment to our veterans. These brave men and women made sacrifices with an expectation that we, their government, would keep our promises to them and their families. I am committed to making sure that our veterans receive the benefits they earned, and the support they were promised and rightfully deserve. The United States is the strongest Nation in the world because of our veterans and we owe them and their families our gratitude and our respect."

Maryland Second in the Nation in LEED Green Building Activity

The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) announced that Maryland placed second in its ranking of the Top 10 States for LEED.

The list highlights the regions around the country leading the movement for sustainable building design, construction and operation. Utilizing less energy and water, LEED-certified spaces save money for families, businesses and taxpayers; reduce carbon emissions; and contribute to a healthier environment for residents, workers and the larger community.

"Here in Maryland, we've committed to developing and implementing environmentally smart building practices over the last seven years because green development saves money and is good for the environment," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "We've made tremendous progress, but there is still more work to do. By using LEED standards as a benchmark, we'll continue to build on Maryland's reputation as a leader in creating a greener, more sustainable environment for future generations."

"In the face of the extraordinary global challenge of climate change, our national imperative to create resource-efficient and cost-effective green buildings has never been greater," said Rick Fedrizzi, president, CEO and founding chair, USGBC. "Maryland has a strong base of dedicated individuals who are using LEED to transform its built infrastructure into high-performing spaces that promote the health of our planet and the people who use these buildings each and every day."

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COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Foreign Money Transfers Just Got Safer

If you're among the millions of U.S. residents who each year send tens of billions of dollars to family, friends or foreign businesses overseas, here's good news: The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau recently instituted new rules governing international electronic money transfers to better protect consumers against hidden fees and improve dispute resolution policies.



CFPB was given oversight over international money transfers as part of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010. Up until then, federal consumer protection rules did not apply to most "remittance transfers," whose exchange rates, processing fees and taxes often vary widely and can be hard to decipher.

Here's an overview of the new remittance transfer rules:

In general, most foreign money transfers for more than \$15 sent by money transmitters (like Western Union and MoneyGram), banks, credit unions and other financial services companies that consistently send more than 100 international money transfers annually are covered.

These institutions now must fully disclose their fees, taxes and foreign currency exchange rates so consumers will have a clearer picture of the true cost of transactions and be able to more easily comparison shop. Also, once a transaction concludes, the company now must provide a receipt that repeats this same information, as well as shows the date when the money will arrive and directions for reporting any problems with the transfer.

The new regulations include several additional protections:

- ❑ Consumers are allowed 30 minutes (and sometimes longer) to cancel a transfer after they've paid — in which case, they're entitled to a full refund. (However, if the recipient has already picked up the funds or had them deposited into their account before 30 minutes have passed, the refund guarantee is voided.)
- ❑ If the wire was scheduled in advance, you can cancel it up to three business days before the transmission and receive a full refund.
- ❑ Senders have 180 days to report any errors they later uncover. By law, the company must investigate such reports within 90 days. For certain errors (e.g., if the money never arrived), you can ask for a full refund or have the money resent.

While the new regulations are certainly welcome, they don't go far enough when it comes to helping customers compare the net costs of making money transfers at different vendors. You'll still need to carefully weigh each company's exchange rate (which fluctuates frequently) and fees (which vary depending on how much you're sending, how quickly you want the money to arrive and the funding method) to determine which one provides the best value — the so-called "effective exchange rate."

One company may have a more favorable exchange rate than another but charge higher fees. Depending on how much money you're trying to transfer and by what method, however, the balance could shift over which transaction is more cost-effective.

To calculate various effective exchange rates, add the amount you're sending (in U.S. dollars) plus all fees; then divide that into the amount of foreign currency to be delivered. The company with the highest result provides the best value.

If you don't trust your math skills, Viamericas has a handy comparison tool that lets you plug in fees and exchange rates for up to three additional vendors and it will calculate their effective exchange rates (visit www.viamericas.com). Use the tool's manual comparison option to allow for more choices.

For more information on the new remittance transfer rule, visit www.cfpb.gov.

Bill in State Legislature Would Legalize Maryland Sale of Raw Milk

By PRESS OFFICER
Get Money Out - Maryland

EASTON — Every day at 4:30 a.m. and again 12 hours later, Eric and Holly Foster round up all 60 of their brown and white Jersey cows at Chapel's Country Creamery in Easton to milk them.

Most of the milk goes to a tank, to be collected later by a co-op and pasteurized. The rest is used in the Foster's cheese and yogurt products, and a small portion of the milk is stored in their fridge to drink.

The raw milk, which is straight from a cow's udder and unprocessed, is stored in a gallon-sized glass bottle. A layer of cream sits atop the milk, and requires a slight shake before drinking. The Fosters and their four children regularly drink the milk in their country-themed kitchen.

"I grew up on a dairy farm as a kid. We drank milk right out of our tank," Eric Foster said.

The Fosters wonder what they would do if it were legal to sell this raw milk to Maryland consumers. It's been illegal to do so since 2006.

Now, a bill that would make the sale of raw milk legal in Maryland is being considered in the state legislature.

The raw milk wouldn't be sold in stores. Instead, a consumer would need to make an arrangement with a farmer and have some kind of financial investment in a cow or herd to obtain the raw milk, according to the bill.

"It boils down to this: an individual should be able to buy a cow and drink its milk," said Delegate Nicholas R. Kipke, R-Anne Arundel, who is co-sponsoring the bill.

"Personally, I've never drank raw milk, but there are thousands of Marylanders who do, and they are healthy and fine," said Kipke.

Bill co-sponsor Delegate James W. Hubbard, D-Prince George's, said that legalizing the sale of raw milk could economically benefit Maryland farmers.

Maryland is one of 20 states where the sale of all raw milk to humans is prohibited, according to the National Conference of



Holly and Eric Foster (far right), along with the help of their farm manager, milk all 60 of their Jersey cows twice a day. They clean the cow's udders and then attach equipment to the udders to extract the milk. Capital News Service photo by Melanie Balakit.

State Legislatures. The remaining 30 states allow consumers to purchase raw milk, though how the milk is sold varies by state.

Of the 30 states that allow the sale of raw milk, 13 allow the sale of raw milk on the farm. If the bill passed, Maryland would become the 14th state to permit this.

In Maryland and other states that ban raw milk, dairy milk is required to be pasteurized, or heated at high temperatures for a short amount of time to kill bacteria. Because raw milk is unpasteurized, it can carry bacteria such as salmonella or E. coli that can cause gastrointestinal illness, such as kidney failure, according to the Food and Drug Administration.

The Maryland Health Department says that raw milk is a high-risk food for all people, especially pregnant women, children and the elderly.

"Milk can easily become contaminated," said Laurie Bucher, chief for Center for Milk and Dairy Product Safety of the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Udders can become infected, distributing bacteria into the milk, Bucher said.

Between 1993 and 2006, 60 percent of reported dairy-related outbreaks were linked to raw milk, according to a study released by the Center for Disease Control in 2012.

Despite health concerns about raw milk, Hubbard said that

some consumers still prefer raw milk, prompting him to co-sponsor the legislation in Annapolis.

"They know what the FDA has said about raw milk," said Hubbard. "I advocate for the bill for the restoration of consumer rights."

Liz Reitzig, a raw milk advocate, said she drives from Bowie to Pennsylvania to buy raw milk for about \$7 to \$8 per gallon for her family.

It's illegal to transport raw milk across state lines, but for Reitzig, the health benefits of raw milk are worth the risk.

"Based on my experience, I've seen my children thrive on it," said Reitzig, a mother of five children, ages 2 to 11.

Proponents of drinking raw milk claim that raw milk is more nutritious than pasteurized milk and that it is antimicrobial, according to the legislative analysis of the raw milk bill.

Eric Foster, the dairy farmer, believes it all depends on where and how the milk is produced. There would be a big difference between raw milk produced on a larger farm compared to a smaller farm, he said.

"I think that if it's milk from a good farm, then I think people should have a choice," said Foster.

On his farm, he can name all 60 of his cows, like Jewel and Wanda. They graze on grass for most of the year.

The Fosters already sell cheese made with aged raw milk, which was legalized in 2009. Their artisanal cheese helped boost their business, but they're not entirely sure if they'd sell raw milk if it became legalized.

There are technical issues to consider, said Holly Foster, co-owner of the farm. The cows are milked by machines. The milk travels through pipes to a large tank. However, once the milk reaches the tank, the Fosters are not allowed to extract the milk.

The Fosters earn money in part based on how much milk they produce, so they'd have to determine how much milk they'd allot for raw milk customers.

Then there's the issue of packaging. Should they allow the customer to bring their own bottles or should they provide their own glass bottles?

"I don't know if I'd trust their bottles, for sanitary reasons," Holly Foster said.

Still, the prospect of another means of income is tantalizing. But Eric Foster also said he could understand the concerns of the dairy industry.

"The dairy industry is a big industry," he said. "Dairy plants do not want to see raw milk get passed because of the possibility of mishandling. It can give milk a bad name."

Obama from A1

encouraged mayors, governors and state legislators to raise wages in their areas rather than wait for Congress to pass a federal bill.

Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., and Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, proposed a bill in March to raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10. It is set to come to the Senate floor in the coming months, but Republicans have indicated they will oppose it.

Greenbelt Mayor Emmett Jordan said before the Costco speech that he believed a minimum wage increase was overdue.

"This is the metropolitan area of Washington, D.C. The cost of living is pretty high, and even... if you're making \$10 an hour and you're renting an apartment or you have a small mortgage, that is just barely enough to scrape by," he said.

Obama called restoring opportunity for every American the "defining project of our generation."

"The economy has been growing for four years now... but the wages and incomes of ordinary people haven't gone up in over a decade," he said.

This makes for less consumer spending, fewer cus-

tomers, less hiring and less investment, hindering the economy, Obama said.

As he did on Tuesday, Obama said that women deserve equal pay and opportunity. Women make 77 cents for every dollar men make, and they also hold the majority of minimum wage jobs in the U.S.

The president's energetic, upbeat speech drew loud cheers and applause from the crowd in Prince George's County, where Obama remains extremely popular. His brief mention of the Affordable Care Act elicited one of the loudest responses of the morning from the spectators, many of whom were Costco employees.

Gov. Martin O'Malley rallied the crowd in remarks before the president's speech, saying the country must respond to Obama's appeals. O'Malley vowed to raise the state minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour this year in his State of the State address last week.

In Lanham, O'Malley stressed the connection between a strong middle class and strong economic growth. Marking Maryland as a leader in economic growth, among other things, he said people all across the country are working too hard while living in poverty.

"While it's right for us to consider ourselves the most important star in the flag, we are one star among the 50 states and we all rise and fall together. So that's why it's so important that we be about the business that the president called us to last night, which is to build our economy from the middle out and the middle up" O'Malley said.

Obama praised O'Malley as a champion of working families in America, and said he supported

efforts by Prince George's County, Montgomery County and the District of Columbia to raise the region's minimum wage.

Sen. Ben Cardin and Rep. Donna Edwards, both Maryland Democrats, were also in attendance.

Obama's speech kicked off a short tour designed to promote his State of the Union proposals, a presidential tradition. He was scheduled to speak in Pittsburgh Wednesday afternoon.

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COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Fights for Investments in Early Childhood Education

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), a senior member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today participated in a hearing called, "Supporting Children and Families through Investments in High-Quality Early Education." The hearing discussed investments in early education and child care programs to better meet the needs of American families and setting children on a path to future success.

"The conversations happening right now are so important because we must be frugal, we must find a way to live within our means and we must cut the excess and the unnecessary. But we must not cut what works, and we must not cut the programs that give our next generation the greatest chance at success and our country the greatest chance at prosperity," Senator Mikulski said. "Investing in children at a very young age makes sense from a moral perspective, because we are a nation that does not turn our back on those most in need. It makes sense from a business perspective because we are a nation that is constantly working to support our businesses. And it makes sense from an economic and academic perspective."

The committee heard testimony from a panel of witnesses including Dr. Hirokazu Yoshikawa, Courtney Sale Ross University Professor of Globalization Education at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development; John White, State Superintendent for Louisiana Department of Education; Danielle Ewen, Director of the Office of Early Childhood Education, District of Columbia Public Schools; and Charlotte M. Brantley, President and CEO of Clayton Early Learning.

As Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski fought to include important investments in early childhood education and care in the recently-passed Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. That legislation includes \$2.36 billion (a \$154 million increase) for Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) programs, supporting child care for an additional 22,000 children and their families. Senator Mikul-

ski is the lead sponsor of the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2013, a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the CCDBG program to improve quality and stability for children in need.

The Appropriations law also includes a \$194 million increase for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program — which provides health and nutrition services to low-income pregnant women as well as kids under five. In addition, the bill includes \$8.6 billion (a \$1.025 billion increase) for Head Start — which provides early childhood services. This additional funding will allow approximately 90,000 more children to be served by Head Start. The legislation also includes \$250 million for Universal Pre-K programs to expand access to pre-k for four-year-olds.

Senator Mikulski's full remarks, as prepared, follow:

"Thank you Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Alexander for convening this hearing on an issue that is very important to me as well as other Members of the committee. It is vitally important that we support our nation's next generation, ensuring we are giving our children every chance to succeed, and our nation every chance to prosper.

"Today's hearing is particularly timely, given the ongoing debate across our nation about how best to tackle our debt and deficit. The conversations happening right now are so important because we must be frugal, we must find a way to live within our means and we must cut the excess and the unnecessary. But we must not cut what works, and we must not cut the programs that give our next generation the greatest chance at success and our country the greatest chance at prosperity. What we will hear from the witnesses today is that providing our nation's youngest children with high-quality early childhood development programs is the best

See **CHILDHOOD**, Page A5

Marc Morial, President and CEO
National Urban League



New York Mayor deBlasio to End Stop-and-Frisk As We Know It

"We believe in respecting every New Yorker's rights, regardless of what neighborhood they live in or the color of their skin. And we believe in ending the overuse of stop-and-frisk that has unfairly targeted young African American and Latino men." New York Mayor Bill de Blasio

Elections have consequences. Never has that been more clearly demonstrated than last week when New York's new mayor, Bill de Blasio, announced an agreement to reform the stop-and-frisk practice of the city's police department, tactics which have disproportionately targeted African American and Latino young men for years. Last Thursday, at the Brownsville Recreation Center in Brooklyn, a community burdened with more police stops than any other in the city, the mayor fulfilled a campaign promise and announced that his administration would drop an appeal of the August 2013 ruling by Judge Shira Scheindlin, who found the policy unconstitutional and an example of "indirect racial profiling."

Mayor de Blasio made stop-and-frisk reform a major issue in his 2013 campaign, and the agreement he announced last week represents a dramatic reversal of the previous administration's staunch defense of the policy. The agreement calls for the commencement of a dialogue between police and community leaders to ensure that policies driving the police and community apart are cooperatively addressed. Furthermore, for the next three years, a court-appointed monitor will oversee the NYPD's compliance with constitutional law. The mayor explained that once the resolution is confirmed by the Federal District Court, New York City will officially drop the appeal that was put in motion by the Bloomberg administration.

Let me be clear. As the former mayor of New Orleans, I fully understand that the first obligation of government is to protect its citizens, and I believe in community policing — done intelligently. But New York's stop-and-frisk policy was counterproductive and violated basic constitutional principles. According to statistics compiled by the New York Civil Liberties Union, "From 2002 to 2011, Black and Latino residents made up close to 90 percent of people stopped, and about 88 percent of stops — more than 3.8 million — were of innocent New Yorkers. Even in neighborhoods that are predominantly white, Black and Latino New Yorkers face the disproportionate brunt... This, on its face, is discriminatory."

The city's new police commissioner, Bill Bratton, underscored the mayor's commitment to reform, noting that instead of securing confidence, legitimacy and justice, in recent years the city's stop-and-frisk practices have "raised doubts and concerns about the police force in this city." He added, "We will not break the law to enforce the law."

The National Urban League has been among those calling for stop-and-frisk reform in New York City. This new agreement essentially marks the beginning of the end of this discriminatory practice as we know it. We applaud Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Bratton and especially the people of New York who voted for change and got it. By paving the way to a reduction in racial profiling, a greater guarantee of equal treatment under the law, and better relations between police and the community, this move offers a guide to other cities across the nation committed to ensuring safety, justice and fairness for all citizens.



Abraham Hall

by appointment

PHOTO COURTESY WIKIPEDIA.

Abraham Hall

Abraham Hall was constructed in 1889 by the Benevolent Sons and Daughters of Abraham, an African American society that was established for the social welfare of its members. Originally known as Rebecca Lodge #6 of the Benevolent Sons and Daughters of Abraham, the building was constructed by John W. Jackson in 1889 in the burgeoning community of Rossville. Abraham Hall, an excellent example of a multi-purpose building associated with African Americans, served as a meeting hall, a house of worship, a school, and a social hall for African Americans living in a segregated society. Located at 762 Old Muirkirk Rd., Beltsville, Maryland, Abraham Hall is available for tours, meetings and small social gatherings. Individual or group tours may be scheduled by appointment. Please call 240-264-3415 for more information.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



The Hungry Child

Some children cheer when schools close for winter storms, but there are hungry children in America right now for whom another snow day this week meant another day without access to school breakfast or lunch. Despite criticism some big city mayors have kept schools open on snowy days this winter so their children would not go without food. These same children suffer over the weekends. While some schools have food pantries and send children home on the weekends with backpacks filled with food, it is still far, far from enough and only a drop in the bucket of need. Schools report students who arrive hungry on Monday morning or cry when they miss the bus or it's late because that means they've missed breakfast.

The record 16.1 million children living in poverty, including over seven million living in extreme poverty, leaves millions of children suffering from hunger in our nation with the world's largest GDP. In 2012 more than one in nine children in the United States lived in households where children were food insecure, meaning they lacked consistent access to adequate food; more than one in five children — 15.9 million — lived in households where either children or adults or both were food insecure. In some families, like Jasmine's, hunger compounds other crises like homelessness, making them even worse. In many others hunger is almost hidden—a quiet secret of parents struggling to recover from the recession and no longer able to stay afloat. Food pantries have reported that some of the same community members who were once regular donors helping to fill the shelves are now regular visitors in need of help themselves.

Black and Hispanic households with children were more than twice as likely as White households to have food insecure children, but White households comprised the largest group of households (43 percent) with food insecure children. In 2010 and 2011, three-quarters of households with food insecure children had one or more working adults, 80 percent of whom worked full-time.

Children's physical health and brain development depend on access to nutritious food, especially in the earliest years of life. Hunger and malnutrition have devastating

consequences for children. Federal nutrition programs continue to be a critical support to ensure children's daily nutritional needs are met: they put food on children's

*We were homeless.
 My mom. My big sister and me.
 We slept in the car. . .
 We went to IHOP and we only got one pancake and we shared it.
 That was our breakfast...
 When I was tired of sitting in the car, I would talk to my mom.
 She would always say a prayer so we could have a better life.
 We should buy kids good food when they are homeless.
 We should help them out.*

-- Jasmine, age 7

plates, help build healthy minds and bodies, and help lift families out of poverty. A recent study found that needy children who received food assistance before age five were in better health as adults. Food programs are particularly crucial for younger children, as they are more likely to be in poor health, experience developmental delays, and be food insecure when their families' food benefits are reduced or ended. These programs work. Yet they are not reaching every child in need.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, which serve over 22 million children — more than one in four

children in America — were cut in the recent farm bill by \$8.6 billion over 10 years. An estimated 850,000 households, including 1.7 million people, will see a reduction on average of \$90 a month in their food assistance. This cut comes on top of the substantial across-the-board benefit reduction that took effect in November 2013 and affected all SNAP households. These cuts are morally offensive and economically indefensible, especially when so many non-needy farmers and others will continue to get agricultural welfare subsidies. SNAP is the only defense against the wolves of hunger for 1.2 million households with children who had no cash income other than SNAP in an average month in FY 2011; FY 2012 is expected to show an increase. It is shameful that Congress continues to treat poor Americans like second class citizens by cutting supports they desperately need.

Like SNAP, the school lunch, breakfast, and summer feeding programs, which provide meals to children in school and during the long hot summer months, are crucial and effective anti-poverty investments that help combat child hunger. They also play a vital role in ensuring children are fed and

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Healthy Tips for Night Shift Workers

It's common that shift workers simply don't get enough quality sleep. "They fall into a bucket of chronic sleep deprivation," says Tina Waters, a sleep specialist with the Cleveland Clinic Sleep Disorders Center. "And based on the research we've found on this, it can cause irritability, excessive daytime sleepiness, and ultimately, can increase one's chances of cardiovascular problems, such as heart attacks, high blood pressure and cardiac arrhythmia."

And in the short term, sleep problems among shift workers can cause mishaps. That sleep-deprived ER nurse may give out the wrong dosage; the overnight baker may drive home from work feeling drowsy.

But there are 24 hours in a day, and we need overnight nurses and security guards and bakers. And chances are, they need the work. So for shift workers, or those considering working overnight schedules, take the following expert advice:

Stick to your schedule. Even on days you don't work, continue to stay awake at night and sleep during the day. It's hard work to reprogram your system to do the opposite of what it's supposed to, and flipping to a conventional schedule can "wreak havoc" on the progress you've made, Waters says. "Anytime you lose or break routine, you might be battling to retain it again." Be as consistent as possible with your sleep schedule by waking up and going to bed at the same times each day.

Perfect your sleep hygiene. Maintaining a consistent sleep schedule is one of the many aspects of proper sleep hygiene, which is especially important for night shift workers who are fighting their own natural rhythm for daytime zzz's. Boost your odds for a good day's worth of sleep. For starters, make your room dark and quiet, which may be tough during the daytime. Try soundproofing your room, investing in light-blocking shades and turning off your phone.

Consider "strategic use of caffeine," as Waters puts it, meaning that while a cup of coffee on the way to work might provide some much needed pep, consuming caffeine toward the end of your shift might leave you sleepless once you get home. Try to wean off caffeine as your shift comes to an end. Avoid alcohol, too, as a way to fall asleep. "Sometimes there's a tendency to use alcohol as a sedative, but it's not good for sleep maintenance," says Eric Olson, co-director of the Center for Sleep Medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. "As it metabolizes, it actually has a rebound effect and wakes you up."

Lighten up. Light sends signals to our brains to be alert, which is partly why we're naturally more awake in the bright daytime and more sleepy in the dark nighttime. So at work, when you're expected to be alert, "the more light exposure you can get, the better you are," Waters says. If possible, simply turn on the lights in your office, she says, or purchase a light box, which is a small, portable device that emits artificial light.

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 www.pgcc.edu.

Federal, State and Local Officials Sign Agreement to Further Develop National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski, Acting Undersecretary of Commerce Dr. Patrick Gallagher, Governor Martin O'Malley, and Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett today signed a Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) to more clearly define further the development of the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (NCCoE). The agreement expands on the collaboration outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding — signed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the State of Maryland and Montgomery County in February 2012 — establishing the NCCoE.

"We're standing up for the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence to protect America's ideas and innovations from cyber terrorists, spies and thieves," said Senator Mikulski, Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee that funds NIST. "With Maryland's world-class educational institutions, leading federal assets and dynamic private sector, our state is the epicenter of cyber security. This center will unite the knowledge of the government with the know-how of the private sector to improve our na-

tion's cyber security and create jobs. I was so proud to put money in the federal checkbook so this new center will ensure Maryland continues to lead the way in cyber technology and cyber jobs."

"This agreement formalizes and expands the commitment that the state, county, and NIST have made to collaborate on helping businesses in a variety of sectors improve their cybersecurity," said Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology and NIST Director Patrick D. Gallagher. "We believe it will lead to greater technology transfer, new technologies and products, and opportunities for students—the future cybersecurity workforce."

"Four years ago, we set out to position our State as the epicenter of cybersecurity, and today, this growing sector is producing high-quality jobs for Maryland families," said Governor O'Malley. "This agreement builds on significant progress for the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence, bringing together our companies, our educational institutions and our government to support critical and personal data protection nationally, while also spurring economic growth by expanding Maryland's middle class."

The Center was one of the priority recommendations outlined in CyberMaryland: Epicen-



PHOTO BY JAY BAKER

Signing Ceremony for National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence at Annapolis, MD.

ter for Information Security and Innovation, released by Governor O'Malley on January 11, 2010. A public-private partnership, the NCCoE was established to accelerate the broad adoption of integrated cybersecurity tools and technologies. Through the National Cybersecurity Excellence Partnership, 16 companies — including Cisco Systems, McAfee, Microsoft, RSA and Symantec — have agreed to provide hardware, software and expertise to the Center's efforts to advance the rapid adoption of secure technologies.

The Center, which has been temporarily housed in the Institute for Bioscience and Biotechnology Research on the campus of the Universities at Shady Grove, will move to a 65,000

square foot building on Seneca Highway in Rockville. The State of Maryland and Montgomery County are providing funding to renovate the facility, which is owned by the Maryland Economic Development Corporation (MEDCO).

"This partnership agreement between NIST, Maryland and Montgomery County clearly marks Montgomery County Maryland as a viable national player in civil cybersecurity," said County Executive Ike Leggett. "I thank Senator Mikulski for her leadership on this issue and Governor O'Malley for his continuing support of our efforts to grow even more business and create the jobs of tomorrow for Montgomery County."

Manpower from A1

Samuel trekked to the Food Bank for supplies no more twice a week before the cuts. Now, he goes every day, waking up as early as 3 a.m. to check the online menu where the Food Bank lists the available items for the day, he said.

The menu has been scant lately, Samuel said, not because the Food Bank doesn't have the items, but because they don't have the volunteers to sort through them all.

"We feel the pinch of that," he said.

At the Crofton Food Pantry at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, director Susan Bixby has also seen an increase in demand, with many clients citing food stamp cuts as the

cause. The pantry, which is open three days a week and one Sunday each month, helped 171 families in December, the largest amount ever, according to Bixby, who has worked at the pantry since its inception 2008. Bixby gets most of her supplies from donations and the Anne Arundel County Food and Resources Bank in Crownsville, where executive director Bruce Michalec said he is grateful that he isn't short on help.

The backlog at the Maryland Food Bank is partly the result of the post-holiday dip in volunteers that comes each year when the facility needs the manpower most. October to December is "food drive season," according to Sam, when donations often flood into the distribution centers.

The bulk of donations, though, comes from retailers, like Giant and Wegmans, which donate several tractor-trailers full of food each month. These donations, known as "salvage," often come in large, mixed quantities that need sorting before they can be distributed to the Food Bank's partners.

"We break it all down so that when our pantries call us, they can get exactly what they need instead of the wide assortment," said Billie Bedregal, who works at the Western Maryland branch in Hagerstown.

The smaller Western Maryland warehouse can only accommodate five volunteers a day, but the other branches prefer larger groups of volunteers who can deal with mass quantities of food quickly.

The Eastern Shore branch, which serves eight counties, is restructuring its program to attract more groups to help with tasks like marking up barcodes on meat donated from retailers, a required step and an added reason for urgency with the perishable nature of the product, Terry said.

The branch has four or five groups that come in on a regular basis, and it hopes to double that number, she said.

"Until we can get enough volunteers to help us mark all of those out, then the food just sits in the freezer, and it's not doing us any good to help people if it's just sitting there," Terry said. "We have a backlog of that food that we need to get out. We need to get it out soon."

Childhood from A4

way to improve their individual futures and our collective economic future.

"We all know the moral arguments behind investing in children. But we must also examine economic and academic benefits of quality early childhood education and care. Programs such as Head Start and Early Head Start have proven long-term economic payoffs — less crime, better health and reductions in welfare use.

"Investing in children at a very young age makes sense from a moral perspective, because we are a nation that does not turn our back on those most in need. It makes sense from a business perspective because we are a nation that is constantly working to support our businesses. One way to help our large and small businesses alike is to ensure they have a qualified and productive workforce. Investing in our children at a young age makes sense from an economic

and academic perspective because we are a nation that understands reductions in crime, juvenile detention rates and welfare use along with increases in high school and college graduation rates as well as higher incomes and homeownership rates will help our nation better prosper.

"Supporting families and children was very important to me and Senator Harkin as we worked to craft and pass the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014. That legislation includes a number of provisions vitally important to children and families. It includes a \$154 million increase for child care programs that help low-income families send their children to child care while they're working or attending school. It includes a \$194 million increase for programs that provide health and nutrition services to low-income pregnant women as well as kids under five. It includes a \$1.025 billion increase for Head Start that provides early childhood

services. This additional funding will allow approximately 90,000 more children to be served by Head Start. It includes a \$250 million increase for Race to the Top and Universal Pre-K, programs that expand access to pre-k for four-year-olds

"I'm so proud of what we got in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2014, but we need to keep fighting. We need to keep making smart investments. And we need to make sure our programs are current. That's why I've been working with Senators Richard Burr (R-N.C.), Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Lamar Alexander (R-

Tenn.) to reauthorize the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which hasn't been reauthorized since 1996. We crafted a bipartisan bill with input from every Member of this committee. We passed it through the HELP Committee last September. And we're planning to have it on the Senate Floor in March."

"I'm really excited to hear from our witnesses today about their work to improve early childhood care as well as their ideas for how the government can help them be them and help them do what they're best at, which is educating and caring for our next generation."

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

“12 Years a Slave”

12 Years a Slave
Grade: A
Rated R, a few graphic scenes of cruel violence, some nonsexual nudity, brief sexuality
2 hrs., 14 min

There are three devastating, longer-than-average shots in “12 Years a Slave” that encapsulate the film’s greatness, both as a movie and as cultural commentary. Two of them, though they depict abject cruelty, may seem otherwise unremarkable at first glance, but they actually speak volumes about the movie’s approach to the ghastly subject of American slavery. The third shot’s notability is unmistakable, and it showcases director Steve McQueen’s brilliance while underscoring his thematic intent.

We will discuss these three shots not in chronological order but in the order that suits us best, because it’s our review and we can do what we want.

Shot #1 is in a scene 15 minutes into the film, when Solomon Northup (Chiwetel Ejiofor), a prosperous black man living in New York in 1841, has just been kidnapped by slavers in Washington, D.C. Solomon has been free his entire life, aware of the horrors of slavery but spared from experiencing them firsthand. His initial reaction to being abducted and chained in a shack is righteous indignation: I’m not a runaway slave, I’m a freeman, you have no right to do this, etc. The law is on his side, of course, but we note the awful absurdity of the situation: if he were a slave, caging and beating him would be perfectly legal. As a black man, the only thing that makes him a human being instead of property is a piece of paper.

His captors seek to make it clear to Solomon that he is no longer a freeman from Saratoga, N.Y. As of this moment, he’s a runaway n***** from Georgia. But for their plan to work, Solomon’s will has to be broken. A slave who’s constantly whining about how he’s not supposed to be a slave, and how he has a wife and children back in Saratoga, and how he could clear all this up if you’d just give him the chance, would be a liability.

Which brings us to the shot: an unbroken 85-second take in which Solomon is forced to his hands and knees and savagely beaten across the back until he submits to his new status as a slave. The ugly man doing the dirty work uses a plank of wood until it splinters, then asks

Solomon if he’s a slave. Solomon whimpers something that sounds like “no,” so now it’s on to the whip to finish the job of breaking his spirit. Finally Solomon accepts that if he doesn’t stop objecting, he’ll be killed.

And that’s how you make a human being relinquish his humanity: through brute force. There’s no other way. Rhetoric, propaganda, and constant negative reinforcement can help make one group of people subservient to another, but it can’t do the whole job. The only way slavery was able to continue was through physical violence.

By depicting it so matter-of-factly, in a single shot, without flinching, McQueen drives the bleak reality of Solomon’s situation home to viewers who’ve never experienced anything remotely like it — viewers who perhaps imagine that if they were in Solomon’s shoes, they would assert their freedom even to the death. This is critical to the film, not just thematically but in terms of storytelling: since Solomon is going to be a slave for the next 12 years, we need to believe that he could be forced into it. McQueen makes sure we believe.

Shot #2 is at the opposite end of the movie, in the final half-hour. Solomon is working under a particularly loathsome plantation owner named Edwin Epps (Michael Fassbender), a Bible-quoting drunkard and rapist whom Solomon tactfully describes as “a man of hard countenance.” (One of the things I like about John Ridley’s screenplay, based on the real Solomon Northup’s memoir, is how even casual conversation sounds elegantly formal by modern standards.) Epps’ own wife (Sarah Paulson) is more direct, calling her husband “a no-account bastard,” though she’s mostly just jealous because Epps favors a slave girl, Patsey (Lupita Nyong’o), over her.

The multi-layered conflict between Epps, his wife, Solomon, and Patsey comes to a head in an astonishing scene consisting of a single take that lasts 4 minutes and 45 seconds, in which Patsey is stripped naked, tied to a post, and mercilessly whipped. To make it crueler, Epps forces Solomon to do some of the whipping.

The scene is almost unbearable to watch (I know I am not making this movie sound very appealing), but it’s a masterwork of filmmaking. Ejiofor, Fassbender, and Nyong’o give impeccable, heartbreaking performances that cover a range of intense emotions even as they also handle the



PHOTO BY JAAP BUITENDIJK
Steve McQueen’s latest is a stark, vivid depiction of the slave trade, based on the famous memoir.

complicated logistics involved in choreographing the shot.

Because the scene is so horrifically compelling, and because the camera moves around a lot, I didn’t realize on first viewing that it was shot in a single take. It’s difficult to stage any shot of that length, let alone one involving background extras, simulated violence, and extreme emotional duress. Why did McQueen do it this way, rather than with ordinary cutting and editing?

As with the previous example, I think it’s to give the scene a sense of immediacy. Not cutting away (not even to another angle of the same action) is the filmmaking equivalent of staring at something without blinking. Whether we consciously realize it or not, we as viewers are drawn into it, unable to relax until finally we cut to something else.

Shot #3 is in the middle of the film, and it’s the one that even a casual viewer will recognize as a singular piece of work. At this point, Solomon is owned by a master named Ford (Benedict Cumberbatch) who treats him with relative kindness. But while Ford is away, Solomon runs afoul of one of his overseers, a petulant brat named Tibeats (Paul Dano) who genuinely, truly hates n*****s. Tibeats and his lackeys string Solomon up in a noose, intending to hang him, but are prevented from finishing the job by a higher-up who points out that since Solomon is Ford’s property, nobody but Ford has the right to kill him. Tibeats and company retreat, leaving Solomon in the noose, his hands tied behind his back, his toes touching the ground just enough to keep him alive in what looks like an obscene parody of a dance.

And there he stays. For hours. Shot #3 is 85 seconds long. The camera remains still, Solomon gasping and struggling in the foreground while in the background life on the plantation con-

tinues. No one, slave or white person, dares rescue him, though a slave does eventually come and give him a sip of water. Slaves go about their work; children play; life proceeds normally even though there is a man hanging from a tree right in front of them.

This is McQueen’s metaphor for the institution of slavery. For decades, while unthinkable cruelty was being inflicted daily on millions of human beings, society went about its business, unable or unwilling to change it. I don’t mean that as a condemnation of average Americans in the 1800s, any more than we judge the slaves in the film for not coming to Solomon’s aid. Part of what made slavery so insidious was the fact that it was a massive, well-established institution that the average person couldn’t fight even if he wanted to. This was normal.

I don’t think we’ve ever fully reckoned with that, with the reality that for many decades, this thing that is very obviously wrong was not considered wrong. What were we — and I mean all the societies that condoned slavery, though the film is about America specifically — thinking? “12 Years a Slave” forces us to consider the actual, literal, day-to-day monstrousness of slavery in a way that few works of art ever have.

But it’s also a stellar piece of cinema, artfully directed and performed, full of haunting beauty. McQueen doesn’t sensationalize or wallow in the depravity: apart from the three scenes discussed, there isn’t a great deal of graphic violence. And there runs through it an undercurrent of hope. We know Solomon will eventually be free, and his refusal to give up entirely — even as he has to make certain concessions to stay alive — is inspiring. The film is exactly the sort of thing we mean when we talk about the arts reflecting, ennobling, and strengthening a culture.

Family Entertainment Network INSP Honors Vietnam Veterans And Their Families

(NAPSI)—The family entertainment network INSP has expanded its commitment to veterans by partnering with the congressionally chartered United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration and by providing the network’s video, entitled “Thank You For Your Service,” an homage to Vietnam Veterans.

The video, part of INSP’s critically acclaimed Moments series, is being presented throughout the country by the Commemoration to thank and honor Vietnam Veterans and their families.

In recognition, the official commemoration flag and certi-

cate, signed by the Secretary of Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were presented to INSP Chairman and Chief Executive Officer David Cerullo during a ceremony held by the Commemoration.

“I have had the privilege of playing this video for thousands of people around the country. This stirring tribute never fails to inspire deep emotions. It has helped bring healing and encouragement to true patriots, many of whom have felt taken for granted and ignored,” says Lieutenant General Claude “Mick” Kicklighter, United States Army (Retired).

Cerullo accepted the flag and certificate, saying, “It is gratifying to know that ‘Thank You For Your Service’ has touched so many lives.”

The video has been featured on the Pentagon Channel, USAA’s Web channels, and at several national conventions, including those of the American Legion and the Vietnam Veterans of America. INSP is producing another veteran series entitled “Moments of Valor,” in partnership with the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation.

“We have pledged to continue this campaign to honor

our veterans,” Cerullo said. “As part of our work with the Vietnam War Commemoration Committee, INSP is donating 1,000 specially designed videos of ‘Thank You For Your Service’ to veterans. We hope that this small gesture will have a lasting impact.”

Moments is an INSP original, inspirational, award-winning video series that celebrates uplifting stories of hope. The videos air as a public service throughout the day on INSP. They are also available on a special website, www.moments.org.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

All-American Michael Sam Comes Out and the NFL Is On the Clock

In our light-speed sports media environment we were all given roughly one hour. We had one hour to feel both exhilarated and optimistic about the future of Michael Sam. Here he was: a first-team All-American football player from Missouri and a co-defensive player of the year in the toughest college football conference of them all, the SEC. And now two months before the NFL draft, he was telling the world, on his own terms, that he was gay. As Mr. Sam put it, “I want to own my own truth.”



PHOTO: USA TODAY SPORTS

Even better, his Missouri Tiger teammates had known his “truth” since last August. Michael Sam had come out to them in a team trust exercise, where every player was asked to share something personal. The Tigers not only supported him, they protected him, keeping his secret until he was ready to come out to the world. As he said to John Branch of The New York Times, “Once I became official to my teammates, I knew who I was. I knew that I was gay. And I knew that I was Michael Sam, who’s a Mizzou football player who happens to be gay. I was so proud of myself and I just didn’t care who knew. If someone on the street would have asked me, ‘Hey, Mike, I heard you were gay. Is that true?’ I would have said yes.”

A couple of Sam’s straight football buddies even hit the gay clubs with him in the lead up to last month’s Cotton Bowl. One joined him at a pride march and, when the season ended, his teammates voted him most valuable player of the overachieving 12-2 Tigers.

This narrative about the locker room is in many ways more important than the coming out itself. What sports general managers have always said in the past, whether they were speaking in the abstract or talking anonymously about unsigned out-and-proud NBA player Jason Collins, is that “the locker room” would not be ready for a gay teammate. No matter how many athletes have come out as allies, no matter how many polls show overwhelming majorities of pro athletes willing to have gay teammates, this is what was always thrown in the faces of fans: the “locker room” isn’t ready. And here was a living, breathing example of an SEC locker room that did not only survive having a gay teammate but thrived.

What a story. For one hour, that song from The Lego Movie, “Everything is Awesome,” seemed to be playing behind every tweet, every Facebook post and every direct message. I exchanged e-mails with Cyd Ziegler and Jim Buzinski, from OutSports, two of the journalists who not only broke this story but helped strategize the timing of Michael Sam’s coming out. They have no illusions that the NFL is somehow a rainbow utopia waiting to happen, but as Cyd said, “I don’t think it will affect his draft stock much at all. It’s impossible to predict where anyone will be drafted, but the NFL is about winning. When it makes sense to draft someone of Michael’s skill, he’ll get taken off the board. I just hope it’s the Patriots so I can cheer for him every game.” Yes, everything was awesome.

Then came this article by Pete Thamel of Sports Illustrated. Thamel collected a series of reactions from anonymous NFL executives about the news of Michael Sam’s coming out, and the operative word here is “reaction.” They belched a collection of comments that would not have sounded out of place in the 1940s, when the sports bosses lectured Branch Rickey about how “the Negro” would make a locker room—and yes, the showers—unbearable. One NFL executive said, “I don’t think football is ready for [an openly gay player] just yet. In the coming decade or two, it’s going to be acceptable, but at this point in time it’s still a man’s-man game. To call somebody a [gay slur] is still so commonplace. It’d chemically imbalance an NFL locker room and meeting room.” (My emphasis.)

Another remarked, “Not that they’re against gay people. It’s more that some players are going to look at you upside down. Every Tom, Dick and Harry in the media is going to show up, from Good Housekeeping to the Today show. A general manager is going to ask, ‘Why are we going to do that to ourselves?’”

You read correctly. NFL executives, many of whom love acting like hyper-macho caricatures for the cameras, are fearful of the media-hordes from Good Housekeeping. For all the fake military rhetoric in the NFL about team executives being “leaders of men,” they sounded like weak and scared little boys.

The most cowardly part of all of this was that, in comment after comment, these executives absolved themselves of homophobia and bigotry by putting it all on the players. There is also an uncomfortable racial element to this in a league where over 90 percent of executives are white and 70 percent of players are African-American. Call it the myth of African-American homophobia. Yes, there is homophobia in every community, but there is a particular scapegoating of African-Americans as being the great block to LGBT social progress. We saw this when the anti-gay marriage amendment Prop 8 passed in California, and it is hard not to hear its echo in the anonymous statements in Sports Illustrated.

The other mendacious part of this is—of course—since when do NFL executives ever listen to “the locker room?” The NFL, as is often said, is not a “player’s league.” Those under the helmet have, on average, about three and a half years in the NFL meat grinder before they are out the door. Every year is invaluable to whatever nest egg they’ll have once the cheering stops. If owners and general managers said that they were going to have a discrimination-free locker room, then that would be the law of the land. Yet in a league where fake tough-guy general managers who never played the game, goad players to “man up” and take the field with concussions, or try to stockpile their locker room with the Richie Incognitos* of the world, this is what you get.

The NFL will continue to be a bigoted institution until its own leadership—its own executives—actually face up to their own bigotry. Michael Sam has said he wants to own his own truth. One wonders if the NFL will ever truly own theirs.

* As I use Richie Incognito’s name as a stand-in for negative locker room behavior, it is worth noting that Incognito has already tweeted out support to Michael Sam, writing, “@MikeSamFootball #respect bro. It takes guts to do what you did. I wish u nothing but the best”

Calendar of Events

February 27 — March 5, 2014

Senior Days

Date and 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
301-583-2400; TTY 301-583-2483

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

College Park Farmers Market

Date & Time: Year-round, Saturdays, 7 am-12 noon
Location: M-NCPPC, Wells-Linson Complex (parking lot)
5211 Paint Branch Parkway,
College Park 20740

Contact: Phil Miller at 301-399-5485
FMNP Checks (WIC & Senior) & FVC accepted
*Please click here for a complete list of Prince George's County Farmers Markets.

Sunjata Kamalenya

Date and Time: Friday, February 28, 2014 12 noon Saturday, March 1, 2014 11 am

Description: This play makes 13th century Mali come to life! Both actors and audience help tell the story of Sunjata Keita, a young boy who is destined to save his people. Traditional music, costumes and scenery create a fascinating world where this timeless tale of personal struggle, family love, and community is depicted.

Cost: Tickets: \$10/person; \$8/groups of 15 or more
Ages: Recommended for grades 6 and up
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Cheverly 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Chesapeake Woodturners Exhibit

Date & Time: March 1-31, 11 am-4 pm
(Closed on Wednesdays.)
Description: See Montpelier filled with beautiful turned wood objects, all handmade by members of the Chesapeake Woodturners. Demonstrations will be given Saturdays and Sundays, 1-4 pm, weather permitting. Please call to confirm.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages (Parental supervision required.)
Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544; montpeliermansion@pgparks.com

Free Platinum Movie: Beasts of the Southern Wild

Date and Time: Tuesday, March 4, 2014 11 am
Description: In an isolated Louisiana Bayou, a six-year-old girl with a buoyant spirit and extraordinary imagination contends with an ailing, abusive father and a storm that threatens to destroy her small community. Roger Ebert wrote: "Sometimes miraculous films come into being, made by people you've never heard of, starring unknown faces, blindsiding you with creative genius. "Beasts of the Southern Wild" is one of the year's [2012's] best films."
Cost: Free
Ages: 60 & better
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Cheverly 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

LIVE at Montpelier! Kristin Callahan, Jazz Vocalist

Date and Time: Friday, March 7, 2014 8 pm
Description: Come witness the stunning voice of Kristin Callahan at our latest LIVE from Montpelier series! She has the rare ability to coax listeners into anticipation of each note and bring people into the very soul of her music. Callahan's stage presence draws you in and grips you until the last note. She has recorded and performed with some of the best, including Warren Wolf and renowned D.C. pianist Vince Evans, who is featured on her album, "A New Love."
Cost: Tickets: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members & seniors
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708
Contact: 301-377-7800 or 410-792-0664; TTY 301-490-2329

Diary of a Worm, a Spider and a Fly

Date and Time: Friday, March 7, 2014 10:15 am & 12 noon
Description: Three quirky crawlers face the first day of school together in this musical coming-of-age story! Learn how they overcome their fears by exploring and accepting personal differences and making friends. This play is based on the best-selling book series by Doreen Cronin and Harry Bliss. This presentation is supported by the GEICO Philanthropic Foundation.
Cost: Tickets: \$6/person; \$5/groups of 15 or more
This presentation is available at no cost to Title I schools in Prince George's County.
Ages: Recommended for grades K-5
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Cheverly 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

EARTH TALK ... "Wind Power's Bright Future"

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the latest prognosis for wind energy to command a larger piece of the renewable energy pie?

— Peter M.,
Akron, OH

Hydroelectric sources of power dwarf other forms of renewable energy, but wind power has been a dominant second for years, and continues to show "hockey stick" growth moving forward. According to the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC), global cumulative installed wind capacity—the total amount of wind power available—has grown fifty-fold in less than two decades, from just 6,100 megawatts (MW) in 1996 to 318,137 MW in 2013.

And the future looks brighter still. Analysts from Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF) predict that wind will account for the largest share—30 percent—of new renewables added to the global power grid by 2030. That new renewables are expected to account for as much as 70 percent of all new power sources over the next 20 years means that wind is poised to become a major player on the global energy scene.

Here in the U.S., energy generated by domestic wind farms has nearly tripled in just

the past four years, despite a brief hiccup due to a lapse in the Production Tax Credit, a renewable energy production incentive that effectively subsidizes the creation of more wind farms. But even despite this, wind represented about a third of all new power added to the U.S. grid over the past five years. The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), a leading environmental non-profit and wind power advocate, forecasts that the U.S. will derive some 20 percent of its total electricity production from wind by 2030.

"The U.S. industry has many reasons for favorable long-term prospects," reports the American Wind Energy Association (AWEA), a non-profit trade group representing the wind industry. "In addition to the record activity at the end of 2013, wind energy helped keep the lights on and insulate against temporary price spikes during the recent 'polar vortex' cold weather snap, demonstrating the value of wind power in a balanced energy portfolio."

AWEA also points out recent reports showing how incorporation of wind energy lowers costs for electric consumers. "And critical to some parts of the country facing continuing drought, wind energy uses no water in its production, as well as releasing no emissions," adds the group.

The fact that wind energy in the U.S. avoids some 100 million tons of carbon dioxide



CREDIT: MARTIN ABEGGLEN, COURTESY FLICKR

Here in the U.S., energy generated by domestic wind farms has nearly tripled in just the past four years and represents about a third of all new power added to the U.S. grid over the past five years.

emissions annually is also good news. AWEA adds that number will grow as wind energy scales up to 20 percent of the grid and beyond "making the addition of more wind power one of the fastest, cheapest, and largest-scale ways for states to meet the Administration's new goals for reducing carbon pollution from power plants."

While wind continues to grow fast, solar may finally be catching up. According to BNEF, some 36.7 gigawatts (GW) of new solar photovoltaic capacity were added worldwide in 2013 compared with 35.5 GW worth of new wind power installations. BNEF adds that global demand for wind turbines may actually shrink in 2014 (by five percent), representing the

first such decline since 2004. But Justin Wu, head of wind analysis for BNEF, says it's just a temporary blip: "Falling technology costs, new markets and the growth of the offshore industry will ensure wind remains a leading renewable energy technology."

CONTACTS: Casey Research, www.caseyresearch.com; MIT Center for Energy and Environmental Policy Research, <http://web.mit.edu/ceep/www>.

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Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Bay Water from A1

said Whitman Miller, a research scientist with the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.

The last time atmospheric carbon dioxide levels increased by 120 ppm was in the Pliocene era—2.6 to 5.3 million years ago—and that increase took 10,000 years, Miller said.

Since the Industrial Revolution, which began in about 1760, the pH level—the scale of how acidic water is—of the world's oceans has decreased by 0.11, indicating a 28.8 percent increase in acidity, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory. Further decreases in the pH level of 0.1 to 0.5 are expected during the next 100 years, according to a 2009 paper by Miller.

Ninety-seven percent of climate scientists agree that climate change trends over the past century are caused by human activities that are adding carbon dioxide to the atmosphere at historically high rates.

In the Pacific Northwest, oyster larvae have already been struggling to build their shells, according to the Ocean Con-

servancy, a nonprofit group advocating for healthy oceans.

Coral is also vulnerable to acidification; a 2009 Oceanography Society study found that an increase in ocean acidity will make it harder for coral to grow.

It's more difficult to predict how acidification will affect the bay, Miller said. Things get more complicated when saltwater and freshwater meet in the bay, and there are other complicating factors, such as how deep the water is in different parts of the bay.

"The Chesapeake Bay is a really complicated system," Miller said. "When we think of acidification, we've got to think about it differently than we do in the open ocean because the sort of absence of this really convenient equilibrium."

State Delegate Eric Luedtke, D-Montgomery, is sponsoring a bill that would require the Maryland Department of the Environment to evaluate probable effects of acidification in the bay and other state waters and include recommendations about how to address the issue in a 2015 report.

Luedtke said acidification could "absolutely" hurt watermen who make their living

from the oyster and crab industries in the bay.

"It creates a real change in ocean ecosystems for shellfish," he said, "and Maryland being a state that is very oriented towards the water, I think it's important that we sort of develop a strategy at the state government level to deal with the consequences of this."

Little research on acidification in coastal systems has been done, and it's badly needed, Miller said. In order for the Maryland Department of the Environment report to be successful, he said the report must be assembled by a wide range of people, including scientists, policymakers, watermen and people who manage natural resources.

Some watermen, however, are skeptical that the bill would help identify negative effects of acidification and ways to combat them.

Tim Devine, owner of Barren Island Oysters in Hoopers Island, said he hopes his oysters can be resilient against acidification because he feels helpless to do anything about it—even with Luedtke's bill.

"There's nothing a group of politicians comes up with that's

going to end up helping us out. That's just the way it goes," he said. "By the time it gets agreed upon, it doesn't do anything."

Steve Allen, of the Oyster Recovery Partnership, said Luedtke's bill could help improve understanding of acidification in the bay.

The "single best" way to combat acidification in the long term, Luedtke said, is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. But, he added, there's lag time associated with this; even if greenhouse gas levels were cut, it would take a long time for the effects it could have on acidification to be felt.

The effects that acidification could have on the bay and its inhabitants are unclear. But he believes that better understanding of the phenomenon—whether or not Luedtke's bill facilitates this—is possible.

"Because of its complexity, it means it's a headache to work in some respects," Miller said. "But if we can understand what's happening in the Chesapeake Bay, we can understand what's happening in almost any coastal system just by means of its complicated nature."

Gun Control from A1

to get voted out, but the change will come and lives are going to be saved," Pauliukonis said.

Despite the optimism of gun control advocates, the fact remains that Congress has failed to pass any gun control legislation since Sandy Hook.

Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said Congress' inaction is unacceptable and Americans should be outraged.

"The response from Congress is at best indifference and I would argue at times complicit," Murphy said.

He said the Senate is debating a bill to allow individuals to bring guns into post offices.

"In the face of record numbers of shootings on public property the response of the United States Senate might actually be to increase the ability for individuals to bring guns on to public property," Murphy said.

Where Congress has stalled, Maryland has succeeded. Maryland passed a new gun control law that became effective on Oct. 1. The law, considered one of the toughest in the nation, requires handgun purchasers to get fingerprinted and take gun safety courses.

Michael Faith, marketing director at Hendershot's Sporting Goods in Hagerstown, said his company took a big hit on its handgun sales after Maryland's law passed.

"In September we had our best month ever in handgun sales. In October we had a 99 percent reduction in handgun sales. We still have not recovered those sales," Faith said.

Faith thinks there are controls already in place that are working at the state level. He also said that most pro-gun people would agree with background checks and most don't mind having a seven-day waiting period.

"If you want to do something meaningful right now you have to address the mental health aspect," Faith said.

Moms Demand Action launched 14 months ago, following the school shooting in Newtown that resulted in the death of 20 children and six adults. The group claims 150,000 members nationwide, about 700 of them in Maryland.

In December, the group joined with Mayors Against Illegal Guns, a gun-control group founded and financed by former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Laurel Mayor Craig Moe were among the handful of Maryland mayors who signed on to the group.

"The citizens of Baltimore know all too well the tragedy and grief caused by gun violence. We must stay committed in our mission to end gun violence in order to make every

city and town in America safer," Rawlings-Blake said in an email.

In 2008, while pregnant with her son, Jennifer Stapleton of Cheverly was carjacked.

"That experience showed me that it is way too easy for violent people to get hold of a gun," Stapleton said.

Stapleton too is convinced that change will come and lawmakers will have no choice but to pass gun reform laws.

"There are millions of moms across the country. We will continue to put pressure on legislators," Stapleton said. "We are committed to keeping our kids safe. We know this is a long-term fight and we know we are up to it."

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Elder Willie W. Duvall, Pastor

Watch from A4

able to succeed in the classroom. In one study, children who were food insecure in kindergarten saw a 13 percent drop in their reading and math test scores by the third grade compared to their food-secure peers. In FY2012, more than 21 million children received free or reduced-price lunch through the National School Lunch Program and nearly 11 million children received free and reduced price breakfast. When school is out, though, it's a different story.

for summer feeding programs in your community to make sure there is no child hunger crisis in your area this summer. Encourage local congregations, organizations, community centers, parks and recreation departments, and others to open their doors and feed hungry children this summer. These entities are eligible to become summer feeding sponsors and sites. If you have a connection to a local service or civic program discuss this issue with them and encourage them to take advantage of

*There are six people in our family.
But only five sit down to dinner.
That's because my mom doesn't eat.
She wants to make sure we have enough food.*

-- Vanessa, age 6

The long summer break can be the worst time of all for our young as hunger does not take a summer vacation. The Children's Defense Fund's latest report shows only 10 percent of the number of children who relied on free or reduced-price lunch during the school year received meals through the Summer Food Service Program. Despite the fact that it is 100 percent federally-funded and has the potential to create local jobs for cafeteria workers, bus drivers, and others, too many states and communities drag their feet, create mindless bureaucratic hurdles, and make it as difficult as possible to get resources to serve meals to hungry children during the summer. I have never understood why and it should be stopped. Click here to see the 10 best and 10 worst states for child enrollment in Summer Food Service Programs. It is crucial to start asking about and planning right now

the opportunity to help hungry children get food. Adults and older children can volunteer to help prepare or serve meals at local sites. Visit the USDA's website to learn more. There should be no hungry people—especially no hungry children—in any community in rich America. Jasmine, Vanessa, and millions of children like them deserve better. 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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