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Public Hopes to Influence Cove Point Verdict

By JUSTINE MCDANIEL
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - An environmental group will deliver more than 35,000 citizen letters by hand to the Maryland Public Service Commission Wednesday in opposition to the proposed Cove Point liquefied natural gas export facility in Calvert County.

The Chesapeake Climate Action Network, a nonprofit that has been at the forefront of the opposition to the facility, will bring the public comments to the commission's Baltimore office in boxes. Wednesday is the deadline for submitting public comments, and the PSC does not accept them electronically.

Meanwhile, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, which is providing the most sweeping oversight of the case, denied on Monday the requests of Maryland Senators Ben Cardin and Barbara Mikulski to hold additional public hearings on the commission's coming assessment of the proposal.

The state's Public Service Commission is responsible for granting the permit needed for the 130-megawatt power plant. Dominion will need to construct. It is conducting the most

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Mark Evans, a junior at Capitol College in Laurel, works to defend his team's network from attacks.

Cyber Blizzard Challenge Tests Student's Security Skills

By MIKE DENISON
Capital News Service

LAUREL - Picture this: a major blizzard has knocked out communications throughout the state. Network security professionals are scrambling to bring relief to afflicted Marylanders, but a team of nefarious hackers have united to thwart their efforts.

Fortunately, it's just a game, but the real-world implications are huge.

On Friday and Saturday, the CyberWatch Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition turned Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory into a cyber battleground. This year's theme is "Operation Cyber Blizzard." Eight teams from colleges in Maryland, Virginia,

West Virginia and Pennsylvania scramble to keep networks secure and ensure aid is administered to distressed — albeit fictional — citizens.

While the disaster may be fake, the students' enemy is much more real. The college teams' opposing hackers, or "Red Team," is populated by computer security professionals using both hi-tech and low-tech methods.

As the red team launched sophisticated cyberattacks, one hacker walked unnoticed with a backpack into the "pit" where the school teams congregate during the competition. He seemed innocuous, but Charlie Frick, a Johns Hopkins cyber researcher and event volunteer,

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Bill Would Increase Film Production Tax Incentives

By LYLE KENDRICK
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS-- The Maryland legislature is weighing whether film and television productions like Netflix's popular "House of Cards" should be dealt additional tax credits to entice them to keep shooting in the state.

Supporters of the bill said the measure would bring more jobs to Maryland and make the state more attractive for future movie and television filming.

Steve Lafayette is one of the people that benefited from tax incentives. An audio worker for the first season of HBO's "Veep," Lafayette moved to Maryland from Chicago before the show's first season.

He said that since "Veep" aired, he's seen more movies and television shows being filmed in Maryland, including "House of Cards" starring Kevin Spacey.

"There was a bit of a snowball effect," Lafayette said, adding that much of the newly available work is because of tax credits to film production companies.

The proposed bill would increase the amount of income tax credits the Department of Business and Economic Development can award to film production companies from \$7.5

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Vaportini Ban Approved by General Assembly

By MELANIE BALAKIT
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Maryland may become the first state to ban the use of Vaportinis, a relatively new device that allows users to inhale fumes from heated alcoholic drinks, if a measure approved by the General Assembly is signed into law.

The Senate unanimously passed the measure Wednesday. The House of Delegates previously passed the bill with a vote of 105 - 28 in March.

Maryland is the only state that considered banning Vaportinis, according to openstates.org, an organization that tracks all legislation in the nation. The Chicago-based inventor of the device said she knows of no other attempts to make her product illegal.

The Maryland bill extends the state ban on so-called "AWOL machines" - to include Vaportinis or any other similar devices. "AWOL" stands for "alcohol without liquid" vaporizers. Violators can be charged with a misdemeanor and a maximum fine of \$1,000.

The AWOL machine was first introduced in 2004. Today, it is banned in Maryland and more than 20 other states, according to a legislative analysis.

"I took a look at what the vaporizer does, and I didn't think it would be a good thing to be doing," said Delegate Charles Barkley, D-Montgomery, who sponsored the bill. "Some doctors were unsure what effect [vaporizing alcohol] would have on the brain."

Julie Palmer, founder and owner of Vaportini, said the dangers of Vaportini are exaggerated.

"Using a Vaportini won't put people over the legal alcohol limit," said Palmer. "There is no danger of overdose."

Palmer said users can feel the effects of alcohol faster using a Vaportini, but the "buzz" also goes away faster. She said that a professional lab is testing the product to see how much alcohol is consumed when using a Vaportini with one ounce of alcohol.

"The only complaints that we've got about the produce is that people weren't getting drunk," Palmer said, adding that she is unaware of any



PHOTO COURTESY OF VAPORTINI

A vaportini is a product that allows users to inhale vapor from heated alcoholic drinks. A bill to ban the product is headed to the Governor's office. A tealight candle heats one ounce of a spirit in a glass sphere atop the glass. The user "sips" the vapors through a straw.

other laws against her Vaportini products.

Unlike traditional consumption of alcohol, inhaled alcohol bypasses the digestive system and directly enters the bloodstream and brain. The health impact of inhaling alcohol vapor is still being studied.

The Vaportini launched in January 2013 according to the Vaportini website. The most basic

Vaportini kit sells for \$35 on Vaportini.com.

A lit tea candle is placed at the bottom of a pint-sized glass. Then, a metal ring and a glass globe filled with about an ounce of a spirit, is placed on top of the glass. After the drink is heated for about five minutes, a user inserts a straw into the globe and then inhales and exhales the vapor.

Average Maryland Teacher Sees Drop In Salary, Despite Increased Workloads

By ETHAN BARTON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - The average salary for Maryland teachers has decreased since 2009, despite an intensified workload from the hastily implemented Common Core State Standards.

Since the 2009-2010 school year, which ended with the adoption of Common Core, the average Maryland teacher has seen nearly a 6 percent decrease in their salary, after adjusting for inflation, according to calculations from data supplied by the state Department of Education.

"Teachers have not been able to negotiate [pay] increases that keep up," said Betty Weller, president of Maryland's teacher's union. "They're taking home fewer dollars."

Part of the problem is that many school districts have seen salary freezes that even neglected scheduled raises.

"We're in a situation in Anne Arundel where there is a revenue cap and there are funding issues," said Richard Benfer, president of the county's teacher's union. He explained that scheduled raises in his county are about 4 1/2 years behind.

Regardless of the freezes, the national teacher's union ranked Maryland as the twelfth best state for wage increases over ten school years, ending in 2013, according to a report released in March.

While many professions suffered during the Great Recession, teachers faced unique challenges from recent changes to the state's education policies, which significantly increased their workload.

Common Core -- a set of controversial, rigorous, new education standards -- was a crucial component of the state's suc-

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INSIDE

Governor O'Malley Announces Retirement of Disabilities Secretary Catherine A. Raggio

As Secretary of MDOD, Raggio led an initiative to provide more affordable housing for people with disabilities. Under her leadership, the Maryland Affordable Rental Housing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities initiative was established with a \$2 million award.
Community, Page A3

Cardin Votes to Extend Tax Provisions

U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.) praised the bipartisan work of the Senate Finance Committee as he joined with his colleagues to pass a package of tax extensions designed to provide certainty and better results for American taxpayers, families and businesses.
Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Small Businesses Begin to Adopt Bitcoin

Weeg, a web developer by trade who says he has been following the Internet for almost 20 years, said that after a friend who worked as a tattoo artist began to accept the digital currency, he thought - "Why not be the first photographer to accept bitcoin?"
Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "Oculus"

Ten years ago, tragedy struck the Russell family, when Tim was convicted of the brutal murder of their parents. Now that Tim is released from protective custody he only wants to move on with his life; but Kaylie, still haunted by that fateful night, is convinced her parents' deaths were caused by something else altogether.
Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:
What's behind the rise in public transit in the U.S. in the last few years, and how does our transit use compare with that of other developed countries?

Angie Whitby,
New Bern, NC

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Heart & Diabetes Health Expo coming up April 26, and it's free!

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is hosting its popular Heart and Diabetes Health Expo on Saturday, April 26, 8 a.m. to noon, featuring more than 40 free medical screenings, including total cholesterol testing, diabetes risk screening, blood pressure screening, hearing tests, sleep apnea pre-screening, posture assessments and allergy and asthma testing.

Also, there'll be special hands-on activities such as "Teddy Bear ER," cooking demos, dance performances and a healthy dose of fun for the whole family.

It's at Colony South Hotel and it's free. No appointment necessary. For information, call 1-866-724-2099.

Neighbors

The Oxon Hill Food Pantry's 18th Annual Walkathon is this Saturday, April 26, beginning at 9 a.m.. You can just show up at Oxon Hill Lutheran Church, 3415 Brinkley Road, and sign up to walk the Henson Creek Trail, which runs two miles out from the starting point—you can do two miles up and two back, or as many as you want—as long as you pledge \$10 or 10 pounds of non-perishable food. Info: 301-899-8358.

My neighbor Stacie Smith invites you to A Woman After God's Own Heart Prayer Breakfast, Saturday, May 3, from 9 a.m. to noon, at King Emmanuel Church, 2324 Ontario Road NW, sponsored by Women of Hope Support Group. Admission is \$12. Information: 240-838-2977.

St. Philip's Sodality is holding its 55th annual Mother/Daughter Breakfast on Sunday, May 4, at 10 a.m. in the Social Hall. Admission is \$10; under five, free. For tickets call: Kathy Wells, 301-423-9271, or

Karin Yeatman, 301-899-7784. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Alma Broderick, formerly of Skyline, was chairman of St. Philip's first Mother/Daughter Breakfast on April 3, 1960 at Wallace's Restaurant in Marlow Heights. I remember that the late Father (later Monsignor) Teletchea was called on every year at the end of the breakfast to sing "Danny Boy" or "Mother Machree."

I enjoyed a recent call from Daisy Young, formerly of Skyline. She and Ralph now live in California and celebrated their 60th anniversary last October. This week, on April 25, Daisy turns 85 (like me—it's a good age!). Daisy also mentioned that daughter Allean and husband George Heaster are in Dubai.

John Stakem, Sr., a longtime resident of Suitland, died April 9. I'll pay tribute to him in a future column.

Dr. Ben Carson honors Scholars

Four students from St. Philip's School, in Camp Springs, were honored at the Annual Carson Scholars Banquet in Baltimore on April 6. They are: 1st Year Scholars Thomas Do, grade 8, and Ashley Wilson, grade 5; 2nd Year Scholar Lauren Weaver and 3rd Year Scholar Kennedy Sarvis. Among others honored: 1st Year Scholar, Kristian Swann of Oxon Hill, and 3rd Year Scholars Kenetia Pinkett, grade 10, Suitland High, and Claire Mudd, grade 10, Eleanor Roosevelt High

The Carson Scholars Fund was founded in 1994 by world-renowned pediatric neurosurgeon Benjamin S. Carson and his wife, Candy, to motivate and reward academic excellence in young people. To date, the Carson Scholars Fund has awarded more than 6,200 scholarships and has scholars in all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

May they rest in peace

John J. "Jack" Riordan, 89, who owned Riordan's Restaurant and Raw Bar on Branch Avenue from 1968 to 1986, died March 29 at the home of his daughter in Edgewater. A longtime resident of Camp Springs, he was born in Washington, served in combat in the Pacific during WWII, and managed his father's D.C. restaurant, also named Riordan's, until the early 1960s. He was a member of the Elks and of SWAA (Southwest Washington Alumni Association). He was the husband of the late Mary Jean Riordan; father of Patricia Hutchinson and Marjorie Riordan; brother of Don Riordan and the late Patsy, Billy and Bobby (his twin); grandfather of Erin Lynn.

Henry J. Franciomet Jr., 91, a retired Defense Communications Agency engineer, and formerly of Clinton, died Dec. 18. A native of Buffalo, he served in the Army during WWII, graduated from the University at Buffalo, and was assigned at Andrews as a civilian engineer. He moved to Florida in 1990 but recently returned to Maryland. He was a member of the Holy Name Society at St. John's in Clinton. Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Evelyn; daughters Dineen Whipple and Lesley Franc; two siblings and six grandchildren.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Daisy Young, Sue Stine McConkey-Mason and my grandson David McHale, April 25; G.A. DeFelle, April 26; Michael Call, Apr. 27; Rose Tiller, Beverly Gotshall Marquis, DJ Fowler and Jessica Phipps, April 28; Lael McCune, Dorothy Lipka and Morningside Councilman Todd Mullins, April 30.

Happy 51st anniversary to Emanuel and Juanita Chaplin on April 26; and happy 42nd anniversary to Jan and Cindy Smith on April 28.

Neighborhood Events

Edwards and President Obama Announce Youth CareerConnect Grant Award To Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) joined President Barack Obama at Bladensburg High School for an announcement that the Department of Labor issued a \$7 million grant to the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation (EDC). Part of the Youth CareerConnect program, this funding will allow the EDC to expand programs at high schools throughout Prince George's County to help approximately 2,500 students develop additional knowledge and career-specific skills to increase their competitiveness upon graduation. The schools located in the 4th Congressional District included in this award are Bladensburg High School, Potomac High School, and Fairmont Heights High School.

"I am grateful the Department of Labor awarded the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation a \$7 million Youth CareerConnect grant. It is critical that we continue to explore and innovate how we provide students with the specialized skills necessary to be competitive in a 21st Century global economy. I thank President Obama for his leadership on this issue, and look forward to seeing the impact this funding will have on students in Prince George's County."

Prince George's County Receives \$7 million Youth CareerConnect Grant from President Obama

Bladensburg, MD — Prince George's County received a \$7 million grant from the United States Department of Labor and the Department of Education through the Youth CareerConnect program. The County was one of 24 recipients from around the country to receive funding from the \$107 million grant program, designed for high schools and their partners to develop innovative and creative programs that will help prepare students for success in post-secondary education and in a highly competitive global workforce.

President Obama made the announcement at Bladensburg High School, which is one of three high schools in Prince George's County where the program will be offered. Approximately 2,500 high school students at Bladensburg High School, Fairmont Heights High School, and Potomac High School will obtain the skills, knowledge, and dispositions over the next 54 months to successfully embark on college educations and/or receive industry recognized certifications in IT and healthcare, making them college and career ready.

"On behalf of the nearly 900,000 citizens and residents of Prince George's County, I would like to thank President Obama and his administration for supporting this County with a \$7 million grant that will enhance our ability to prepare our young people for careers in information technology and healthcare. This grant is an excellent opportunity for the talented teachers and students of the Prince George's County Public Schools and I congratulate all the partners in-



Congresswoman
Donna F. Edwards

involved for this unprecedented level of collaboration with my administration, which ultimately lead to a very thorough and successful proposal."

This grant will be facilitated through a partnership between the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, Prince George's County Public Schools, Prince George's Community College, Bowie State University, ASHLIN Urban Institute, Hillside Work Scholarship Connection, Latin American Youth Center, Lockheed Martin and Dimensions Healthcare System. This was President Obama's fifth visit to Prince George's County since last October and his second visit to a Prince George's County Public School this year.

The three high schools chosen are located within County Executive Baker's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI), which was used as the foundation of this grant application. This innovative initiative is improving the quality of life in some of the County's most challenged communities. Early success in these TNI communities is creating a sense of energy that has spurred groups throughout Prince George's County to collaborate in ways they have not in the past.

"Our TNI efforts to date have resulted in a strong foundation for community engagement and partnership. This grant will help us firm it up so that it is sustainable for many years to come," said Baker. "It is clear that the Obama administration is focused on creating Opportunity for All and it is incredibly gratifying to know that the strategies we are using with TNI make a real difference in people's lives. We anticipate this funding will be a resource to help thousands of young people realize their dreams, expand their horizons and prepare them for a better and brighter future."

The Youth CareerConnect grant program is designed to encourage America's school districts, institutions of higher education, the workforce investment system, and their partners to scale up evidence-based high school models that will transform the high school experience for America's youth. Youth CareerConnect schools will strengthen America's talent pipeline through:

- Integrated Academic and Career-Focused Learning: Grants will provide students with education and training that combines rigorous academic and career-focused curriculum to increase students' employability in in-demand industries and prepare them for employment, post-secondary education, long-term occupational skills training, or registered apprenticeships.

- Work-Based Learning and Exposure to the World of Work: Strong partnerships will provide work-based learning opportunities. In addition to actual work experience, youth participants will also participate in field trips, job-shadowing, or other types of opportunities that provide students with exposure to different career paths and prepare them for the world of work.

- Robust Employer Engagement: Employer partners will provide work-based learning and mentoring, creating a path for students to in-demand industries and occupations including those in information technologies, advanced manufacturing and other science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields. Employers will also work closely with schools on professional development and training for staff to drive the sustainability of the program over the long term.

- Individualized Career and Academic Counseling: As an integral part of the program design, students will be provided with individualized career and academic counseling experiences to strengthen their career and post-secondary awareness and explore opportunities beyond high school.

- Integration of Post-secondary Education and Training: Students will participate in education and training, while they are still in high school that leads to credit toward a post-secondary degree or certificate and an industry recognized credential, where appropriate.

State Issues New Immunization Requirements For the 2014-2015 School Year

UPPER MARLBORO, MD — Immunization requirements in the State of Maryland have changed for the 2014-2015 school year for students entering Kindergarten and Grade 7.

As a result, all Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) students who will be enrolling in Kindergarten must receive two (2) doses of the Varicella (Chicken Pox) vaccine.

All students who will be enrolling in Grade 7 are required to receive a single dose of the TDaP (Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis) vaccine and a single dose of the Meningococcal (Meningitis) vaccine.

Students have 20 calendar days after the start of the 2014-2015 school year to present medical verification of receiving the required vaccinations. If documentation is not presented the student will not be allowed back in school until the required records have been provided.

Parents are asked to contact their child's physician to ensure that their child's immunizations are current for the upcoming 2014-2015 school year. Families without health insurance may contact the Prince George's County Health Department Immunization Clinic at 301-583-3386.

If you have any questions about the immunization requirements please contact your school nurse.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Ruth Turner 301 888 2153

JAMES MADISON INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE WORLD SCHOOL

There will be a Principal's Chat and Chew on Friday, April 25, 2014 from 6:00PM-7:00 PM. Invitees are Parents of Incoming 7th Graders. JMIBWS will have Open House Tuesday, May 6, 2014 from 9:00 AM-11:00 AM. Invitees are Parents of Incoming 7th Graders.

WOMEN'S DAY

Women's Day at Westphalia United Methodist Church, Rev. Dr. Timothy West Senior Pastor will be celebrated on Sunday, April 27, 2014 at 10:30 AM. The guest speaker will be Rev. Dr. JoAnn Browning from Ebenezer A.M.E. Church. The address is 9363 D'Arcy Road Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774. Telephone number is 301-735-373.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY TOWN MEETING

Join us for County Council Education Town Hall Meeting April 22, 2014 at 7:00 PM. Topic: Our Pre-K-20 Strategy for College and Career Readiness in Prince George's County.

The location of the meeting is Surrattsville High School 6401 Garden Drive, Clinton, Maryland 20735.

ST. PHILIP'S DAY

You are cordially invited to attend St. Philip's Day, Sunday, May 4, 2014. Their worship service is 9:30 AM with activities presented during the service by their Family Church Members. Please come and enjoy their St. Philip's Day. Chicken Boxes will be sold for \$5.00 following the worship service. Their church is located at 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613-8426.

BADEN COMMUNITY CENTER

Soccer, volleyball, karate, fitness, dance, basketball and tennis are offered at the Center. Baden sponsors horseback riding lessons at the Hideaway Horse Center. Recreational opportunities offered are after school drop in programs, summer camps, holiday and special events. The Center participates in the Xtreme Teens program every Friday and Saturday night from 7:00-10:00 PM. Telephone number is 301-888-1500; TTY 301-203-6030.

ANNUAL GOSPEL PROGRAM

Come out and enjoy an evening of Gospel Music on Sunday April 27, 2014 at Asbury United Methodist Church. The church is located at 4004 Accokeek Road Brandywine, Maryland 20613. The time is 4:00 PM. Donation is \$10.00. This program is sponsored by: Peter A. Gross Sr. Scholarship/Memorial Fund Inc. For tickets contact Michele Chase at 240-882-3369. The groups on the program are Jr. and the Voices of Harmony, New Hope Fellowship Male Chorus, Tolson Family, Mother's Dream and Redeeming Soul.

WATKINS REGIONAL PARK

Join a naturalist for a story, game, crafts and/or hike Friday May 9, 2014 from 10:00 AM-11:00 AM. The topic for the class is "Wonderful Wetlands". Reservations required (SMART LINK# 1396745). The class is for children ages 3-4. Resident fee is \$3.00 and non-resident fee is \$4.00. Call 301-218-6702 or TTY 301-699-2544 for additional information.

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COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Reining in Prom Expenses

If you've got teenagers, you already know how expensive high school can be. Besides food, clothing and school supplies, a whole host of extracurricular activities are competing for a share of your wallet – even as you frantically try to save for college and your own retirement.

One of the biggest expenses you'll encounter is prom. Gone are the days of borrowing dad's suit and crepe paper streamers in the school gym: Today's proms are often more like a Hollywood premiere with limousines, designer gowns and swanky after-parties.

I'm not kidding. According to a recent nationwide survey conducted by Visa Inc., the average U.S. family with a high school student attending the prom expects to spend \$978 this year. Surprisingly, that's down 14 percent from last year's survey average of \$1,139 per family.

A few other interesting statistics the survey uncovered:

- ❑ On average, parents plan to pay for about 56 percent of prom costs, with their kids picking up the remaining 44 percent.
- ❑ Parents in lower income brackets (less than \$50,000 a year) plan to spend an average of \$733 – a considerable share of the family budget. Thankfully, that's down significantly from last year's \$1,245 estimate.
- ❑ Those earning over \$50,000 will spend an average of \$1,151.

Here's a breakdown of how those prom dollars typically get spent:

- ❑ New prom dresses often cost \$100 to \$500 or more.
- ❑ Plan on spending another couple hundred for shoes, accessories, flowers and professionally styled hair, nails and make-up.
- ❑ New tuxedos cost several hundred dollars, not to mention the formal shirt, tie, studs and shoes you'll need. Even renting all this will likely run over \$150.
- ❑ Figure at least \$80 an hour plus tip to rent a limousine for a minimum of four to six hours.
- ❑ Prom tickets typically cost \$50 to \$150 per person, depending on venue, entertainment, meals, etc. And don't forget about commemorative photos.
- ❑ The couple will probably need at least \$50 for a nice pre-prom meal.
- ❑ After-parties can run anywhere from a few bucks at the bowling alley to hundreds of dollars for group hotel suites.

As with weddings and vacations, spending on prom can easily spiral out of control, especially if your teenager isn't used to sticking to a budget. Use this as a learning experience by getting your kid involved making tough decisions, helping to prioritize expenses from vital to non-essential.

To help with the prom budgeting process, Visa launched a free smartphone app last year called Plan'it Prom. You simply enter your budgeted amounts for each item and then track actual spending on your phone or tablet as you shop. The app also includes budgeting tips, a photo gallery and a timeline for tracking pre-prom deadlines. Plan'it Prom is available at the iTunes store, the Google Play store and from www.practicalmoneyskills.com/prom.

Here are a few prom cost-saving ideas:

- ❑ Shop for formal wear at consignment stores or online. As with tuxedos, many outlets rent formal dresses and accessories for one-time use.
- ❑ Have make-up done at a department store's cosmetics department or find a talented friend to help out.
- ❑ Split the cost of a limo with other couples, or drive yourselves.
- ❑ Team up with other parents to host a pre-prom dinner buffet or after-party.
- ❑ Take pre-prom photos yourself and have the kids use their cellphones or digital cameras for candid shots at various events.

Bottom line: You want to ensure your child has a memorable high school experience, but not at the expense of your overall budget.



Governor O'Malley Announces Retirement of Disabilities Secretary Catherine A. Raggio

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

Annapolis, Md. – Governor Martin O'Malley announced that Catherine A. Raggio, Secretary of the Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD) will retire at the end of this month. Appointed by Governor O'Malley in February 2007, Raggio came to the State of Maryland with more than 30 years of experience in the disability community. Prior to her appointment, Raggio was the founder of Independence Now, a center for independent living (CIL) serving Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and served as its executive director for 12 years. From 1980-1989, she led the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council.

"Over the past seven years, Cathy has worked as an outstanding advocate for people with disabilities, addressing a number of critical issues for the disability community including employment and educational opportunities, housing, accessibility and inclusion," said Governor O'Malley. "Her leadership and vision for a Maryland where every individual has the chance to lead a productive, meaningful and independent life, has united the dis-

ability community. We are tremendously grateful for all her efforts to promote the many accomplishments of individuals with disabilities and underscore the importance of full citizenship and inclusion for all of our citizens."

As Secretary of MDOD, Raggio led an initiative to provide more affordable housing for people with disabilities. Under her leadership, the Maryland Affordable Rental Housing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities "Weinberg Apartment" initiative was established with a \$2 million award from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. A successful partnership of state agencies, advocacy organizations and public housing authorities resulted in an \$11 million award from the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to implement the Section 811 Project Rental Assistance Demonstration. The HUD Award will create 150 long-term affordable rental units for individuals with disabilities.

Believing that education and employment were critical to independence, Raggio created the Students United for Campus-Community Engagement for Post Secondary Success (SUCCESS) program at University of Maryland Baltimore County

(UMBC), Maryland's first four year post-secondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities. A partnership between MDOD and UMBC, the SUCCESS program is in its second year with 13 students attending classes at UMBC.

"Working with Governor O'Malley to expand opportunities for Marylanders with disabilities and their families has been a tremendous honor and privilege," said Raggio. "During my tenure at MDOD we have been fortunate to see many changes and accomplishments. Rosewood, Maryland's oldest and largest state operated institution was closed; nearly 2,000 people moved from nursing facilities to homes of their own or other community based settings; and over 700 people entered or reentered the workforce by enrolling in the State's Medicaid Buy-In, thus obtaining essential health insurance coverage." Raggio's future plans include traveling, volunteering and some consulting as she embarks on this new chapter in her life.

Governor O'Malley also announced that MDOD Deputy Secretary George P. Failla, Jr., with 19 years experience in State government, would assume the post as Acting Secretary. Failla joined MDOD in

2008. As Deputy Secretary, he directed the development, implementation and communication of MDOD's policy initiatives across state government through the State Disabilities Plan; supervised the Maryland Technology Assistance Program (MD TAP) and the Access Maryland Capital Program; and coordinated the Department's legislative agenda before the Maryland General Assembly.

Prior to his appointment at MDOD, Failla served 13 years with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services in various capacities. A graduate of the University of Maryland School of Law, Failla provided legal assistance to the Division of Special Education/Early Intervention Services and acted as a liaison between parents and advocates for students with disabilities, local school systems and state agencies regarding the delivery of special education services and school based related services through Medicaid. In 1987, Failla was selected Outstanding Youth with a Disability by the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Failla lives in Carroll County with his wife and young son.

Verdict from A1

comprehensive review of the project of any state-level agency.

On Wednesday, CCAN is "outlining our closing case to the Maryland Public Service Commission," said Kelly Trout, the group's communications director.

In addition, 50 Maryland businesses signed a letter to the PSC Tuesday stating their opposition to the plan. Signees included Blue Moon Rising, an eco-tourism village near Deep Creek Lake, Financial West Group in Westminster and the Chesapeake Sustainable Business Council.

The Dominion Resources LNG facility, which currently only imports natural gas, has been at the center of a months-long controversy over its plan to export LNG, something a handful of facilities across the country is moving toward amidst protest and praise from different corners.

Blizzard from A1

said that backpack was full of antennae gathering information about the defenders' networks.

The scheme worked: No student noticed the intrusion.

The collegiate "White Teams", all clustered around tables in a separate room from the red team, felt the pressure.

"It's intense...you really have to multitask," said Eileen Hindman, a senior at Radford University in Virginia.

The Red Team got deep into student networks quickly, further flustering the students.

"It's a little hectic ... I thought it would be smoother," said Felix Guerrero, a junior at Towson University.

Some students' efforts to maintain security bordered on paranoia. Keegan Moore, a sophomore from Laurel's Capitol College interrogated an innocent volunteer to ensure he wasn't a Red Team spy, only relenting when Frick verified his identity.

After meeting with community groups in February, Cardin and Mikulski wrote to FERC requesting that the commission hold five public meetings in regions across the state, in addition to one it had already agreed to in Calvert County.

Via letters released Monday, FERC acting chairman Cheryl LaFleur told the senators that the one extra meeting for public comment on the commission's assessment is appropriate since it will take place in the county where Cove Point is located.

The environmental assessment FERC is crafting has been questioned by many citizens who have asked for a more rigorous report. Dominion has said the commission's oversight is thorough.

Any interested stakeholder can submit a written comment to the commission, LaFleur said. FERC gives equal consideration to writ-

ten comments and comments at a public meeting, she said.

Once the assessment is released, it will be open for comment on the Federal Register and the single Calvert County hearing will be held.

"I can assure you that the Commission's decision on whether to authorize the project will be based on a careful review of the issues and will be rooted in the law, facts, and science," LaFleur wrote to the senators.

FERC has said it will release its environmental assessment of the project May 15.

After Russia took control of Crimea late last month, politicians like Sen. Mary Landrieu, D-La., began pushing for the acceleration of U.S. natural gas exports, hoping to put pressure on Russia, which supplies much of Europe's gas. Louisiana will be home to the first LNG exporter, Sabine Pass LNG Terminal,

which is slated to begin exporting in 2015.

Last week, hearings were held on the matter in the House and the Senate. A House bill was introduced to expedite U.S. LNG exports by granting all pending applications.

Some say simply the decisive entry of the U.S. into the global market could help affect the market and send a message to Russia, even if the U.S. can't begin exports immediately.

However, it is a lengthy path to exporting. In addition to approval from the Energy Department, companies like Dominion must secure local, state and federal permits, as well as financing.

Environmentalists contend that LNG exporting will increase net global greenhouse gas emissions and provide incentive for hydraulic fracturing, the practice of fracturing shale rocks to release gas.

But members of the Red Team welcome the chance to switch sides after playing defense for most of their professional careers.

"I'm having a blast," said Sean Pierce, a red team member and technical intelligence analyst for Virginia-based iSight Partners. "It's fun and easy to attack. There's no pressure."

The complexity of the scenario leaves each college with a plethora of tasks to juggle. Networks have to be maintained and secured, but much like the real world, critical functions can't just be shut down to deal with threats.

On top of that, there are phony elected and corporate officials to please. For example, Costis Toregas, a cybersecurity professor at The George Washington University, plays the role of a county executive who will grill team captains, demanding better performance in areas that teams may have neglected.

"Sometimes cybersecurity is contained within the technology

silos," Toregas explained. The simulation of added demands from government and business creates a more realistic environment and forces teams to learn "business acumen" that computer science classes may gloss over, he added.

The winning White Team will compete in a national tournament in San Antonio next month, but cybersecurity firms are eyeing potential hires from day one. During the competition weekend, a career fair gives students a chance to talk to employers one-on-one.

"We have a really unique perspective on the growing need for cyber talent," said Jennifer Havermann, engineering manager for Raytheon, a security corporation and sponsor of the event. She added that competitions like this give students the opportunity to practice valuable skills that classrooms can't teach.

Dustin Shirley, a member of Anne Arundel Community College's team, agreed.

"This is the best learning tool for students," Shirley said. The competition offers a chance to apply skills, whereas "in the classroom, you get Power-Pointed to death."

And despite the stress of the challenge, the atmosphere in the pit and the Red Team's base is casual. The Red Team is blasting loud electronic music. Cans of energy drinks and snack food wrappers are scattered across White Team tables. Unallocated Space, a Severn-based technology education center, brought a modified Ms. Pac-Man machine that lets non-competitors play a number of classic arcade games.

For the student teams, camaraderie and communication are critical. Teams like Anne Arundel's have spent months refining their techniques, and members said that team chemistry has formed naturally.

"We can sense stress ... we help each other out," Shirley said, grinning.

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COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin Votes to Extend Tax Provisions to Spur Investment, Job Creation and Help For Workers and Small Businesses

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.) praised the bipartisan work of the Senate Finance Committee as he joined with his colleagues to pass a package of tax extensions designed to provide certainty and better results for American taxpayers, families and businesses. The Expiring Provisions Improvement Reform and Efficiency (EXPIRE) Act encourages economic growth and development, innovation, and job creation. It includes a number of specific provisions authored by Senator Cardin to promote energy efficiency in buildings, to help the long-term unemployed, and to encourage domestic economic investment and job creation. Senator Cardin was pleased that the tax extenders package also renews incentives for use of public transit and conservation easements, renews the New Markets Tax Credit, and extends the Low Income House Credit minimum rate for both existing property and new construction, all of which are important for Baltimore and communities throughout Maryland.

"Our tax code directly or indirectly affects every American and resident of the U.S. We need to enact comprehensive tax reform but in the meantime, we can make the current system work better to encourage economic growth and development, spur innovation, and create jobs. We can use the tax code to provide much needed support for our children, families, and workers, and provide stability and predictability for our businesses," said Senator Cardin.

179D — "Energy efficiency improvements are a smart, cost-effective way to reduce pollution, increase the competitiveness of our manufacturers, and put Americans back to work. It's simply good business and good policy. I am pleased that the EXPIRE Act extends the 179D deduction for energy efficient buildings, and includes several improvements that now allow tribal governments and non-profits to access this important incentive. I look forward to working with the Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee to ensure that further improvements to 179D—especially extending the incentive to retrofits—become law."

Section 181 — "Section 181 is about making

the US competitive in the global market and keeping skilled jobs at home by extending the rules for film and television expensing, and extending those benefits to theatrical productions. This isn't a tax give-away to Hollywood or Broadway; it's about ensuring that movies, television programs and shows are filmed or produced in Maryland, and around the country, rather than in Vancouver or Sydney. Australia, Canada, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, and the UK all have been aggressively marketing tax incentives for production activities.

"As just one example, in Maryland, this provision helps support 1,200 employees who work in the offices of Bethesda-based Discovery Communications. Since Section 181 became effective, Discovery's investment in the U.S. on qualified television productions has increased from approximately \$33 million in 2004 to more than \$1 billion in 2013. Section 181 also supports actors, directors, producers and other production personnel who have been involved in television shows like The Wire, House of Cards, and VEEP, all of which are filmed in Maryland," Senator Cardin added.

Portman-Cardin WOTC amendment

"According to the 2014 Economic Report of the President, released in March, the current elevation of the unemployment rate is entirely due to long-term unemployment. In December 2013, the unemployment rate for workers unemployed 26 weeks or less fell to lower than its average in the 2001-07 period, while the unemployment rate for workers unemployed 27 weeks or more remained higher than at any time prior to the Great Recession.

"I am very proud to have joined my colleague Senator Portman on an amendment to counter the stigma that can often attach to those individuals. WOTC has been extremely effective in encouraging employers to take chance on hiring individuals who are difficult to hire and in so doing, dramatically reduced the burden of public assistance with respect to the unemployed. Studies on the Work Opportunity Tax Credit have shown that for every WOTC hire, the federal government saves approximately \$17,000 by encouraging the hiring of hard-to-employ individuals."

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



2014 State of Black America® Spotlights the Nation's Great Divide — and Points to Even Greater Solutions

"A house divided against itself cannot stand."
— Abraham Lincoln

Our Constitution, Declaration of Independence and Emancipation Proclamation all speak of equality and unity as bedrock principles of American Democracy. But the truth is we have always been battling a Great Divide of race and class that has kept the American Dream out of reach for millions and that now threatens the very future of our nation. That fact is the central finding of the 38th edition of the State of Black America® — One Nation Underemployed: Jobs Rebuild America. This year's report underscores the urgency of the jobs crisis — both unemployment and underemployment — and offers ideas from the National Urban League and leading voices across the corporate, academic, political, civil rights and arts arenas about how African American and other communities of color can forge a path to economic stability and upward mobility.

Our 2014 Equality Index™, one of the most critical and respected tools for tracking racial equality in America, finds that the state of Black America stands at 71.2 percent of the state of white America in the areas of economics, social justice, civic engagement, health, and education. With an equality index of 75.8 percent, a similar divide exists between Latinos and whites, with Latinos experiencing only three-quarters of the full benefits America has to offer.

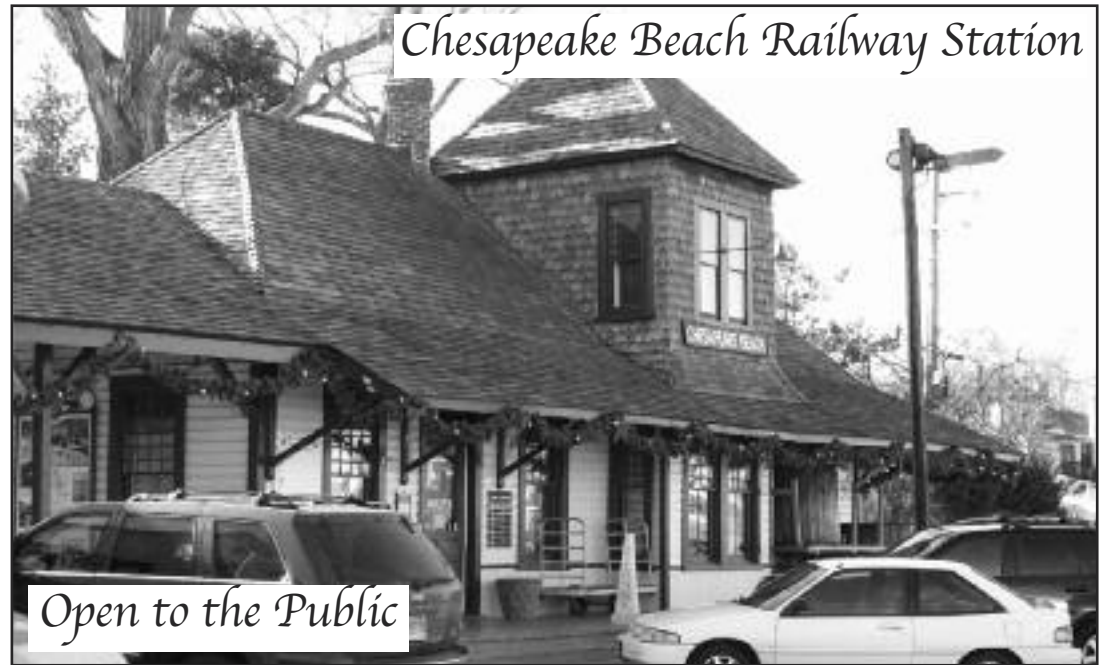
For the first time, the Equality Index also includes rankings of U.S. cities in a new metropoli-

tan section, ranking cities from most-to-least equal via the Black-White Index (77 cities) and Hispanic-White Index (83 cities) — providing a revealing look at the local dynamics beneath the national trends. While each state and city has its own story to tell, the consistent refrain is that there is an urgent and growing disparity between the few who are reaping the rewards of economic recovery and the majority who are still reeling from the aftershocks of the Great Recession.

This year's report again sheds light on the racial dimensions of economic inequality in America. Our Economics index, which compares such factors as income, poverty, employment and wealth, finds that the economic status of African Americans is only 55.5% of that of whites, meaning that Blacks are still missing almost half of the economic pie. Hispanics are at 60.6%. The growing racial and ethnic divides in employment, homeownership and mortgage and home improvement loan denials drove losses in the economics index for both groups.

Our Economics Index also shows that unemployment inequality between Blacks and whites has widened, with the white unemployment rate dropping below 7 percent and the Black unemployment rate hovering above 13 percent for much of the past year. Further, with a Black-white income equality of only 60% and with Black house-

See GREAT DIVIDE Page A5



Chesapeake Beach Railway Station

Open to the Public

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS PHOTO BY: PUBDOG

CHESAPEAKE BEACH RAILWAY STATION

The Museum offers a wide variety of objects and artifacts, both original and best representations of the era. The Museum brings the railway and amusement park to life with pictorial displays, postcards, oral histories and memorabilia. Our exhibits range from railroading lanterns to a Dentzel carousel kangaroo from the park as well as authentic period bathing suits. Visitors may also enjoy our diorama showing the train depot and boardwalk as it appeared in the early 1900's. In addition, the Museum also offers a DVD presentation of the history of the Chesapeake Beach Railway which includes oral histories of the amusement park that was part of the resort area. The Chesapeake Beach Railway Museum is home to the last known railcar, The Dolores, which is located behind the Museum. Admission is free, Mid-March - March 31, weekends only — 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.; April 1 - October 31, weekday and weekend hours — 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.; November 1 - 30, weekends only — 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information call 410-257-3892.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



Improving the Odds for America's Children

"... We see repeated efforts in Congress in recent years to take resources away from poor and middle-class children and families, like food stamps and tax credits and education funding and access to affordable health care, and give even more to the wealthy and powerful. Bipartisanship has taken a severe beating in recent years, as has the willingness of Congress to enact or support policies driven by evidence-based research that help children and families and our country as a whole."

— Congressman George Miller, Foreword, Improving the Odds for America's Children

More than 40 years ago the earliest planning for what would become the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) took place at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. CDF began in 1973 in a Harvard University owned clapboard house. Our beginning was bolstered by a two-volume publication of the Harvard Educational Review in 1973 and 1974 among whose top editors were CDF staff, many of them graduates of or students at Harvard's education and law schools. Another young staff attorney, Hillary Rodham, in her first job after law school contributed an article on the "Rights of Children."

At the same time, CDF staff knocked on doors to look for children out of school in Massachusetts and all across America. A local group, Massachusetts Advocacy, had issued a report on Children Out of School in Boston and we wondered whether this was a statewide or national problem. After knocking on many thousands of doors in census tracts across our country, CDF documented it was a national problem with at least 2 million children out of school including 750,000 the census said were between 7-13 years old but did not tell us who they were. We found many were children with disabilities. Other children were pushed out by discipline policies, language, and the inability to afford school fees. Children Out of School in America became our first report in 1974. We followed it up by organizing with parents at the local level and collaborating with na-

tional organizations concerned with children with mental, physical, and emotional disabilities and many others to help push Congress to enact 94-142 — now the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act — which for the first time gave children with disabilities the right to a free, appropriate public education. CDF's first report led to publication of School Suspensions: Are They Helping Children describing many of the practices we are still combating today with school discipline policies that suspend children for a wide range of nonviolent offenses include truancy and subjective offenses like disruptive behavior.

After 40 years we are now blessed with a new indispensable evidence-based book from Harvard Education Press—Improving the Odds for America's Children: Future Directions in Policy and Practice. Dr. Kathleen McCartney, President of Smith College and former Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, was the driving force behind this volume which she coedited with Hirokazu Yoshikawa and Laurie B. Forcier. It features articles from a wide range of scholars, child and family policy experts, and practitioners. Their combined expertise documents the benefits to be gained by

closing the gap between what we know and what we do for children—and we know a lot more than we did 40 years ago. Hillary Rodham Clinton, now informed and seasoned by many years of state, national, and international experience, says of the book: "This important collection of ideas about how to improve the odds for America's children should be required reading for policy makers across the country."

Each chapter suggests a prominent pathway for moving forward to level the playing field and improve the odds for children. In their recommendations for future directions in child and family policy and practice, the contributing authors to Improving the Odds for America's Children affirm a foundational belief that CDF has acted on for decades: children don't come in pieces and require a continuum of comprehensive and quality support throughout their lives. The volume starts with prenatal and infant health and development, emphasizing parent and caregiver support in a child's earliest years, moves through the school years and adolescence, and addresses the special needs of the most vulnerable youth involved

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Seeing Change As a Positive Experience

It's inevitable. Change happens. Often it's something minor, but it can also be a major change that leaves you feeling frightened, stressed and unsure of what's coming next.

But change doesn't have to be upsetting or a negative situation. It's your choice whether you want to see a transition as an opportunity for growth and improvement, or whether you want to desperately hang on to the status quo and stay in your comfort zone.

There are things you can do to emphasize the good in change:

- **Decide on a positive attitude** - When you look at a transition as an opportunity to grow and add to your world, you can approach change as something to enjoy and look forward to. Make this your mantra: "Happiness is a decision."
- **Use your support network** - If a change has you feeling sad, confused or overwhelmed, look for support from others. It may be family or friends who are willing to listen in a non-judgmental way. Or you may be more comfortable speaking with a member of the clergy or a therapist. It may surprise you to receive help and support from unexpected places.
- **List the stable things in your life** - When things are changing it's easy to feel totally off balance, but the reality in most cases is that there are many things in your life, from friends and family who love you to familiar daily routines that will still be there for you. Simply listing them can remind you of the stability still in your life.
- **Give yourself time** - Life changes can happen in an instant, but orienting yourself to what has ended and what is coming can take time. Losing a job... experiencing the death of someone close... being widowed or divorced... they're all changes in which you need to allow yourself time to adjust to your new life situation.
- **Explore the opportunities in the transition** - It's often said that for every door that closes, another door opens. When a change happens, take the time to explore what new chances and options it may be bringing. Think in different directions and about the new things that might be possible.

For most of us, change is never easy but it often provides opportunities that might otherwise have been missed. Approach change as a positive experience and you just may find it is.

Business Spotlight

Overcoming Workplace Bullying

(NAPSI)—We've all heard about the increase in bullying among children, but workplace bullying among adults is also a growing problem. According to recent reports, 35 to 50 percent of U.S. employees say they were bullied in the course of their career.

The Problem

At companies across America, employers and workers are discovering a problem that's bad for morale, bad for their own health and happiness, and bad for the bottom line: workplace bullying.

Some Solutions

What can you do if you're bullied at work? Dr. Colleen Logan, Walden University's program director for the M.S. in Career Counseling program, and an expert in bullying issues, offers some advice:

- **Know the signs.** Workplace bullying can include verbal abuse, threats, gossip, the silent treatment, offensive conduct, humiliation, intimidation, and work interference or sabotage.
- **Be honest with yourself.** It's easy to discount or ignore bullying, thinking you might be reading the situation wrongly, but if you think you're being bullied, you likely are.
- **Set boundaries.** Tell yourself you do not have to stand for this behavior and will not be victimized. Remain in charge of your values, decisions, behavior and conduct.
- **Get ready to confront the bully.** Mentally prepare to send a clear and consistent message that the bullying needs to stop.
- **Make a formal complaint.** Talk to your boss. Provide specific details about the bullying and how it affects you and your work. If your boss is the bully, talk to a human resources representative.
- **Seek alternative employment.** If your workplace doesn't change, take steps to find a nonhostile work environment where colleagues listen to one another's viewpoint with respect, agree to disagree and move forward.

"Bullying in the workplace is fundamentally wrong. It can cause physical, mental and emotional harm as well as long-term career problems," says Dr. Logan. "Although no one wants to admit to being the bully or to being bullied, everyone has the right to work in a healthy, nonhostile work environment."

Learn More

For more information, tips and other resources for victims of bullying and those who witness bullying in the workplace, visit www.WaldenU.edu/bullyingprevention.

Maryland Small Businesses Begin to Adopt Bitcoin

By ETHAN BARTON
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE — Bitcoin, a virtual peer-to-peer currency created in 2009, is now being accepted by a handful of Maryland small businesses — but not without skepticism.

The new age currency — which is traded and held within what are known as "digital wallets" — offers zero transaction fees, and is an alternative to the standard charges imposed by credit card companies upon merchants.

"The government can't control it, can't play with your accounts as they can with traditional money... and the government can't inflate it," said Mark Lovett, of Mark Lovett Web Design in Gaithersburg.

"I'm making it sound like something for illegal business... but there's no middle man, no 3 percent [transaction fee]... that's the only reason I'm a huge fan," he continued.

On the Eastern Shore, Salisbury-based photographer Tony Weeg said he began accepting bitcoin "just to do it."

Weeg, a web developer by trade who says he has been following the Internet for almost 20 years, said that after a friend who worked as a tattoo artist began to accept the digital currency, he thought — "Why not be the first photographer to accept bitcoin?"

"I love the fact that it's not centrally controlled... the government can't take it down," Weeg said.

However, Weeg said, "That aspect could be its downfall."

"It's gonna be hard for brick and mortar companies to accept it when its volatile. People in my shoes — where you're paid for your services — can afford to take those risks... maybe," he said.

Craig Meister, of Tactical College Consulting, echoed Weeg's concern for the currency's volatile nature.

Meister has been accepting bitcoin as payment for his company's tutoring services for about four months.

He currently quotes monthly invoices in bitcoin, though he is yet to receive a payment in the virtual currency.

"I talked to people who could possibly pay me with these... [there's] too much fluctuation," he said.

"The people who know about bitcoin most are the ones who see it as an investment rather than a currency," Meister said.

"I can't argue — because it's not acting like a currency," he continued, comparing buying bitcoin to buying into gold or silver.

According to Meister, in the course of time that his business has been accepting bitcoin, he has seen the price of a single bitcoin fluctuate from "anywhere from \$700, to the thousands, down to the \$400, and back up again."

"Who wants to pay with that?," he continued. "It may make sense to hold on to it."

Not all businesses are still waiting for their first bitcoin transaction, however.

John Reusing, owner of the bar Bad Decisions in Baltimore's



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY PATRICK FARRELL

Using a QR code, customers can scan the virtual wallet for Bad Decisions using their smartphone, and then transfer bitcoins to the establishment from within an app.

Fells Point neighborhood, said that he makes around one transaction per week using bitcoin.

Reusing attributes this to what he calls a crowd of 'nerdy' clientele, noting that the bar regularly receives phone calls from soon-to-be patrons who are eager to trade bitcoin for beer.

"For the average business owner, it's so far off the radar they probably haven't heard about it," he said.

Reusing believes that if a major brand or retailer began to accept bitcoin, the currency might have a chance to catch on.

He said: "If Starbucks started taking it in their stores, the average business owner would have to say: what's stopping me?"

Looking forward, the future of bitcoin as both a currency and investment product is unclear.

In February, Tokyo-based bitcoin exchange Mt. Gox al-

legedly lost hundreds of thousands of bitcoins, leading the company to file for bankruptcy.

Further complicating the matter, the IRS recently announced that it will now treat bitcoin as a form of property, rather than a foreign currency.

The move is a threat to bitcoin's main selling point — non-government regulated, tax-free currency.

"People are going to be more skeptical, and [the Mt. Gox scandal] might be the nail in the coffin," Weeg said.

Weeg remains hopeful, however, suggesting bitcoin could be to cryptocurrency what MySpace was to Facebook — "a nexus for the next thing that is the natural evolution of bitcoin."

"For now I've put it on the backburner... but I think it's gonna be the way to go of the future," Lovett added.

Salary from A1

Successful application to receive the \$250 million Race To The Top grant. The standards led to a wave of additional work for teachers, often requiring them to construct new curriculums within a small timeframe and with limited resources, among other challenges.

While the federal dollars were not specifically earmarked to go into teacher's pockets, "recruiting, developing, retaining and rewarding effective teachers and principals" was one aim of the Race To The Top program, according to a report released by the U.S. Department of Education in March.

"Teachers are spending eight hours on Saturday and eight hours on Sunday just to get caught up," Benfer said. "They're not paid for that."

Fort Meade Middle School Spanish teacher Colleen Benda added: "We just work so hard. I don't think we even realize how much we do."

Her students also recognized that Benda, an officer in the teacher's union, is beleaguered. "I do how much work?" Benda, with 19 years of teaching experience, called out to her class. "Too much!" they replied in unison.

Great Divide from A4

holds having just \$6 in wealth for every \$100 in wealth of white households — or a median wealth of \$6,314 vs. \$110,500, respectively, what we see emerging from the rubble of the Great Recession is a state of Black America in severe economic crisis.

But the 2014 State of Black America report also points to solutions. The National Urban League continues to move forward with our Jobs Rebuild America initiative — a \$100 million, five-year effort bringing together resources from the federal government, business and non-profits to reduce unem-

ployment, create jobs and expand economic opportunity in 50 communities throughout the nation. We also continue to press Congress to pass the Urban Jobs Act, the Project Ready STEM Act, a transportation infrastructure bill and the Harkin-Miller Fair Minimum Wage Act, which would raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 for all workers with an index to inflation thereafter.

This year's publication also includes thought-provoking, solutions-focused essays from jazz great Wynton Marsalis, Xerox Chairman and CEO Ursula Burns, author and scholar Dr. Thomas Shapiro, HHS Sec-

retary Kathleen Sebelius, actor and philanthropist Hill Harper and many others. The Metropolitan Index section also features commentaries from the mayors of four of the featured cities — Baltimore, Denver, Jacksonville, and Memphis — focused on scalable initiatives they are implementing to drive job creation and help narrow the divide between the haves and have-nots.

Half a century after President Johnson declared the War on Poverty, the 2014 edition of the State of Black America calls us to take immediate steps to address the income and wealth divides that threaten our na-

tion's economic recovery and our ability to compete in the global marketplace. We must act now. As America was reminded during another great crisis, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

state -- are scattered in their ranking based on salary. Additionally, Calvert County, which ranked the highest for 2013 average teacher salary, had the fourth highest percentage of teachers with only a bachelor's degree.

There is a similar lack of correlation with master's degree holders, the most common degree held by teachers statewide. Only one percent of teachers held a doctorate, according to data from Maryland's Department of Education.

Regardless of experience, education level or pay freezes and decreases, Benfer said he believes educators statewide still hold one commitment in common.

"Teachers keep plugging along because they want to do what's best for kids," Benfer, who has taught in Anne Arundel County for 21 years, said.

Salary averages supplied by the Maryland State Department of Education were weighted to factor in part-time teachers. Inflation adjustments were found using information from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data about ranking, teacher experience and degree attainment excluded educators for technical or trade classes, as well as the SEED school, Maryland's public boarding school.

Somerset, St. Mary's and Worcester -- the three counties with the highest percentage of teachers holding only a bachelor's degree, the minimum requirement for certification in the

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OUT ON THE TOWN

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

Oculus
Grade: B?

Rated R, moderate violence, some gruesome images, general creepiness, some profanity
1 hr., 45 min

The first thing you should know about *Oculus*, a horror film about a haunted mirror, is that it is much better than a film about a haunted mirror has any right to be. Directed, co-written, and edited by Mike Flanagan, it's an expansion on a well-received 30-minute short he made several years ago, and the extra practice he's had at getting it right is evident in the way he creates atmosphere and builds suspense.

It also helps that the characters are smart, by which I mean they do what WE would do if WE were faced with a haunted mirror. At several points in the story you'll nod and smile and think, "Yes! Good idea," and then be scared pantsless when it doesn't work after all.

The evil mirror in question is an ostentatious antique from the 1700s that fell into the hands of the Russell family 11 years ago. At the moment, 21-year-old Tim Russell (Brenton Thwaites) has just been released from a mental facility where he's lived since the events that happened when he was 10. His older sister, Kaylie (Karen Gillan), has been waiting for him to get out so he could help her fulfill the promise they made as children: to "kill it," "it" being the mirror and "kill" being undefined. (No, they can't just smash it. The film addresses that question satisfactorily.) What happened all those years ago is revealed soon enough in basic terms (suffice it to say it was tragic) and shown to us in detail as Flanagan smoothly jumps back and forth between the two timelines.

In the past, young Kaylie (Annalise Basso) and Tim (Garrett Ryan) see their father (Rory Cochrane) and mother (Katee Sackhoff) gradually undone by what the kids realize are sinister forces associated with the mirror



ROTTENTOMATOES

Ten years ago, tragedy struck the Russell family, leaving the lives of teenage siblings Tim and Kaylie forever changed when Tim was convicted of the brutal murder of their parents. Now in his 20s, Tim is newly released from protective custody and only wants to move on with his life; but Kaylie, still haunted by that fateful night, is convinced her parents' deaths were caused by something else altogether: a malevolent supernatural force unleashed through the Lasser Glass, an antique mirror in their childhood home. Determined to prove Tim's innocence, Kaylie tracks down the mirror, only to learn similar deaths have befallen previous owners over the past century. With the mysterious entity now back in their hands, Tim and Kaylie soon find their hold on reality shattered by terrifying hallucinations, and realize, too late, that their childhood nightmare is beginning again... (c) Relativity

that hangs in Dad's home office. Now, the mirror doesn't jump down off the wall and go around killing people, obviously. Don't be silly. What it does is mess with your mind. It'll make you want to do something you wouldn't normally do, or make think you're doing one thing when you're actually doing something else. For example, maybe you think you're pulling a Band-Aid off your finger, but you're really yanking out the fingernail. Or maybe you think you're giving the kids a bath, but you're actually -- well, you get the idea.

In the present, Kaylie is determined to prove that the terrible things that happened in their home 11 years ago were caused by the mirror, and that the people who did the actual deeds were not responsible for their actions. (She has a long list of gruesome

fates met by the mirror's previous owners over the years.) With video cameras running and safeguards in place to stave off the mirror's trickery, she and Tim begin the experiment.

Tim is reluctant, though. He's spent the last decade being "cured" of the delusion that a haunted mirror is to blame for what happened to their family, and he tries to convince Kaylie that their childish imaginations simply got the best of them. As for us, while there is mystery in the film, it's not centered on the question of whether the mirror is genuinely haunted. There's little room for doubt on that subject. The question is how -- and whether -- Kaylie can capture evidence of it and then destroy the thing before it kills again.

Telling a story about a mirror that plays mind games means Flanagan gets to play mind

games too. We see Tim and Kaylie's actual memories, plus their mirror-induced hallucinations of memories, plus their hallucinations of what's happening now, tonight. Flanagan revels in keeping us as off-balance as the characters are, not letting us figure out what's real any sooner than Tim and Kaylie do.

Covering both timelines at once allows for parallel climaxes set in the same house in different years. Though the tension of the flashback story is diminished somewhat by our already knowing (essentially) how it ends, Flanagan cuts between them expertly, letting the past and present bleed together. Gillan, Sackhoff, and Cochrane give sharp performances (Thwaites is a bit of a lightweight) as the darkness unfolds in both timelines. It's almost like getting two effective, creepy stories in one.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

The Northwestern University Football Union and the NCAA's Death Spiral

"Pigs get fat, hogs get slaughtered," — Mark Cuban

The experts said that the efforts of the Northwestern University football team to form a union would crash and burn. The experts scoffed that these naïve jocks would lose their case before the National Labor Relations Board. The experts all believed that this is what they call "settled law." After all, since the 1950s, when the widow of a football player who died on the field of play failed in her efforts to sue the NCAA for worker's compensation, it was clear to the courts that these were not workers but "student-athletes." The experts were proven wrong on Wednesday and the established order in the sports world has been shaken to its foundations.

The NLRB has ruled that the Northwestern Wildcats are in fact workers. They ruled that since players do not get class credit for playing football and that they are given value for their time playing football, namely an annual scholarship that is worth over \$60,000, then yes, they can organize themselves into a union.

This decision marks the first real crack in the NCAA cartel in any of our lifetimes. It is also far from over. Northwestern University is leading the appeals process for now. They want the NLRB decision squelched for two reasons, both based in fear. They are afraid that if the football players can unionize, then the graduate teachers, the custodial staff, the work-study students and the cafeteria workers will all say, "If they can be a recognized union, then why not us?" That simply cannot happen in today's neoliberal university system. Northwestern may fear those below them, but they fear those above them even more. That would be the Big 10 conference and the NCAA. If their football players are allowed to collectively bargain, the NCAA could shut them out, turning off the spigots from which the almighty revenue streams of cable television money seem to endlessly flow. Yet whatever response Northwestern is conjuring, it pales in comparison to the scorched earth about to be fired from the NCAA's legal guns. For Northwestern, this jeopardizes the power arrangements on their campus, but for the NCAA, this decision threatens their very existence.

The NCAA is now in a fight for its life. Their power emanates solely from its position as a cartel. That means they have the controlling authority to hold every school to the same byzantine ground rules or suffer the consequences. This controlling authority is currently being crippled under the weight of its own greed. This controlling authority has created an unsustainable system of free-market, freewheelin' capitalism for coaches and indentured servitude for players. This controlling authority allows the NCAA to turn its so-called student-athlete players into walking billboards for the pleasure of their corporate sponsors. This controlling authority has taken maximum advantage of the fact that the two revenue producing sports, football and basketball, tend to be populated by impoverished people of color. They have created a system of \$11 billion television contracts where coaches make 100 times what they made thirty years ago. They have kept their foot on the gas, making and remaking conferences, destroying traditional rivalries and all with a short-term eye on the bottom line. Through it all they never reassessed the position of the players themselves and now they are paying the price. Pigs get fat, hogs get slaughtered.

The NCAA is trying to avoid slaughter. They will throw millions of dollars in legal fees at this football team from Northwestern and appeal the NLRB decision to the Supreme Court. Yet, let's take a moment to actually ponder what it would mean if other football and basketball teams followed Northwestern's example and "consciously uncoupled" from the NCAA's absolute authority.

Imagine a college sports system where high school players could choose schools on an entirely new set of criteria. Maybe one school guarantees scholarships for all four years and that can be a point of attraction. Perhaps another highlights the fact that their coaches have their salaries capped, which allows for more money to go in a trust or stipend for players. What if some schools offer players a cut of the shoe money? What if the best players, as was suggested to me on twitter, now avoid the Southeastern Conference because of their state's right to work legislation that make it more difficult to build a strong union? Would this lead a state like Alabama, where Crimson Tide and Auburn Tiger football is king, to repeal its antiunion laws in an effort to keep the best talent available?

If nothing else, the end of the NCAA would open a gusher of money, and not only because that multimillion dollar legal war chest could be used for something more productive than enriching attorneys. Imagine the end of compliance offices, where schools spend hundreds of thousands of dollars annually to make sure they are "NCAA compliant." Imagine head coaches who make less, boosters who pay more, and athletic departments emancipated from the cartel. The biggest canard of NCAA defenders is that if players get paid then all sports, particularly women's sports, would be crippled. This is hogwash. These sports are already being crippled with over 90 percent of athletic departments in the red. We can do better. It is time for a new model. Thanks to the football players at Northwestern, we can now imagine there's no NCAA. It's easy if you try.



Lt. Governor Brown Announces New Hospital-Based Domestic Violence Program at MedStar

Administration Doubles Number of Hospital Programs in Maryland Since 2010

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Lt. Governor

LEONARDTOWN, Md. — Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown was joined by health care representatives, domestic violence advocates, community members, and state and local officials to announce the launch of a new Hospital-Based Domestic Violence Program at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital (MSMH) in St. Mary's County. MSMH is receiving nearly \$40,000 in State funds through the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention to support the new program.

The MSMH program is Maryland's ninth hospital-based domestic violence program designed to meet the goals of the Governor's 2010 Executive Order, "The Maryland Domestic Violence Health Care Screening and Response Initiative." In four years, the Administration has doubled the number of hospital-based domestic violence programs in the state, an effort led by Lt. Governor Brown. As outlined by the

Executive Order, the programs aim to identify victims at an early stage in the cycle of domestic violence and extend comprehensive services to prevent future physical and emotional injury. Similar programs are currently in place in the Baltimore region at Greater Baltimore Medical Center, Anne Arundel Medical Center, Mercy Medical Center, Sinai Hospital and Northwest Hospital, as well as Prince George's Hospital Center and Meritus Medical Center in Hagerstown. In October, the Lt. Governor announced the eighth program at Howard County General Hospital in Columbia.

"Over the past seven years, we've driven Maryland's domestic violence rates to new lows by going after abusers and expanding services to victims, but we still have work to do," said Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown. "By establishing our state's ninth hospital based domestic violence program here at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital, we're taking another step forward to strengthen

communities and build a brighter future for all of our families."

Established in 1912, MSMH is a 95-bed, full-service hospital, delivering state-of-the-art emergency, acute inpatient and outpatient care. The new MSMH Domestic Violence program provides enhanced training for nurses and emergency department personnel, as well as improved screening, referral, and documentation of domestic violence victims. The grant from the State, which began in October 2013, was partially used to hire a part-time Domestic Violence Program Coordinator, responsible for overseeing the training and referral process. The remainder of the funding is being used to purchase a Varic light source camera that allows for increased evaluation and documentation of strangulation victims, aiding in evidence collection. In the first quarter since the start of the grant, the Hospital has begun staff training and has seen five victims, including one strangulation case.

"We are pleased to have this opportunity. This initiative further enhances our hospital and our county's best-practices collaborative services and support for victims of domestic violence. We are excited to be able to provide this connection at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital," said Hospital President Christine Wray. In response to the 2010 Executive Order, the Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention and the Maryland Community Health Resources Commission made state funds available for Hospital-Based Domestic Violence Programs. Private sector partners have also committed private/non-profit funds to support select programs. MSMH has also been awarded a \$75,000 grant from the Weinberg Foundation to support their new program.

"GOCCP recognizes that hospitals play a key role in combating domestic violence in Maryland. For victims, hospitals provide a safe, neutral location

Calendar of Events

April 23 — April 30, 2014

LIVE at Montpelier!- Big Daddy Stallings, Blues Vocalist
 Date and Time: Friday, April 25, 2014 8 pm
 Description: Join us for the latest LIVE at Montpelier session with blues musician, "Big Daddy" Stallings! Since 2004, he has been delivering his "Good Time Bluez with a Twist" to audiences from the mid-Atlantic to Melbourne, Australia. Raised in North Carolina with ten siblings, he lived the blues every day-- turning to music as an escape. He has shared the stage with many great artists, including Michael Burks, Pinetop Perkins, Bernard Allison and Magic Slim, to name a few.
 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; 301-490-2329

Dallas Black Dance Theatre: The Nina Simone Project
 Date and Time: Friday & Saturday, April 25-26, 2014 8:00 pm; Sunday, April 27, 2014 4:00 pm
 Description: The Dallas Black Dance Theatre presents the life, music, and story of acclaimed pianist, singer, performer and civil rights activist, Nina Simone! Narrated and set to myriad of musical genres that shaped Simone's life and career, this extraordinary production is choreographed by renowned dance artist Dianne McIntyre.
 The presentation of The Nina Simone Project was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project. Lead funding is from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and additional funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
 Cost: Tickets: \$25/ adults; \$20 seniors, students and groups
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5455 Landover Road, Cheverly 20784
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea and the Arts
 Date & Time: Saturday, April 26, 10 am-4 pm
 Description: Join us for the 18th year of this family event. Montpelier brings you a day that will delight your senses, with tea and scones in the mansion, over 30 vendors of handmade arts and crafts, live music, and 70 acres of beautiful grounds to explore. We'll also have tours of the historic house, gardening talks, nature walks, art demos, and more. Visit the Art Center's galleries and studios. Great opportunity to find the perfect Mother's Day gift. Kids can play in the always-popular history playground, Blast-in-the-Past, see a live animal exhibit, and more.
 Cost: FREE admission (There is a charge for tea in the house.)
 Ages: All ages
 Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site
 9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708
 Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage
 Date and Time: Saturday, April 26, 2014 (All-day event)
 Description: Darnall's Chance House Museum is thrilled to be one of the stops on the Prince George's County leg of this year's Maryland House and Garden Tour! Tickets for the tour can be purchased through Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage organization.
 Cost: Please call for details
 Ages: Please call for details
 Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum
 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro 20772
 Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

Nature Fair 2014
 Date & Time: Saturday, April 26, 2014 11 am-4 pm
 Description: Come out to this year's Nature Fair! There will be a variety of events: a creek hike, animal meet-n-greets, fabric dyeing, and more! Joe Romano will also be on hand to do green magic shows; this guarantees fun for the whole family!
 Cost: Free for residents and non-residents
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Clearwater Nature Center
 11000 Thrift Road, Clinton 20735
 Contact: 301-297-4575; TTY 301-699-2544

The Montpelier Classical Recital Series- Woobin Park, Piano
 Date and Time: Saturday, April 26, 2014 12 pm
 Description: Join us for a night of music at Montpelier with classically-trained pianist, Woobin Park! Praised for her commanding stage presence and elegant musicianship, Woobin Park has performed throughout the U.S and Korea. She recently held concerts at Carnegie Hall and Steinway Hall in New York, the Strathmore Mansion and Steinway Gallery in Maryland and Seoul Arts Center in Korea. Dr. Park has also collaborated as a soloist with the University of Minnesota Orchestra, the Linden Hills Chamber Orchestra in Minnesota and the Gyeonggi Philharmonic Orchestra in Korea.
 Cost: Free; A \$5 donation is suggested
 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

Riversdale Chamber Music Society Concert Series
 Date and Time: Sunday, April 27, 2:30 pm
 Description: This edition of the the Riversdale Chamber Music Society Concert Series features the US Army String Quartet and clarinetist Robert DiLutis! Come be delighted by their performance of Mozart's famous Clarinet Quintet.
 Cost: Free
 Ages: All ages welcome
 Location: Riversdale House Museum
 4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737
 Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ...Is Public Transportation in the United States Now on the Upswing

Dear EarthTalk:

What's behind the rise in public transit in the U.S. in the last few years, and how does our transit use compare with that of other developed countries?

Angie Whitby,
 New Bern, NC

Transit ridership is indeed at its highest level in the U.S. in 57 years. According to data collected by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Americans took 10.7 billion trips on public transportation in 2013—the highest number since the 1950s when many fewer of us owned our own cars. And this increase "isn't just a one-year blip," says APTA. Since 1995—when Congress passed the landmark ISTEA legislation and other surface transportation bills that greatly increased funding for public transit—U.S. ridership has risen 37.2 percent, topping both population growth (up 20.3 percent) and vehicle miles traveled (up 22.7 percent). "There's a fundamental shift going on," says APTA's president Michael Melaniphy. "More and more people are deciding that public transportation is a good option." A number of factors are contributing to Americans' embrace of transit in recent years. For one, the flow of federal dollars to transportation alternatives since 1995 has meant more options than ever are available

to those leaving their cars behind: Melaniphy reports that in the last two years, upwards of 70 percent of transit tax initiatives have passed, providing lots more funding for beefing up transit projects coast-to-coast. Another factor is the economic recovery. "When more people are employed, public transportation ridership increases, since nearly 60 percent of the trips taken on public transportation are for work commutes," says Melaniphy. "People in record numbers are demanding more public transit services and communities are benefiting with strong economic growth." Despite these gains, the U.S. still lags way behind other developed nations. In a recent issue of The Atlantic, Ralph Buehler cites 2010 statistics showing that, while Americans drive for 85 percent of their daily trips, Europeans opt for cars only 50-65 percent of the time. "Longer trip distances only partially explain the difference," reports Buehler, adding that 30 percent of daily trips are shorter than a mile on both continents. "But of those under-one-mile trips, Americans drove almost 70 percent of the time, while Europeans made 70 percent of their short trips by bicycle, foot or public transportation." The U.S. ranked last in the National Geographic Society's Greendex survey of transit use across 17 developed nations. Only five percent of Americans surveyed reported using public transit on a daily basis and only seven percent reported using



CREDIT: MISSOURI DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION?
According to data collected by the American Public Transportation Association, Americans took 10.7 billion trips on public transportation in 2013—the highest number since the 1950s when many fewer of us owned our own cars.

at least once a week. Internationally, 25 percent of respondents reported daily public transportation use, with 41 percent using it at least once a week. According to Greendex, Canadians are more than twice as likely to report weekly or more transit usage than Americans, while Germans are almost five times more likely to use transit at least weekly. Russia topped the list with 52 per-

cent of respondents using public transit daily and 23 percent using it at least once a week. Given America's suburban sprawl—and the car-based infrastructure that has built up to support it—it's hard to believe the U.S. will ever catch up with other developed countries in transit usage. But that won't stop millions of forward-thinking Americans from trying.

CONTACTS: APTA, www.apta.org; The Atlantic, www.theatlantic.com; National Geographic Greendex, environment.national-geographic.com/environment/greendex.

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Incentives from A1

million to \$18.5 million during the next fiscal year.

The Senate already passed the bill and a House committee held a hearing on the matter Wednesday, and is expected to vote later this week.

Sen. Edward Kasemeyer, D-Baltimore, testified in support of the bill and said while Maryland manufacturing has not experienced significant growth in recent years, there are opportunities in the film industry.

"It's an industry, I think, that's creating a lot of activity," he said.

In order for a company to qualify for a tax credit, it must spend more than \$500,000 in the state and the money cannot go towards an individual whose salary exceeds that.

Debbie Dorsey, director of the Baltimore Film Office, said the

bill's failure would economically harm the state.

"It would really send a message that Maryland isn't open for business," she said.

Media Rights Capital, which produces "House of Cards," sent a letter to Gov. Martin O'Malley warning that it would look at other states for potential filming if the state did not increase tax credits for film production.

Supporters of the bill said increased tax incentives would help workers across a wide range of industries.

David O'Ferrall, a business agent with Mid-Atlantic Studio Mechanics, said television series like "House of Cards" and "Veep" use local vendors and Maryland workers for jobs like lumber and paint work for set decorations.

"It means work for all the peripheral businesses," he said.

Watch from A4

with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Common threads essential to sound policy and practice emerge quickly—including the impact of poverty and inequality on children's well-being. Unifying refrains include the need to bring multiple supports together to seek change for children and families; the need for more intensive supports for children and parents with special health and mental health needs; recognition of the harm done to children by withholding help to children and adults who are not citizens nor legally present in the U.S.; and the call to pay attention to the well-being of parents and caregivers and all those who care for children. The book reinforces the importance of never giving up on a child.

This second decade of the twenty-first century is a crucial one for the children's movement and the nation's future, as poverty and child poverty have resurged in a prolonged recession and jobless "recovery" and with wealth and income inequality at near record levels and achievement gaps among children who are poor and of color unacceptably wide. Our children are in trouble and our nation is in trouble, and we must reset our moral and economic compasses. CDF has been sounding the siren with urgency and persistence over four decades and will not stop until it is heard.

In our fifth decade CDF is committed to implementing the comprehensive policy vision in this fine book and building the critical mass of servant leaders and transforming voices needed to build and sustain the political will to do for all children what we know works. We must band together across all racial and income groups and be clear that we cannot wait any longer to ensure our children's healthy development and well-being. It is the right thing to do, and we can start right now by putting into place a comprehensive early childhood development system including a continuum of care birth through age 5. Children have only one childhood, and it is now. We know what to do. We know what works. We must make it happen now by working together. Improving the Odds for America's Children is a blueprint for action.

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*.

Hospital from A6

where they can receive assistance. Offering a domestic violence program in this setting helps to identify victims, link them to critical services, and save lives," said Tammy Brown, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Crime Control & Prevention.

"Working hand-in-hand with law enforcement, government, and local service providers is an important step in the fight against domestic violence," said Sheriff Timothy Cameron. "This new program at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital is a vital component of a partnership that will quickly connect victims with the support and resources they need."

Reducing domestic violence is a personal cause for Lt. Governor Brown. In August 2008, his cousin Cathy was senselessly murdered by her estranged boyfriend. The grief of her loss spurred Lt. Governor Brown to increase his efforts to address domestic violence in our state. Building on his experience as a legislator and the perspective provided by this tragedy, Lt. Governor Brown has championed reforms to combat domestic violence.

In 2009, Brown led successful efforts to improve domestic violence laws by giving judges the authority to take guns out of the hands of domestic abusers. Brown championed

legislation enacted in 2010 allowing a victim of domestic abuse to terminate a residential lease with a copy of a final protective order. Additionally, in 2012, Brown led efforts to allow Marylanders to apply for unemployment benefits when forced to leave a job to escape the threat of domestic violence. The Lt. Governor has also led efforts to increase the availability of hospital-based domestic violence screening programs in Maryland.

These measures, and Lt. Governor Brown's continued cooperation with lawmakers, stakeholders, law enforcement, and domestic violence and sexual assault advocates, have contributed to a 20% decrease in domestic violence assaults and a 32% decrease in the number of women and children that have died from domestic violence over the last seven years in Maryland.

During this year's legislative session, Brown is leading efforts to pass the Administration's three-bill domestic violence package, which includes legislation to reduce the burden of proof required to obtain a peace or protective order, add second degree assault to the list of crimes for which domestic violence victims can obtain a final permanent protective order, and give judges the authority to impose enhanced penalties for acts of violence committed in the presence of a minor in the home.