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OFFICIAL WHITE HOUSE PHOTO BY PETE SOUZA

President Barack Obama talks with Press Secretary Josh Earnest, Chief of Staff Denis McDonough, and John Podesta, Counselor to the President, in the Outer Oval Office before delivering a statement on the crash of Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 and the situation in Ukraine, July 18, 2014. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

Statement by President Obama on Malaysian Flight Over Ukraine

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of The White House

July 17, 2014

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning, everybody.

Yesterday, Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17 took off from Amsterdam and was shot down over Ukraine near the Russian border. Nearly 300 in-

nocent lives were taken -- men, women, children, infants -- who had nothing to do with the crisis in Ukraine. Their deaths are an outrage of unspeakable proportions.

We know at least one American citizen, Quinn Lucas Schansman, was killed. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family for this terrible loss.

Yesterday, I spoke with the leaders of Ukraine, Malaysia,

and the Netherlands. I told them that our thoughts and prayers are with all the families and that the American people stand with them during this difficult time. Later today, I'll be speaking to Prime Minister Abbott of Australia, which also suffered a terrible loss.

By far, the country that lost the most people on board the plane was the Netherlands.

From the days of our founding, the Dutch have been close friends and stalwart allies of the United States of America. And today, I want the Dutch people to know that we stand with you, shoulder to shoulder, in our grief and in our absolute determination to get to the bottom of what happened.

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PGCPS Receives \$3 Million To Open Two New High Schools

By PRESS OFFICER
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD -- Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) was recently awarded a \$3 million grant to open two new public high schools for underserved and at-risk students in the county.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York will fund the development of the schools, through an existing partnership between PGCPS, Internationals Network for Public Schools, and CASA de Maryland.

"We have a wonderful partnership with these organizations and securing this grant allows us to work collectively to provide our students with a

valuable education," said Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, Chief Executive Officer of Prince George's County Public Schools. "We serve a very diverse student population where academic support and language services must be integrated for our students' success. These schools will enable us to do that more effectively."

The two PGCPS CASA-Internationals Community Schools are designed to improve achievement rates amongst English Language Learners (ELL) and will be the first of their kind in the county. The schools will provide im-

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Pigtown, Business Owners Want Gamblers To Stop By

By CASSIDY STERLING
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE -- It's a rainy Wednesday afternoon, but Café Jovial on Washington Boulevard is bustling with customers picking up lunch and friends chatting over coffee.

Behind the counter is Dede Kassa, the café's waitress/cook/barista -- in fact, its entire staff. She opens her café at 6 a.m. most days. She has no commute. Kassa, 47, and her husband live in the apartment upstairs, overlooking the main street of the

southwest Baltimore neighborhood of Pigtown.

Her café, with its exposed-brick walls, is narrow and cozy. A few tables fill the front of the shop. The works of local artists decorate the walls. Most customers are regulars, and she knows many of their orders by heart.

"It's the kind of place where people can come together," said Ben Hyman, executive director of Pigtown Main Street. "Every neighborhood needs a small meet-

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Defendants Who Fail to Come to Court Burden Maryland Judicial System

By TAMIEKA BRISCOE
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS-- In 2013, there were over 41,000 cases where criminal defendants failed to show up to court in the state, according to Maryland District Court records. Defendants missed scheduled court dates for initial charges that included petty crimes to more serious offenses.

The majority of the initial charges where defendants failed to appear in court were drug-related, according to records obtained by Capital News Service through a Maryland Public Information Act request. There were more than 10,900 drug-related charges.

There were nearly 7,500 theft charges among the initial cases. Other initial charges included littering, selling unpackaged cigarettes, animal cruelty and violation of protective orders.

For Maryland District Court clerks, the process of rescheduling court dates and processing

bench warrants for these 'failure to appear' cases happens so frequently that it has become just another part of the job.

But in criminal cases, if a defendant does not keep their court date it delays due process and compromises the case, said Judge Robert C. Wilcox, a retired District Court judge, who continues to hear cases twice per week.

"It collapses the system," said Wilcox. "Time works for them but against the court," Wilcox said, noting that delaying a case can be used as a defense tactic. "The cases do not get stronger with time."

Wilcox said there are excusable absences. If a person has documentation of illness or proof that they were not served with notice of the scheduled hearing, the court will take that under consideration.

Opposite of a failure to appear, an attorney can request a

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Farmland Growing in Bay States

By KARL BLANKENSHIP & WHITNEY PIPKIN
The Bay Journal

After decades of decline, one resource in the Bay watershed is making a comeback -- farmland.

Figures from the most recent agricultural census from the U.S. Department of Agriculture showed that the Bay watershed gained about 125,000 acres of agricultural land between 2007 and 2012, bringing the total to more than 12.6 million acres of crops, pastures and other farmland.

While that's small -- and within the census' margin of error -- it does signal that the region's once precipitous rate of farmland loss halted in recent years as the housing market weakened and prices for many crops hit record highs.

"The economics of agriculture in the mid-Atlantic in recent years has been pretty good," said James Shortle, an agricultural economist at Penn State University. "High prices have been the key thing, and low interest rates have also been good."

Whether the figures in the most recent census represent a temporary pause in the long-term trend of agricultural land loss or signal a permanent change is anyone's guess.

"If those markets remain strong, I can see where this type of leveling off is going to continue," said Mark Dubin of the U.S. Department of Agriculture who is the coordinator of the Bay Program's Agriculture Workgroup. "But if they falter, I think there will be a pretty fast reversal, particularly if there is a greater value in some other land use, like development."

Shortle agreed, adding that "farmland doesn't compete well with the urban lands unless you have good commodity prices."

"I think that is going to be a continuing tension in the watershed," he said.

After years of record highs, prices for crops such as corn have dropped dramatically this year, and there have been some hints of recovery in the housing market.

From a Chesapeake Bay perspective, farmlands provide important habitats for many types of birds and animals.



PHOTO COURTESY BAY JOURNAL; BY DAVE HARP

The increase in farmland acreage has coincided with record high prices for commodities like corn.

Plus the open land gets a chance to absorb rainfall, unlike developed landscapes where it is quickly shunted into local streams.

At the same time, a farmland increase could make the already daunting task of reducing Bay sediment and nutrient pollution even more difficult. Cropland and areas with large livestock populations generally produce the

highest amounts of nutrient-laden runoff to the Bay and its tributaries.

The census shows that harvested cropland in the watershed -- generally the most intensively managed fields -- increased by about 150,000 acres, to about 5.9 million acres, with

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INSIDE

Modes Less Traveled – Bicycling and Walking to Work in the United States: 2008-2012

Since 2000, the percent of people who biked to work in Washington increased from 1.2 percent to 3.1 percent, according to 2008-2012 statistics from the American Community Survey. In addition, 12.1 percent of workers in Washington walked to work. **Community, Page A3**

Bipartisan Jobs Bill Tackles Urban and Youth Unemployment

The decade-plus struggle for Congressional renewal of the nation's pre-eminent job training legislation was finally won thanks in large part to the tenacity, commitment and leadership of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Rep. Chaka Fattah of Pennsylvania. As co-sponsors of the Urban Jobs Act. **Commentary, Page A4**

O'Malley Makes Ceremonial Second Call On New Statewide 700 MHz Radio System

Governor Martin O'Malley joined Superintendent of the Maryland State Police Colonel Marcus Brown, and several other state and local officials to make the ceremonial second call on the Maryland First Responders Interoperable Radio System Team. **Business, Page A5**

Movie Review: "Borgman?"

Borgman is roused from his elaborately furnished underground dirt bunker in the forest by three angry men from a nearby town. Evading capture, he warns two friends hiding in spider holes elsewhere in the woods, and disappears into an upscale suburban neighborhood, where he goes door to door asking if he can take a bath. So there's that. **Out on the Town, Page A6**

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

Why are wildfires on the increase and what can be done to stop them from happening?

— Sandy Heffran,
Albuquerque, NM

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Homeless Outreach reaches out to residents of area shelters

The Homeless Outreach, Inc. is hosting its Back-to-School event on Aug. 10, 4 to 6 p.m., at the National Church of God in Oxon Hill.

Approximately 350 men, women and children from five area shelters will be treated to a meal, a like-new clothing boutique, and a time of worship, praise, music and dance. Each family will receive hygiene items and baby products. Students will receive a backpack filled with school supplies. Also available will be second-hand baby equipment such as strollers and playpens.

Homeless Outreach is a nonprofit, faith-based organization that depends on donations from local churches and individuals. Monetary contributions may be sent to The Homeless Outreach, Inc., 4114 27th Ave., Temple Hills, MD 20748. By the way, the cost of a high quality backpack is only \$6.00.

For information, call Kathy Gabrielsen, 301-423-7851, or Carol Leo, director, 240-475-4219.

Senior Luau

You 8th District seniors are invited to the 4th annual District 8 Senior Luau on Friday, August 1, 4 to 7 p.m., at Oxon Hill Manor, 5901 Oxon Hill Road. Seating is limited, so RSVP at 301-952-3860 or councildistrict8@co.pg.md.us.

Hosts are Councilman Obje Patterson, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, and the Coalition for Stronger Communities.

Looking for a Crab Feast? Here's two

St. Philip's Parish, 5416 Henderson Way, invites you to join them for great Chesapeake Bay Blue Crabs and corn on Saturday, August 9, 1 to 5 p.m. Ticket prices are \$35 for adults, \$20 for ages 6-15, and children five and under, free. For reservations contact Suzy Giroux at suzygiroux@verizon.net or call the parish office, 301-423-4244. All proceeds benefit the St. Philip's Athletic Association.

Bells united Methodist Church, 6016 Allentown Road, invites you to their Crab Feast on August 23, 1 to 4 p.m. Crabs, chicken, pulled-pork, hotdogs, burgers, corn-on-the-cob, string beans, potato salad and more. Grand Feast will be \$40; Crab Feast, \$30; Family Feast, \$20. Advance sale only; tickets must be purchased by August 17. Call Pat Jones, 240-472-4823, or Claire Kennedy, 301-868-4154, or Brittany Ford, 240-640-2908, or Al Collins, 240-472-0702, or Patrice Underwood, 202-841-2367.

Neighbors

Coming up are two Night Out evenings on Tuesday, Aug. 5—in Skyline at Skyline School and in Morningside at the Town Hall and Patterson Park.

Jean Conlon Ferrante, formerly of Morningside and Camp Springs, celebrated her 70th birthday with her kids and nine grandkids at the Front Porch in Leonardtown. She misses her husband Joe—who died in November 2011—but enjoyed having a beautiful evening with her family.

She brought me up to date on other Conlons: Judy Conlon Boyden is recovering from hip replacement surgery. (All those years of dancing took their toll.) Joyce Conlon Riggs' youngest daughter, Allison, just married at St. Mary's Church in Bryantown and had a reception at Floral Corner Farm. She and husband Daniel Madden are headed back to New Orleans where he has been transferred.

Janet Booth Kaye wrote me about Loretta Ennis Hooe who died July 7. "She was a classmate/graduate with me at Suitland High School (1952)." She wrote, "My remembrance of Loretta was a gentle, quick to laugh, delightful young woman. In later years she would call me when we were trying to plan our reunions for the 1st graduating class at Suitland HS. She provided info and addresses for our classmates and always offered to do more. She leaves us all with fond memories of our youth."

I've enjoyed recent visits from some of my out-of-town family. Daughter Therese Gallegos flew in from Brownsville, Texas, where she is a professor at the University of Texas/Brownsville. My brother Tom Mudd and his wife Evelyn came from Saginaw, Mich., by way of Gettysburg where Tom's vintage baseball team, the Saginaw Old Golds won two, lost two in the annual tournament.

Last week I wished happy times to two who have passed on—I wished a happy birthday to Dottie Erhardt and a happy anniversary to Laurence Majors. Thank you to Dave Williams for letting me know; I'll correct my list. But I know both Dottie and Laurence celebrated in Heaven.

May they rest in peace

Wayne Michael Abernethy, 67, of Mechanicsville and formerly of Suitland Road in Morningside, died May 10. Years ago he was our favorite babysitter.

Thomas Chris Sarris, 89, who owned some of our favorite restaurants, died in Arlington on July 12. He was born in Easton to Athena and Chris A. Sarris and in time owned Tom Sarris Orleans House, Tom Sarris Steak House, and The Covered Wagon. Survivors include his son Chris T. Sarris. Funeral services were at St. Katherine Greek Orthodox Church with burial at Cedar Hill.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Carolyn Dade, Aug. 1; Chris Webb and Samantha Wade, Aug. 3; Victoria Levanduski, Laura Cook and Sallee Bixler, Aug. 4; Miss Bailey Sparks, GeGe Feeny, Bernie Miller, my granddaughter Rose Seidman and Diane Ruby, Aug. 5; Markeyce Herring and Connie Kimbles, Aug. 6; and Mary Leonard, who turns 90 on Aug. 7.

Happy anniversary to William and Orva Heissenbuttel on their 67th, Aug 3; and to Denis and Donna Wood, Aug. 7.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP

Come join us for our Praise Break (Celebrating the Works of God) Vacation Bible School 2014. Reverend Constance Smith is our Pastor. Vacation Bible School will be August 18-August 22, 2014 from 6:30 PM-8:30 PM. Our address is New Hope Fellowship 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Church telephone number is 301-888-2171.

OLD MARYLAND FARM

The Educational Farm located at 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774 is open Tuesdays-Fridays, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM; Sundays, 11:30 AM-4:30 PM. Come and view year-round livestock, displays that include ducks, goats, rabbits, and many more. You can walk through the interpretive gardens and stop by the Gift Shop.

COMMUNITY DANCE

Attention all dancers and non-dancers. St. Philip's Church will be having Fun Night with Line and Hand Dancing on Friday, August 8, 2014 and August 22, 2014 from 7:00 PM-9:00 PM at St. Philip's

Church, Baden Parish Fellowship Hall. The address is 13801 Baden Westwood Road, Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Admission is \$2.00. Come out and get in the groove with the dances and have some fun.

CASINO TIME

It's Casino time to Delaware Park Raceway and Casino Wilmington Delaware Sunday, August 10, 2014. Bus will leave Park-N-Ride, Clinton Maryland at 10:30 AM and St. Philip's Church at 11:00 AM and returns at approximately 7:30 PM.

Fun package includes a \$30.00 rebate, 50/50, music and a bagged lunch. All tickets must be purchased by August 3, 2014. Donation is \$40.00 and absolutely no refunds. Benefit: Peter A. Gross Sr., Scholarship/Memorial Fund Inc. For tickets contact Shirley A. Cleaves (302) 690-4260, Ruby E. Hinnant (301) 627-1235 and Michele K. Chase (301) 888-2510.

JOB FAIR AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH Come join us September 22, 2014 from 9:00-2:00 PM July 23, 2014 at Union Bethel Church in Brandy-

wine, Maryland. You will be able to connect with regional employees that have current job openings. Come prepared to be interviewed. Dress for Success and bring you resume. For more information call Bethel House Inc. at 301-372-1700.

BADEN COMMUNITY CENTER

Hand Dance for Adults beginning is offered from August 1, 2014-Friday, October 3, 2014 at Baden Community Center. You will learn basic steps to dances with styles, including swing, contemporary and R&B. Smartlink number is #1449367. The address is 13601 Baden-Westwood Road Brandywine, Maryland 20613. Telephone number is 301-888-1500; TTY 301-203-6030.

READY 4 THE WORLD

Ready 4 The World after school program has enhanced their program by adding two new components Tutoring and Martial Arts Monday thru Friday. The address is 613-615 Commerce Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774. Phone number is (240) 432-1378.

Neighborhood Events

Prince George's County Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative Teen Summer Faceoff

County challenges summer youth to identify challenges to address issues in TNI areas

Largo, MD – As a part of the larger Tech Prince George's initiative, the Prince George's County Office of Information Technology (OIT) has created a summer youth program that allows County youth, under the umbrella of the Prince George's County Government Summer Youth Enrichment Program (SYEP), to work in their area of career interest, while partnering with government, higher education and industry in order to gain valuable hands on expertise and to demonstrate that technology should play an important part in the successful execution of every professional field by using the scientific method in order to develop innovative solutions.

OIT's summer youth program has been designed with a special sense of mission – and with a solid team of information technology (IT) professionals, all centering around the topic of technology, which has become an educational priority, not only in Prince Georges County, but also all across America, as we progressively re-tool to become maximally productive in the new Global Science & Technology Economy.

The focus this summer will be on Prince George's County's TNI and what young people can do to combine technology and innovative solutions in order to address some of the most vexing challenges that exist in the six respective TNI areas of Prince George's County. The 18 students have been broken down into six equal teams and each teamed up with a paid mentor from Bowie State University. The teams will compete against each other to see which TNI team is able to develop an innovative solution, over the six week period, which has the most sustained impact.

This effort is a continuation of last year's OIT STEAM Dream Team, which broke ten summer youth into two teams and also successfully challenged the STEAM Dream Team participants to find technology based solutions for issues that confronted Prince George's County.

The TNI Teen Summer Faceoff will culminate on Friday, August 8, 2014 at 10:00 am with a ceremony that includes a review of the team presentations for the respective TNI projects and the selection of a winner. The panel of judges will consist of States Attorney Angela Alsobrooks, Prince George's County Council Chair Mel Franklin and other distinguished guests. The location of the ceremony will be 1801 McCormick Drive, Suite 140, Largo, MD.

About Tech Prince George's

The sustained focus of Tech Prince George's is on the long term development of a career pipeline and interceptive strategies to improve student matriculation and eventual career success in technology fields.

The goal of the program is to identify and develop students in the Prince George's County who have demonstrated a sustained aptitude and interest in IT and to cultivate their educational and career growth so that they become future contributors to the

economic success and viability of Prince George's County.

This is made possible through partnerships between Prince George's County Government, Prince George's County Public School System (PGCPS), institutes of higher learning, nonprofit organizations and private industry. For more information, visit Tech Prince George's.

New research Reveals Langley Park Children and Families Face Severe Barriers to Achievement

The Urban Institute, Prince George's County Public Schools, and CASA de Maryland today released From Cradle to Career: The Multiple Challenges Facing Immigrant Families in Langley Park Promise Neighborhood, an examination of the dire challenges facing families in the region's densest immigrant neighborhood. The report, the result of a year-long community assessment process supported by the US Department of Education Promise Neighborhoods program, engaged dozens of community organizations, government agencies, schools, and Langley Park parents and youth in examining the multiple sector deficiencies impacting the capacity of Langley Park students to learn and grow.

"Thanks to a Promise Neighborhood Planning grant, Langley Park had the rare luxury of taking a data-driven look at the community's needs and pinpointing key points of intervention to make a difference in the lives of children and families," explained Molly M. Scott, Senior Research Associate at the Urban Institute. "Because immigrants and their children are one of the fastest growing segments of our society, what we learn moving forward in Langley Park will have implications not just for local practice but for communities across the country."

The year of research revealed that, few of Langley Park's 3700 children-- nearly all born in the U.S.-- are currently on track for a secure future. Their path is impeded by well-known challenges of poverty: poor access to health care (Langley Park lacks pediatricians altogether), high rates of neighborhood crime, chronic housing instability and school mobility, and particularly low levels of parent education and English proficiency. Although they enter kindergarten less ready than their peers, Langley Park children largely make up academic gaps during their elementary years. Unfortunately, with each transition to middle school and then high school, Langley Park children fall further behind. Less than half graduate high school in four years, often because of high rates of early pregnancy and the early work to help support their families. On virtually all standards for a healthy and stable life, Langley Park children fall below their peers in the County and the State.

"This report will be a valuable tool as we plan for future educational initiatives in Langley Park," said Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, Prince George's County Public Schools Chief Executive Officer. "It not only represents the culminating effort of valuable partnerships be-

tween Prince George's County Public Schools, CASA de Maryland, Prince George's County, and other organizations, but also marks the beginning of a realignment of resources and services that will better serve our students and their families."

In light of the adverse statistics, partners in the planning year, which included Prince George's County, Prince George's County Public Schools, Prince George's Community College, Centronia, Latin American Youth Center, Community Clinic Inc., the University of Maryland Schools of Education and Public Health and others, performed the hard work of prioritizing the order of the critical interventions needed to address the crisis for Langley Park children and many committed to be involved in the campaign to eliminate silos and create holistic solutions. Building on the services and programs already offered in Langley Park, Promise Neighborhoods allowed stakeholders to establish a data-supported roadmap to improve lives.

"There are no simple or quick solutions. For example, you don't build a health clinic from one day to the next. We have challenges, but we also have assets - a vibrant community with committed families willing to do what it takes for their children to succeed," said Gustavo Torres, Executive Director, CASA de Maryland. "Together we can ensure that Langley Park is a community in which all children and families can live and thrive."

Laurel becomes 13th US city to declare Oct 25 as "Rajan Zed Day"

City of Laurel in Maryland has become the 13th city in USA to declare October 25 as "Rajan Zed Day" after religious statesman Rajan Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism.

Signed by Laurel Mayor Craig A. Moe, Proclamation of the City of Laurel mentions: "Rajan Zed's initiatives to bring various religious communities together throughout the world so that they can live in peace and mutual trust and enrich themselves through dialogue".

It further includes: "Rajan Zed's work to uplift about 15-million Roma (Gypsies) people of Europe who live in apartheid conditions by frequently voicing their maltreatment, issues and concerns and urging other religious leaders to do so".

"Rajan Zed's leadership responsibility leads him in his attempts to help the helpless", Proclamation adds.

Zed opened the Laurel City Council, incorporated in 1870, with its first historic Hindu prayer on June 23; reciting from Rig-Veda, the oldest scripture of the world still in common use, besides lines from Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita (Song of the Lord), both ancient Hindu scriptures.

October 25 is Rajan Zed's birthday.

Zed is a global Hindu and interfaith leader, who besides taking up the cause of religion worldwide, has also raised huge voice against the apartheid faced by about 15-million Roma (Gypsies) in Europe. He is bestowed with World Interfaith Leader Award.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Don't Let Back-to-School Tasks Sneak up on You

Parents, if this is your first time at the back-to-school rodeo, let me share a few lessons my wife and I have learned the hard way. Chances are you'll be spending the next few weeks filling out piles of pre-enrollment paperwork, lining up carpools and, of course, taking the dreaded shopping excursions for clothes and school supplies.



If you're a first-timer or simply need a back-to-school refresher course, here are a few suggestions that can help you save time, money and sanity:

Get organized. Maintain a correspondence file from your kid's school for things like registration requirements, report cards, permission slips, required vaccinations, school policies, teacher and parent contact information, etc. Ask whether the school has a website, online calendar or email list you can join. Also, create a family master calendar.

Back-to-school shopping. Between new clothes, classroom supplies and extracurricular activity fees and equipment, many parents end up spending hundreds of dollars per child. Ideally, you've been setting money aside all year. If not, you'll need to determine what you can afford to spend without blowing your overall budget.

Here are a few organizational and money-saving tips:

□ Before you shop, make a comprehensive list for each child. Use previous years' expenses as a guide and compare notes with other parents and school officials.

□ Engage your kids in the budgeting process. Share how much money is available to spend and get them involved in prioritizing expenses between "needs" and "wants."

□ Go through your kids' closets and have them try on everything. Make an inventory of items that fit and are in good shape, and take it when shopping so you don't accidentally buy duplicates. (While you're at it, share, sell or donate unneeded items.)

□ Spread clothing purchases throughout the year so your kids don't outgrow everything at once. Many stores hold fall clearance sales to make room for holiday merchandise.

□ Review the school's dress code so you don't waste money on inappropriate clothing.

□ Although shopping online can save money, time and gas, don't forget to factor in shipping and return costs, which could undo any net savings. If your kids are old enough, put them in charge of online comparison shopping and coupon clipping.

□ Ask which school supplies you're expected to buy. Go in with other families to take advantage of volume discounts and sales.

□ Find out how much extracurricular activities (athletics, music, art, etc.) cost. Account for uniforms, membership dues, private lessons, field trips, snacks, etc.

□ Rent or buy used sporting equipment or musical instruments until you're sure they'll stick with an activity.

□ Know when to spend more for higher quality. Cheaper notebook paper shouldn't matter, but don't buy poorly made shoes that might hamper proper physical development.

□ Before buying new clothing or accessories, look for "gently used" items in the closets of your older kids and friends, at garage sales, thrift and consignment stores and online.

□ Clip newspaper and online coupons. Many stores will match competitors' prices even if their own items aren't on sale. Plus, many consolidation websites post downloadable coupons and sale codes for online retailers, including: CouponCabin.com, CouponCode.com, CouponCraze.com, DealHunting.com and Dealnews.com.

□ Mobile shopping apps let in-store smartphone and mobile browser users scan product barcodes and make on-the-spot price comparisons, read reviews, download coupons, buy products and more.

□ Follow your favorite retailers on Facebook and Twitter, where many post special savings for their followers.

Bottom line: If you get organized before setting out on back-to-school shopping, you can save money, time and aggravation.

Modes Less Traveled – Bicycling and Walking to Work in the United States: 2008-2012

By PRESS OFFICER
U.S. Census Bureau

by Bike in Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., had among the highest percent of commuters who bike to work, the U.S. Census Bureau reported today in a new brief focused on biking and walking to work. Nationally, 0.6 percent of workers commute by bike.

Since 2000, the percent of people who biked to work in Washington increased from 1.2 percent to 3.1 percent, according to 2008-2012 statistics from the American Community Survey. In addition, 12.1 percent of workers in Washington walked to work.

"Through efforts to increase local transportation options, Washington, along with many other large U.S. cities, has contributed to the increase in the number of people who bike to work," said Brian McKenzie, a Census Bureau statistician who studies commuting. "This information shapes our understanding

of how people get to work and how this may change across cities in the coming years."

The report, "Modes Less Traveled – Bicycling and Walking to Work in the United States: 2008-2012," highlights the trends and socio-economic and geographic differences between motorized and nonmotorized commutes. This report – the Census Bureau's first focusing only on biking and walking to work – is one of many that examines specific aspects of commuting, including workplace location, working from home, long commutes and specific travel modes.

The American Community Survey also provides annual estimates about how commuters in Washington travel to work and how long it takes them to get there.

Transportation Highlights for Washington

Among the 306,336 workers in Washington, 37.8 percent took public transportation, 3.1 percent

biked, 12.1 percent walked, and 4.9 percent worked at home.

Of workers who did not work from home, the average travel time to work was 29.6 minutes.

Traveling alone by public transportation was among the most common commute modes.

About the American Community Survey

The figures in this release come from data collected from questions in the Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey. The questions asked include:

How did this person usually get to work last week? If this person usually used more than one method of transportation during the trip, mark (X) the box of the one used for most of the distance.

• How many people, including this person, usually rode to work in the car, truck, or van last week?

• What time did this person usually leave home to go to work last week?

• How many minutes did it usually take this person to get from home to work last week?

Organizations use the statistics from this question to design programs that ease traffic problems, reduce congestion and promote carpooling. In addition, police and fire departments use the statistics to plan for emergency services in areas where many people work. The American Community Survey provides local statistics on a variety of topics for even the smallest communities.

Ever since Thomas Jefferson directed the first census in 1790, the census has collected detailed characteristics about our nation's people. Questions about jobs and the economy were added 20 years later under James Madison, who said such information would allow Congress to "adapt the public measures to the particular circumstances of the community," and over the decades allow America "an opportunity of marking the progress of the society."

PGCPS from A1

migrant students, as well as those who are economically disadvantaged and prospective first generation college attendees, with an innovative opportunity to complete their high school diploma. Students will develop a commitment to learning, a capacity for critical thinking, an understanding of their future role as community leaders, and gain the academic

skills necessary to achieve future success. Additionally, the schools will serve as a community resource for students and their families to ensure that their adjustment needs are met.

In the county, 12% of the students receive ELL services. The 2012-2013 four-year cohort graduation rate for ELL students who entered ninth grade during the 2009-2010 school year was 63.03%, below

the county's overall graduation rate of 74.12%. Additionally, about 47% of the district's graduates enroll in college, while only 32% of ELL graduates enroll in college.

"The development of these schools is an important step in addressing the serious challenges facing Prince George's County, especially the Langley Park community," said Gustavo Torres, Executive Director of CASA de Maryland.

Each year, the schools will add a cohort of approximately 100 students per grade until serving at least 400 students in grades nine through twelve. One school will be within the Langley Park area, optional for all students in Langley Park, and the other school will be for new English language learners as a school-within-a-school in another part of the county. The schools are expected to open at the start of the 2015-2016 school year.

Ukraine from A1

Here's what we know so far. Evidence indicates that the plane was shot down by a surface-to-air missile that was launched from an area that is controlled by Russian-backed separatists inside of Ukraine. We also know that this is not the first time a plane has been shot down in eastern Ukraine. Over the last several weeks, Russian-backed separatists have shot down a Ukrainian transport plane and a Ukrainian helicopter, and they claimed responsibility for shooting down a Ukrainian fighter jet. Moreover, we know that these separatists have received a steady flow of support from Russia. This includes arms and training. It includes heavy weapons, and it includes anti-aircraft weapons.

Here's what must happen now. This was a global tragedy. An Asian airliner was destroyed in European skies, filled with citizens from many countries. So there has to be a credible international investigation into what happened. The U.N. Security Council has endorsed this investigation, and we will hold all its members -- including Russia -- to their word. In order to facilitate that investigation, Russia, pro-Russian separatists, and Ukraine must adhere to an immediate cease-fire. Evidence must not be tampered with. Investigators need to access the crash site. And the solemn task of returning those who were lost on board the plane to their loved ones needs to go forward immediately.

The United States stands ready to provide any assistance that is necessary. We've already offered the support of the FBI and the National Transportation Safety Board, which has experience in working with international partners on these types of investigations. They are on their way, personnel from the FBI and the National Transportation Safety Board.

In the coming hours and days, I'll continue to be in close contact with leaders from around the world as we respond to this ca-

tastrophe. Our immediate focus will be on recovering those who were lost, investigating exactly what happened, and putting forward the facts.

I want to point out there will likely be misinformation as well. I think it's very important for folks to sift through what is factually based and what is simply speculation. No one can deny the truth that is revealed in the awful images that we all have seen. And the eyes of the world are on eastern Ukraine, and we are going to make sure that the truth is out.

More broadly, I think it's important for us to recognize that this outrageous event underscores that it is time for peace and security to be restored in Ukraine. For months, we've supported a pathway to peace, and the Ukrainian government has reached out to all Ukrainians, put forward a peace plan, and lived up to a cease-fire, despite repeated violations by the separatists -- violations that took the lives of Ukrainian soldiers and personnel.

Moreover, time and again, Russia has refused to take the concrete steps necessary to deescalate the situation. I spoke to President Putin yesterday in the wake of additional sanctions that we had imposed. He said he wasn't happy with them, and I told him that we have been very clear from the outset that we want Russia to take the path that would result in peace in Ukraine, but so far at least, Russia has failed to take that path. Instead, it has continued to violate Ukrainian sovereignty and to support violent separatists. It has also failed to use its influence to press the separatists to abide by a cease-fire. That's why, together with our allies, we've imposed growing costs on Russia.

So now is, I think, a somber and appropriate time for all of us to step back and take a hard look at what has happened. Violence and conflict inevitably lead to unforeseen consequences. Russia, these separatists, and Ukraine all have the capacity to put an end to the fighting. Meanwhile, the United States is going

to continue to lead efforts within the world community to de-escalate the situation; to stand up for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine; and to support the people of Ukraine as they courageously work to strengthen their democracy and make their own decisions about how they should move forward.

Before I take just a couple of questions let me remark on one other issue. This morning, I spoke with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel about the situation in Gaza. We discussed Israel's military operation in Gaza, including its efforts to stop the threat of terrorist infiltration through tunnels into Israel. I reaffirmed my strong support for Israel's right to defend itself. No nation should accept rockets being fired into its borders, or terrorists tunneling into its territory. In fact, while I was having the conversation with Prime Minister Netanyahu, sirens went off in Tel Aviv.

I also made clear that the United States, and our friends and allies, are deeply concerned about the risks of further escalation and the loss of more innocent life. And that's why we've indicated, although we support military efforts by the Israelis to make sure that rockets are not being fired into their territory, we also have said that our understanding is the current military ground operations are designed to deal with the tunnels, and we are hopeful that Israel will continue to approach this process in a way that minimizes civilian casualties and that all of us are working hard to return to the cease-fire that was reached in November of 2012.

Secretary Kerry is working to support Egypt's initiative to pursue that outcome. I told Prime Minister Netanyahu that John is prepared to travel to the region following additional consultations.

Let me close by making one additional comment. On board Malaysian Airlines Flight MH17, there were apparently nearly 100 researchers and advocates traveling to an interna-

tional conference in Australia dedicated to combating AIDS/HIV. These were men and women who had dedicated their own lives to saving the lives of others and they were taken from us in a senseless act of violence.

In this world today, we shouldn't forget that in the midst of conflict and killing, there are people like these -- people who are focused on what can be built rather than what can be destroyed; people who are focused on how they can help people that they've never met; people who define themselves not by what makes them different from other people but by the humanity that we hold in common. It's important for us to lift them up and to affirm their lives. And it's time for us to heed their example.

The United States of America is going to continue to stand for the basic principle that people have the right to live as they choose; that nations have the right to determine their own destiny; and that when terrible events like this occur, the international community stands on the side of justice and on the side of truth.

So with that, let me take just a couple questions. I'll start with you, Julie.

Q Thank you, Mr. President. Just on a technical matter, does the U.S. believe that this passenger jet was targeted, or that those people who shot it down may have been going after a military -- thought they were going after a military aircraft? And more broadly, this incident does seem to escalate the crisis in Ukraine to a level we haven't seen before. Does that change your calculus in terms of what the U.S. and perhaps Europe should be doing in terms of a response?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think it's too early for us to be able to guess what the intentions of those who might have launched this surface-to-air missile might have had. The inves-

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COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski, Cardin Announce \$5 Million in Federal Funding to Support On-The-Job Training for Long-Term Unemployed

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) announced today that the Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded more than \$5 million in funding to the Maryland Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) to support on-the-job training programs in Maryland for the long-term unemployed. The grants are part of the DOL's Job-Driven National Emergency Grant (JD NEG) program, which uses funds from the Workforce Investment Act Dislocated Worker National Reserve fund.

"I believe that in America, if you're ready to work and want a job, you should have one," Senator Mikulski said. "Families who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own need a hand to help get back on the job so they can pay food, housing and day-to-day needs. These funds in the federal checkbook will help Marylanders who have been looking for a job get the on-the-job training and know-how they need."

"We cannot afford to let anyone fall through the cracks as we continue to strengthen our local and regional economies. This latest federal investment will help Marylanders, who lost their jobs through no fault of their own, to get the training they need to rejoin the workforce and make their families whole again," said Senator Cardin, a member of the Senate Finance and Small Business Committees. "We have a responsibility to educate and train our workers to fill the skilled jobs of our knowledge-based economy."

The (DLLR) will receive \$5,137,155 to enhance and expand the provision of services to long-term unemployed dislocated workers in the fields of construction and manufacturing, health care, information technology, and transportation and logistics by focusing on employer partnerships that create employment opportunities through various integrated work-based learning models, including the creation or expansion of Registered Apprenticeship or pre-apprenticeship programs; on-the-job training programs; and customized and occupational skills training.

Maryland will coordinate a state-led effort to streamline and standardize policies and processes resulting in enhanced outreach efforts to employers and eligible participants. The State plans to build on active interagency relationships with the State Department of Business and Economic Development, Department of Transportation and Department of Human Resources. These enhanced partnerships will continue industry-led initiatives, such as the EARN program, Career Pathways, and the Highway and Transit Construction programs, as well as strengthen their Business Engagement and Apprenticeship Roundtable initiatives.

This grant also supports a Welcome Back Center program to leverage a strategic state investment targeted to provide a comprehensive approach in addressing the needs that foreign-trained healthcare professionals encounter when obtaining their Maryland licenses. The Welcome Back Center is an innovative model that builds on the personal and professional assets of immigrants living in the United States to: further address health professional shortages; diversify the health workforce; provide economic opportunities to underutilized individuals as they return to work in the health field; and enhance health outcomes of the entire community. The Welcome Back Center is one of several centers comprising the national "Welcome Back Initiative" network.

These grants are part of more than \$154 million in funding through the Job-Driven National Emergency Grant program. Thirty-two states, Puerto Rico and the Cherokee tribal nation will receive funding to provide education, training, and job placement assistance for workers who lost a job through no fault of their own in high-demand industries. Through these programs, employers will get the skilled workers they need, and American workers will be equipped with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to succeed in new and emerging occupations in high-growth industries.

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Bipartisan Jobs Bill Tackles Urban and Youth Unemployment

"Supporting education and training for our youth is a smart investment that can help rebuild local economies and pay dividends over the long term."

—U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

"The future of our economy depends on an educated, skilled workforce that encompasses all individuals — even the most disconnected and at risk."

—Congressman Chaka Fattah

Just when it seemed Congress was no longer capable of working together on any level to serve the best interests of the American people, on July 9 members of both parties in the House of Representatives joined forces to pass a new bipartisan jobs bill, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). With the passage of WIOA, millions of unemployed and under-employed workers and urban youth of color can now receive the job and skills training, as well as the support services, they need to chart a path to a better future. The bipartisan vote in the House was 415-6. The Senate passed the bill in June with a 95-3 bipartisan majority, and it is now headed to President Obama's desk for signing.

The decade-plus struggle for Congressional renewal of the nation's preeminent job training legislation was finally won thanks in large part to the tenacity, commitment and leadership of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand of New York and Rep. Chaka Fattah of Pennsylvania. As co-sponsors of the Urban Jobs Act, a bill advocated and championed by the National Urban League, they helped craft bi-partisan legislation that responds to the education, skills, and employment needs of millions of individuals who are unemployed or under-employed and face multiple barriers to employment. The National Urban League and the advocacy work of our Affiliates on the Urban Jobs Act were the impetus for many of the local

youth provisions that are now a part of the WIOA, as well as provisions for funding to non-profit organizations that operate effective workforce training programs. These include a focus on the needs of youth, aged 16-24, including high school drop-outs, and individuals with multiple barriers to employment, such as ex-offenders, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system and the long-term unemployed.

Passage of this legislation represents a special victory for communities of color where unemployment continues to outpace the national average. In June, overall unemployment fell to 6.1% and the rate for whites is now at 5.3%. But African American unemployment remains in double-digits at 10.7%. The rate for Hispanics is 7.8%. Most disturbingly, African American and Hispanic youth continue to experience extremely high rates of unemployment. According to a joint statement from Senator Gillibrand and Congressman Fattah, "The average unemployment rate for minority youth in May was almost 24 percent for African Americans and just over 12 percent for Hispanics. Approximately 5.8 million youth, or nearly 15 percent of 16 to 24 year olds, are neither employed nor attending school, and as a result not developing the skills, education and job experience necessary for quality jobs."

Passage of the Urban Jobs Act provisions in WIOA will help reduce youth unemployment, strengthen our economy and give millions of young people of color access to the education and skills needed for success in work and in life. The legislation also complements the National Urban League's extraordinary \$100 million, five-year Jobs Rebuild America initiative, which is bringing together resources from the government, business and non-profit sectors to help bring jobs and hope back to

See **Youth**, Page A5



ANTIQUE CHESAPEAKE CAROUSEL & MINIATURE TRAIN
Watkins Regional Park, 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD, 301-218-6761. The park features an authentic, hand-carved, hand-painted, 80-year-old carousel. Featured on the Carousel are 45 animals with a rare combination of kangaroo, jackass, goat and seahorse. Do not miss the train as it passes through the lovely, wooded surroundings. The carousel and train are open Memorial Day-Labor Day, Tues-Sun, 10-7 p.m. (\$) PHOTO BY LEGUSTA FLOYD, JR.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



Andrew Young's Choice

None of us had any real education in social change. I was a biology major and a preacher. And yet we found ourselves in positions where we had to change the world . . . and what you will find is that it is easy if you listen to that still, small voice within. That's where you hear God." These wise words were shared recently by civil rights warrior and former Atlanta mayor and United Nations Ambassador Andrew Young with nearly 2,000 college students and teachers gathered together to prepare to conduct summer Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools® programs. They are literacy rich child empowerment programs for pre-K-12th grade students to staunch summer leaning loss. Andy Young reminded all of us how critical it is to find significance and purpose in one's life's work—one worth living and dying for: "Now, Dr. King used to tell us all the time, 'You're going to die, but you don't have anything to say about where you die, how you die, when you die. The only choice you have is what it is you die for.' So each day you need to chart your life so that if your life were taken on that day, people would say, 'This is what he gave his life for' or 'This is what she gave her life for.'"

He said that as young people already committed to serving as educators and mentors and advocates for children, they were already on their way: "If you listen to what's going on in the news, it's easy to despair and give up. But you are God's children . . . You are vessels of the love of God or you wouldn't be here. Somebody loved you somewhere and told you you were somebody. And because of that, at least for a little while, you have enough dedication to stop whatever else you were doing, to come here to try to share your blessings with others . . . So God bless you, and you pass on God's blessings to the people and children with whom you work all summer long. . . Make them believe in themselves, and it doesn't take much. Just sometimes say to them—'You know, you are a wonderful person.' 'Golly, you write well.' 'You recited that beautifully.' It's positive reinforcement, and so much beats us down and we beat each other down that if we can lift each other up, we lift up the world."

Andy Young emphasized that allowing a positive purpose to direct your path can be much more powerful than just having a plan. His decision as a young minister to return to the South in 1961 to dedicate himself full time to the civil rights movement seemed impractical by any logical standard: it required quitting his job with the National Council of Churches in New York and moving his family to an unknown future while his wife Jean was pregnant with their third child. But they stepped out in faith, especially Jean: "She was one of these crazy women who believed that God would lead you, and you didn't need to know where you were going." Following that calling and continuing to go where he felt led even when it wasn't originally part of his own plan shaped his life: "I didn't want to be in the movement. I wanted to observe, analyze, write about it, and all of a sudden I'm right in the middle of it, and everything that has happened to me has happened without any plan, without knowing anything about it."

"I didn't want to go to Congress. I didn't want to go to the U.N., but going to the United Nations—I told Jimmy Carter, I said, 'Look, if it comes to a choice between the State Depart-

ment and what Martin Luther King taught, I'm not going to listen to the State Department. I really would rather stay in Congress,' and he said, 'No. That's why we need you at the U.N., because we need to take some of the vision of human rights from Martin Luther King and the nonviolent movement, and we need to share it with the world.'"

Trying to discern and follow God's purpose in his life helped Andy Young make a huge difference in our country and around the world. Encouraging young leaders to seek and follow their own passion and purpose, however, requires overcoming the love of wealth and need for security he warned: "You can be enslaved by your ambitions and your greed for status and material things, or by your fears. But when you overcome those and really free up your spirit, the power of God flows through you in such a way that the world has to change around you. Now, it doesn't change automatically, and you don't see it—but it's changed."

After I was arrested with about 90 other Black college students during my senior year at Spelman

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

How To Help Your Daughter Develop A Realistic Self-Image

Unfortunately, society today forces upon young women images of perfection that are unrealistic and unhealthy. From the covers of teen magazines to countless television ads and music videos, our daughters are bombarded with images of pencil-thin yet voluptuous models whose message is clearly "be like me to be successful and accepted."

These unrelenting media images have a subtle, but certain effect on how girls view themselves -- an effect that's being seen at an ever younger age. You see it in girls who dress to mimic the fashions of female music, TV and movie stars. You see it in young women constantly worrying about weight and appearance, or who lose interest in academics, music, art or sports in order to focus more on their physical appearance and popularity with boys.

While it may be impossible to stop the avalanche of unrealistic media images, there are ways to counter this propaganda within your own house.

Start by simply talking with your daughter about the media images she's seeing. Watch some of the TV shows and music videos she's watching. Read some of the magazines she reads. Then talk with her about how realistically some of these women are being portrayed.

Ask her if this is how she or her friends really act, speak or look. Ask her about the messages being presented and how they make her feel. Are such feelings fair or realistic? Discuss the realities of advertising and other media presentations of women. It's easy for a young girl to accept the images being presented, while forgetting the make-up artists, hair stylists, designers, and photographers making such images possible.

You can also take action to help your daughter better recognize her own worth. Rather than complimenting her and other young women on their looks, compliment them on their interests, creativity, intellect, ideas and accomplishments. Encourage her to continue to develop her interests in art, music, sports or other activities, or help her develop new interests in areas other than appearance and popularity.

Rather than just allowing your daughter to be impressed by all the media images, help her gain a realistic perspective. Encourage your daughter to see her real value as a person, rather than measuring herself against unrealistic advertising images.

If you find your daughter is showing signs of depression related to her appearance or sense of self-worth, consider seeing a professional counselor specializing in adolescents and teens.

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

Youth from A3

hard-pressed communities -- reducing unemployment, creating jobs and expanding economic opportunity in 50 communities throughout the nation.

The reauthorization of WIOA is also a victory for bipartisanship and responsible government action, two things that have been lacking recently in Washington. As President Obama commented, "Today's vote helps ensure that our workers can earn the skills employers are looking for right now and that American businesses have the talent pool it takes to compete and win in our global economy. I look forward to signing it into law and hope Congress will continue to come together to make progress for America's working families."

We intend to keep up the fight to see that they do.

Watch from A4

College in March 1960 for helping organize and participating in student sit-ins at Atlanta's racially segregated restaurants—I got arrested for sitting in the restaurant at Atlanta's City Hall—I wrote in my diary when I returned to Spelman's campus: "SOMETHING WORTH LIVING AND DYING FOR!" I never lost that conviction—especially during the four years I served in Mississippi as a civil rights lawyer during and after the 1964 Freedom Summer Project. Although I never cranked up my car in the morning without leaving the driver's door open having been instructed that if a bomb had been planted I had a chance that way of being thrown from the car injured rather than killed, and occasionally realized a bullet had whizzed by into a wall just passed, these things were not paralyzing. It's amazing how you learn to live with danger if you feel you're doing the right thing and connected to a higher presence. I marveled repeatedly at the courage I could not hope to match of poor Black Missis-

sippians, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) leaders, and the young civil rights workers in Mississippi—Black and White—who served in the Freedom Summer project and day in and day out risked their lives for justice.

I also learned that change is almost never instant or obvious but can take time from many many seeds that are faithfully sown. How rewarding it was when Andy Young became mayor of Atlanta 21 years after my arrest at City Hall—succeeding Maynard Jackson, who had been the first Black mayor of a major Southern city—and I visited him in his City Hall office. Doing the right thing matters even when you don't see the immediate consequences.

I hope and pray that a new generation of young people in America and around our world will catch the passion for justice and engagement and find their own calling to end indefensible child poverty, racism, ill health,

See WATCH, Page A12

O'Malley Makes Ceremonial Second Call On New Statewide 700 MHz Radio System

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD (July 18, 2014) – Today, Governor Martin O'Malley joined Superintendent of the Maryland State Police Colonel Marcus Brown, and several other state and local officials to make the ceremonial second call on the Maryland First Responders Interoperable Radio System Team or "Maryland FiRST," the new statewide 700 MHz radio system.

Today's event continues the 'Governing for Results' series, which highlights the Administration's 16 strategic goals to keep Maryland moving forward. Today's focus was on one of the Administration's primary homeland security goals -- to connect first responders on one interoperable radio system to better coordinate state and local resources in the event of an emergency.

"We are unified in our efforts to provide first responders with the tools they need to continue saving lives and protecting the public's safety," Gov. O'Malley. "Our most sacred duty as a government is the safety and security of our people. By setting measurable goals and investing in better technology, we will continue to

meet evolving challenges together and build a stronger and more resilient Maryland."

Governor O'Malley made the ceremonial second call today on the new radio system connecting the Maryland Joint Operations Center at the Maryland Emergency Management Agency, Maryland State Police Centreville Barracks, the State Highway Administration's Easton District, a Department of Natural Resources vessel located off of Deal Island, and with Ocean City Emergency Services Department.

In total there are eleven State agencies and three Federal law enforcement agencies operating on the system. As a result of the completion of phase 2, the entire Eastern Shore is now covered.

"This second phase of the new statewide secure radio system will allow for even more of Maryland's public safety agencies to communicate more efficiently on the same system, which will ultimately enhance our mission of homeland security," said Colonel Marcus L. Brown, Superintendent of the Maryland State Police. "Achieving maximum interoperability is a high priority for those who dedicate their lives to public safety. This new technology pro-



PHOTO COURTESY OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

vides increased efficiency, heightened awareness as situations occur and an even more rapid response time."

"Maryland FiRST" began providing statewide interoperable communications to connect Maryland's first responders on one secure radio system in 2012. This first phase became fully operational in 2012. The first phase connection completed coverage for Central Maryland and Kent County, and key infrastructure patrolled by the Maryland Transportation Authority Police which includes: the I-95 corridor, BWI Airport, Port of Baltimore, the Inter County Connector (ICC), the Key Bridge, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, the

Harry Nice Bridge and both tunnels under the Baltimore harbor. The entire Maryland FiRST system is anticipated to be complete by 2016.

"Governing for Results" is a statewide effort to promote the O'Malley-Brown Administration's 16 strategic goals and highlight Maryland's progress in the areas of opportunity (jobs and schools), sustainability, public safety, and health. Kicked off in early June, events will continue over the next several months and will chronicle some of the different strategies the Administration is using to make Maryland a safer, healthier place with more jobs and opportunity for all Marylanders.

Ukraine from A3

tigation is going to be ongoing, and I think what we'll see is additional information surfacing over the next 24 hours, 72 hours, the next week, the next month.

What we know right now, what we have confidence in saying right now is that a surface-to-air missile was fired and that's what brought the jet down. We know -- or we have confidence in saying that shot was taken within a territory that is controlled by the Russian separatists.

But I think it's very important for us to make sure that we don't get out ahead of the facts. And at this point, in terms of identifying specifically what individual or group of individuals or personnel ordered the strike, how it came about, those are things that I think are still going to be subject to additional information that we're going to be gathering. And we're working with the entire international community to make sure that the focus is on getting to the bottom of this thing and being truthful.

And my concern is obviously that there's been a lot of misinformation generated in eastern Ukraine generally. This should snap everybody's heads to attention and make sure that we don't have time for propaganda, we don't have time for games. We need to know exactly what happened. And everybody needs to make sure that we're holding accountable those who committed this outrage.

With respect to the second question, as you're aware, before this terrible incident happened we had already ratcheted up sanctions against Russia. And I think the concern not just of Russian officials but of the markets about the impact that this could have on the Russian economy is there for all to see.

I made clear to President Putin that our preferred path is to resolve this diplomatically. But that means that he and the Russian government have to make a strategic decision: Are they going to continue to support violent separatists whose intent is to undermine the government of Ukraine? Or are they prepared to work with the government of Ukraine to arrive at a cease-fire and a peace that takes into account the interests of all Ukrainians?

There has been some improved language at times over the last month coming from the Kremlin and coming from President Putin, but what we have not seen is an actual transition and different actions that would give us confidence that that's the direction that they want to take.

And we will continue to make clear that as Russia engages in efforts that are supporting the separatists, that we have the capacity to increase the costs that we impose on them. And we will do so. Not because we're interested in hurting Russia for the sake of hurting Russia, but because we believe in standing up for the basic principle that a country's sovereignty and territorial integrity has to be respected, and it is not the United States or Russia or Germany or any other country that should be deciding what happens in that country.

Q At this point do you see any U.S. military role that could be effective?

THE PRESIDENT: We don't see a U.S. military role beyond what we've already been doing in working with our NATO partners and some of the Baltic States, giving them reassurances that we are prepared to do whatever is required to meet our alliance obligations.

Steve Holland.

Q Sir, thank you. How much blame for this do you put on President Putin? And will you use this incident now to push the Europeans for stronger action?

THE PRESIDENT: We don't exactly know what happened yet, and I don't want to, as I said before, get out ahead of the facts. But what I do know is, is that we have seen a ticking up of violence in eastern Ukraine that, despite the efforts of the Ukrainian government to abide by a cease-fire and to reach out and agree to negotiations, including with the separatists, that has been rebuffed by these separatists. We know that they are heavily armed and that they are trained. And we know that that's not an accident. That is happening because of Russian support.

So it is not possible for these separatists to function the way they're functioning, to have the equipment that they have -- set aside what's happened with re-

spect to the Malaysian Airlines -- a group of separatists can't shoot down military transport planes or, they claim, shoot down fighter jets without sophisticated equipment and sophisticated training. And that is coming from Russia.

So we don't yet know exactly what happened with respect to the Malaysian Airlines, although obviously we're beginning to draw some conclusions given the nature of the shot that was fired. There are only certain types of anti-aircraft missiles that can reach up 30,000 feet and shoot down a passenger jet. We have increasing confidence that it came from areas controlled by the separatists. But without having a definitive judgment on those issues yet, what we do know is, is that the violence that's taking place there is facilitated in part -- in large part -- because of Russian support. And they have the ability to move those separatists in a different direction.

If Mr. Putin makes a decision that we are not going to allow heavy armaments and the flow of fighters into Ukraine across the Ukrainian-Russian border, then it will stop. And if it stops, then the separatists will still have the capacity to enter into negotiations and try to arrive at the sort of political accommodations that Mr. Putin himself says he wants to see. He has the most control over that situation, and so far, at least, he has not exercised it.

Q Tougher sanctions in Europe -- will you push for them?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that this certainly will be a wake-up call for Europe and the world that there are consequences to an escalating conflict in eastern Ukraine; that it is not going to be localized, it is not going to be contained. What we've seen here is -- just in one country alone, our great allies, the Dutch, 150 or more of their citizens being killed. And that, I think, sadly brings home the degree to which the stakes are high for Europe, not simply for the Ukrainian people, and that we have to be firm in our resolve in making sure that we are supporting Ukraine in its efforts to bring about a just cease-fire and that we can move towards a political solution to this.

I'm going to make this the last question. Lisa Lerer, Bloomberg.

Q Do we know yet if there were other Americans on board beyond the person you mentioned? And how do you prevent stricter restrictions, economic sanctions from shocking the global economy and --

THE PRESIDENT: We have been pretty methodical over the last 24 hours in working through the flight manifest and identifying which passengers might have had a U.S. passport. At this point, the individual that I mentioned is the sole person that we can definitively say was a U.S. or dual citizen.

Because events are moving so quickly, I don't want to say with absolute certainty that there might not be additional Americans, but at this stage, having worked through the list, been in contact with the Malaysian government, which processed the passports as folks were boarding, this is our best assessment of the number of Americans that were killed. Obviously that does nothing to lessen our outrage about all those families. Regardless of nationality, it is a heart-breaking event.

With respect to the effect of sanctions on the economy, we have consistently tried to tailor these sanctions in ways that would have an impact on Russia, on their economy, on their institutions or individuals that are aiding and abetting in the activities that are taking place in eastern Ukraine, while minimizing the impacts on not only the U.S. economy but the global economy.

It is a relevant consideration that we have to keep in mind. The world economy is integrated; Russia is a large economy; there's a lot of financial flows between Russia and the rest of the world. But we feel confident that at this point the sanctions that we've put in place are imposing a cost on Russia, that their overall impact on the global economy is minimal. It is something that we have to obviously pay close attention to, but I think Treasury, in consultation with our European partners, have done a good job so far on that issue.

Thank you very much, everybody.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review "Borgman"

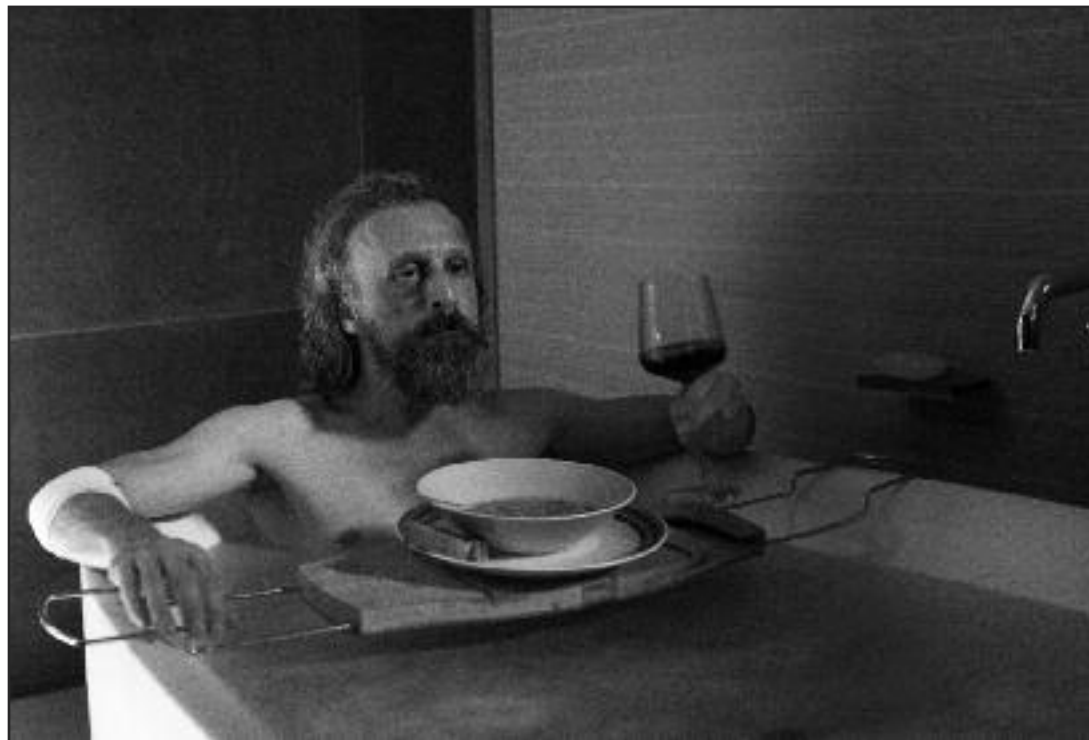
Borgman
Grade: B+
Not rated, probably R
for incidental nudity,
some strong violence
1 hr., 53 min.;
Dutch with subtitles

Borgman is a strange movie, but its strangeness is matter-of-fact, even casual. It's not the kind of strangeness that draws attention to itself and says, "Look how strange this is!" (That's the Tim Burton method.) If you were flipping channels and saw a scene out of context, you might not realize there was anything particularly unusual about Borgman at all.

But make no mistake, this is a baffling, bemusing story, something like *Funny Games*, *What About Bob?*, and a biblical parable about evil, all of it conveyed by writer-director Alex van Warmerdam with deadpan humor and an oblique sense of the sinister. His penchant for depicting things that would seem to require further explanation, then not giving it to us, can be maddening, so you have to stop waiting for literal answers, consider the allegorical ones, and enjoy the daftness.

It begins with a bearded, disheveled man who's eventually named Borgman (Jan Bijvoet) being rousted from his elaborately furnished underground dirt bunker in the forest by three angry men (including a priest) from a nearby town. Evading capture, he warns two friends (colleagues?) hiding in spider holes elsewhere in the woods, and disappears into an upscale suburban neighborhood, where he goes door to door asking if he can take a bath. So there's that.

He starts insinuating himself into the lives of an affluent family where the wife, Marina (Hadevych Minis), is an abstract painter with a lot of white liberal guilt, and the husband, Richard (Jeroen Perceval), is an aggres-



It begins with a bearded, disheveled man who's eventually named Borgman being rousted from his elaborately furnished underground dirt bunker in the forest by three angry men (including a priest) from a nearby town. Evading capture, he warns two friends hiding in spider holes elsewhere in the woods, and disappears into an upscale suburban neighborhood, where he goes door to door asking if he can take a bath. So there's that.

sive and humorless business bro. They have three cherubic young blond children, a Danish nanny (Sara Hjort Ditlevsen), and a gorgeous modern home. By degrees, Borgman comes to be involved with them, parlaying Marina's sympathy for him into a residency in the guest house.

Borgman has all the appearance of a harmless hobo, but we know he's not to be trusted. What keeps us off-balance is not knowing what his game is, whether he's whimsical, murderous, or something else. He wields some kind of power over Marina's dreams (but only when he squats naked over her while she sleeps; don't ask), and uses it to exploit an existing crack in her and Richard's marriage -- yet he doesn't seem to be interested in stealing Marina away. He tells the children grim folk tales, catching the interest of solemn-faced little Isolde (Elve

Lijbaart) in particular. Something's off about her.

Adding to our uneasy amusement: we get the sense that Borgman has done all of this before. When he needs to manipulate things to his favor, he calls on his accomplices -- the two men from the spider holes at the beginning and a couple of professionally dressed women -- to play various roles, ranging from clownish to deeply nefarious. They seem to have a pretty good system in place. (Who they are, exactly, and what their affiliation is are the kind of questions there's no point in asking.)

Van Warmerdam's style is detached, like he's aloof from the characters but halfway curious about them. That, and his judicious use of shocking violence (mostly unseen), reminds me of Michael Haneke. I also thought of *Dogtooth*, the insane 2009 Greek film about an isolated

family. Van Warmerdam's straight-faced presentation, eschewing musical underscore and other overt cues even when seemingly major events (like murder) are happening, makes the tone tantalizingly ambiguous. Should we be amused, nervous, or appalled? How serious is van Warmerdam? This seems like real life, but it seems like a fable, too.

Films like this, and Haneke's work, and *Dogtooth* -- casually surreal and dark, intentionally equivocal, punctuated with menace and meanness -- can be divisive. Either you dig it or you don't. If you don't, Borgman will probably seem pointless and arbitrary, like a rambling, morbid joke without a punchline. But if you do find yourself on van Warmerdam's wavelength, this humorous, subtly nightmarish tale could be the vigorous brain-boink you've been craving.

Defendants from A1

postponement of the case where appropriate, and a continuance can be requested when a case starts but circumstances require it to be delayed.

Wilcox said that while postponement requests and continuances also prolong the process, failing to appear hinders the ability for the court to proceed.

"With a postponement, you know when the case is coming back ... with a failure to appear, you don't know when or if they are coming," Wilcox said.

Wilcox said that judges only grant delays if there is a legitimate reason.

"Defendants have the right to a speedy trial," Wilcox explained.

He also said that failing to appear affects the court employees.

"When it gets put off, it adds to the ever increasing workload," Wilcox said. "There is more work than workers."

Angelita Plemmer Williams, a District Court spokeswoman, said that failure to appear affects witness testimony.

"As cases are delayed, witness memories will diminish," she said.

While the courts were unable to provide the quantifiable costs associated with failing to appear, Williams said it creates a "ripple effect" in terms of time and resources.

When a person fails to appear during a scheduled court date, it prompts additional actions from the court and the sheriff's office. The judge issues a bench warrant, the clerk processes the warrant and the sheriff's office serves it.

While many of the failure to appear defendants are picked up on traffic stops, Duran said that

In addition, Williams said that witnesses often take off work to appear in court, which can result in loss of wages.

The Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office is in charge of serving subpoenas, arrest warrants and bench warrants in its jurisdiction.

Lt. Jennifer Gilbert-Duran, of the Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Office, said that failure to appear cases make up a large portion of the warrants the deputies serve.

Duran said that when Sheriff Ronald S. Bateman, D-Anne Arundel, took office in December 2006, there were 13,584 open warrants and that at the end of February 2014, the sheriff's office had 8,978 open warrants.

While many of the failure to appear defendants are picked up on traffic stops, Duran said that

the progress is due to department efforts such as conducting sweeps and responding to tips.

Duran said there are three warrant teams and when they receive tips they have to coordinate resources quickly.

"That is challenging because we are only staffed with so many deputies," Duran said, adding that the department takes a team approach to handling warrants.

"When someone fails to appear in court, sometimes it is because of events beyond their control, but others appear to be evading," Duran said. She explained that deputies investigate Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration records, employment files, and utilize other methods to track down those who fail to appear.

Pigtown from A3

ing spot to bring people together. She provides it."

From the sidewalk outside the cafe's narrow entryway, Kassa can see the light standards of Oriole Park at Camden Yards. The schools of the University of Maryland, Baltimore lie just a few blocks north. And less than a mile south, building cranes are working on the site of the Horseshoe Casino, set to open in late summer.

Kassa thinks the casino can help speed the revival of Pigtown -- which got its name in the days when pigs were unloaded off rail cars and run through the streets to

butcher shops. In recent years, the neighborhood was given the more dignified name of Washington Village, but many -- including the local business association -- prefer to call it Pigtown.

"Everyone is expecting the casino to contribute money to the community," she said. "A lot of shops have been opening, and we think we're going to benefit from the casino."

"Great business potential" Hyman says 10 new businesses have come to Washington Boulevard commercial strip in the last 18 months.

Sen. Catherine Pugh, a Baltimore Democrat, opened the 2 Chic

Boutique at the corner of Washington Boulevard and West Barre Street last winter. "I think the casino will absolutely help," she said. On game days, "people walk by and stop in," she said. "We hope the casino will help similarly."

"There is a lot of great business potential in Pigtown," Pugh said. "We need to bring in more business that the neighborhood really wants, more restaurants, retail, the high-quality services the neighborhood deserves."

Hyman thinks the neighborhood will get some notice from casino visitors, perhaps from those "looking for something to do before or after they're done gambling."

Kassa certainly hopes the casino will help her cafe.

"Business every day is a struggle," she said. "We need more traffic, so I'm hoping the neighborhood will change and bring in more customers."

Some residents are worried that crime will increase with the casino's opening, "but I don't see it," Kassa said. "We don't get crime from the games, but we also don't get fans to come visit and spend money."

A diverse neighborhood

Since Hyman took over Pigtown Main Street in 2012, he said, he worked to bring more police pa-

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Luis Suárez May Bite, but FIFA Sucks Blood

This is not a pro-Luis Suárez column. This is not an article in defense of his taking a chomp out of Italy's Giorgio Chiellini during Uruguay's 1-0 World Cup victory. This is not a piece that will make apologies for Mr. Suárez, who has some longstanding issues when it comes to getting peckish with opponents, so much so, it was reported that 167 people won a "prop bet" that he would bite someone during the World Cup.

Suárez should be suspended because what he did should not be a part of the sport and is, frankly, kind of gross. But for the sports media to climb their branded pulpits and say that Suárez demands suspension precisely because young, impressionable, wide-eyed youngsters the world over would emulate him and start adopting a particular kind of paleo diet on the pitch, is absurd.

Hopefully, it goes without saying that if your kid is biting people, they probably have issues that need addressing above and beyond just their affection for Luis Suárez. But all that aside, there is something so profoundly noxious about the thought of Boss Sepp Blatter and FIFA doing anything for anyone's children, and being permitted to bathe themselves in that particular kind of sanctimonious light.

This is an organization that loves children when they are needed for commercials or to release "doves of peace" before an international audience. But when the cameras are away, its record is less dovish and more akin to vultures. FIFA has long cared for children only insofar as they show up to work on time to stitch the very balls kicked around the pitch. The organization, which is a stakeholder in soccer equipment produced the world over, has held a public opposition to child labor since 1997. Yet even its own commitment to "raising awareness of and attempting to curb child labour" has left a great deal to be desired.

In 2010, right before the World Cup in South Africa, the International Labor Rights Forum released a report titled "Missed the Goal for Workers: the Reality of Soccer Ball Stitches." The study outlined how child labor in sweat shop conditions was still a part of the FIFA production line in Pakistan, India, China and Thailand, concluding, "The existence of child labour and other labour abusive practices were found to varying degrees in all four FIFA licensed supply chains."

Ineke Zeldenrust from the Clean Clothes Campaign said in the report, "As fans worldwide get excited about the games, the public expects FIFA and the soccer ball industry to finally live up to its promises."

But at least FIFA gives lip service and even throws some money at organizations that aim to curb the use of child labor. It says and does nothing about the children of Brazil getting removed from their homes or having them occupied militarily in the name of World Cup security. These children are the invisible casualties of the World Cup, victimized by FIFA's security and stadium demands as well as the Brazilian government's efforts to use these mega-events as a way to displace impoverished communities that sit upon valuable land. In one destroyed favela I visited, the wreckage of a child's toys was all that was identifiable amidst the rubble. As families are compelled to move with little time and preparation, it was stunning to see what was left behind. Then there are the favelas that are still standing but are occupied by the police and military for the duration of the World Cup. A 14-year-old boy suspected of robbery was reported to have been shot and killed by Brazil's military police after being taken into custody.

The Suárez incident for me highlights less that a player has a biting problem than the fact that international soccer is run by vampires. It highlights the need for a body that oversees international soccer that doesn't do symbolic acts "for the children," while aiding and abetting the robbery of their childhoods. It showcases the need for new leadership and new principles to guide the beautiful game. Sepp Blatter and company may lower the boom on Luis Suárez's biting, but it will only serve to highlight the fact that they are all bark. On issues that require real leadership, FIFA is actually part of the problem.



controls into the neighborhood. It has made business owners more comfortable, he said, and some are staying open later.

The 50-acre neighborhood is one of most diverse in the city. The neighborhood is about 50 percent black, 40 percent white, with Asian, Hispanic and other groups composing the rest, according to 2011 statistics compiled by the Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance.

The ethnic diversity shows in the neighborhood array of business that feature international food and clothing.

Kassa, who was born in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, moved to New York when she was 18. That was

1985, in the midst of a famine that the United Nations estimates killed a million people in Ethiopia.

She has also lived in Washington and Texas. She and her husband, Richard, who is also Ethiopian, left Dallas to be closer to family in Northern Virginia and to be in a market where her husband can work at construction jobs.

Kassa wanted to open up a cafe. The couple settled on Pigtown after hearing of a vacancy from Ethiopian friends here.

That was 2 1/2 years ago, and Kassa wants to stay forever. "I love the neighborhood so much," she said. "The people here are great."

Calendar of Events

July 31 — August 6, 2014

Concerts in the Park! Nelly's Echo

Date & Time: Thursday, July 31, 2014, 7-8:30 pm
Description: Pop and R&B with African Roots!
Celebrate 17 years of music at Watkins Regional Park! Enjoy 7 weeks of cool tunes at twilight. Family and friends can enjoy a variety of FREE music under the setting sun. Bring a blanket and delight in the harmony on these jivin' Thursdays. Please note: This is a non-smoking venue!
Cost: FREE
Ages: All ages
Location: On the Green at Watkins Regional Park
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro 20774
Contact: 301-218-6700; TTY 301-218-6768

Free Marietta House Tour Day

Date and Time: Friday August 1, 2014, 1-4 pm
Description: Haven't been to Marietta in a while? Come back for a free fun and educational tour of the house and grounds!
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Marietta House Museum
5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, Maryland 20769
Contact: 301-464-5291; TTY 301-699-2544 (Mary Amen)

Xtreme Teens: Late Night Swim

Date and Time: Wednesdays & Saturdays,
July 2-August 9, 2014 9 pm-12 midnight
Event Description: Safe Summer participants will enjoy swimming at Theresa Banks Aquatic Facility.
Ages: 12-24
Fee: FREE
Location: Glenarden Community Center
8615 McLain Avenue, Glenarden 20706
Contact: 301-772-3151; TTY 301-218-6768

Xtreme Teens (Safe Summer): Chase Your Dreams

Date and Time: Saturday, August 2, 2014 10 pm-12 midnight
Description: Test your basketball skills with former WNBA basketball player, Sonia Chase. Afterward, cool down by playing your pick of classic board games.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17
Location: North Brentwood Community Center
4012 Webster Street, North Brentwood 20722
Contact: 301-864-0756; TTY 301-455-4512

Xtreme Teens (Safe Summer): Nachos and Video Game Night

Date and Time: Saturday, August 2, 2014 10 pm-12 midnight
Description: Choose a TV and a game system to play your favorite video games with your friends! But, don't forget to enjoy tasty nachos when you take a break.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 12-18
Location: Bladensburg Community Center
4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-277-2124; TTY 301-445-4512

Arts on the Waterfront

Date and Time: Sunday, August 3, 2014 6-7:30 pm
Description: Join us at the Waterfront with a great day of arts on the waterfront! There will be plenty of music and entertainment from jazz to rock—even a puppet show. Refreshments will be available for sale.
Cost: FREE
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Bladensburg Waterfront Park
4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544

Club 300 Group Walk (Woodrow Wilson Bridge)

Date & Time: Sunday, August 3, 2014 9:30-11 am
Description: Hey seniors, join Club 300 for our Summer Walking Program! Walking is an easy way to stay in shape. And, we'll do so walking the Woodrow Wilson Bridge together! Please arrive on time and meet us at the Oxon Hill Manor parking lot.
Cost: FREE
Ages: 50 & better
Location: Oxon Hill Manor Historic Site
6907 Oxon Hill Road, Oxon Hill 20745
Contact: 301-446-3400; TTY 301-446-3402

Xtreme Teens (Safe Summer): Floor Hockey

Date and Time: Monday, August 4, 2014 10 pm-12 am
Description: Got Monday Night blues? Don't. Instead, enjoy floor hockey with your friends and then photography club afterwards!
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 12-18
Location: Langley Park Community Center
1500 Merimac Drive, Hyattsville 20783
Contact: 301-445-4508; TTY 301-445-4512

Tumbling Workshops

Date and Time: Mondays, August 4 & 11, 8:30- 9:30 pm
Description: Looking to improve your tumbling technique? The gymnastics venue is offering workshops to help improve your tumbling skills. These workshops are a great way to focus on your specific tumbling needs, whether you're a beginner or advanced tumbler, our experienced instructors can help you achieve your goals! Spaces are offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.
Cost: \$12/participant
Ages: 8- 18 years
Location: Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, MD 20785
Contact: 301-583-2400; TTY 301-583-2483

Night of the Arts

Date and Time: Thursday, August 7, 2014 6:30-8 pm
Description: Enjoy an amazing view of the Patuxent River while listening to soothing live music and sipping a glass of wine on the patio! Light refreshments will be served.
Cost: Resident: \$10; Non-Resident: \$12
Ages: 21 & up
Location: Billingsley House
6900 Green Landing Road, Upper Marlboro 20772
Contact: 301-627-0730; TTY 301-446-6802

EARTH TALK ... Preventing Wildfires

Dear EarthTalk:

Why are wildfires on the increase and what can be done to stop them from happening?

— Sandy Heffran,
Albuquerque, NM

There's no question that wildfires are on the increase across the American West and other fire-prone regions of the world, and most environmental leaders agree that global warming is largely to blame. In a recent study published in the journal *Geophysical Research Letters*, researchers from the University of Utah analyzed a database of large wildfires in the western U.S. between 1984 and 2011 and found a significant increase in the number of large fires and/or the area covered by the blazes. From Nebraska to California, the number of large wildfires increased sevenfold per year over the study period, with the total area burned increasing by 90,000 acres a year on average.

"Wildfire trends in the West are clear: There are more large fires burning now than at any time in the past 40 years and the total area burned each year has also increased," says Alyson Kenward of the nonprofit Climate Central. "Over the same span, average spring and summer temperatures across 11 Western states have increased by more than 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit, contributing to the higher fire risks." What worries Kenward and oth-

ers is that the latest climate model projections show temperatures rising an additional two to four degrees Fahrenheit over the next few decades (and as much as eight degrees by 2100).

According to the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), the hotter temperatures we are already experiencing increase fire risks for several reasons. For one, drier, hotter conditions increase evaporation rates and encourage desertification. Also, as snowpacks melt earlier and summer temperatures rise to new heights, the length of the "fire season" is extending. Meanwhile, warming-induced insect infestations and other problems are ravaging many forests, turning once teeming ecosystems into tinderboxes. And the increased frequency of lightning as thunder storms become more severe only exacerbates the situation.

Not everyone agrees that global warming is causing the increase in wildfires. Professor David B. South of Auburn University points the finger at forest management and fire suppression practices over the last century that have allowed "fuels" to build up on forest floors, making the fires that do get started that much harder to quell or contain. "Policymakers who halt active forest management and kill 'green' harvesting jobs in favor of a 'hands-off' approach contribute to the buildup of fuels in the forest," South told the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee in May 2014. "This eventually increases the risk of catastrophic wildfires," he said, adding that



CREDIT: JOHN MCCOLGAN

Wildfires are on the rise across the American West and other fire-prone regions of the world, and most environmentalists agree that global warming is largely to blame. But some scientists point out that poor forest management and fire suppression practices over the last century have allowed "fuels" to build up on forest floors, making the fires that do get started that much harder to quell or contain.

blaming carbon dioxide emissions for increased fire risk would be "simply unscientific."

Regardless of who is right, we can all help reduce or prevent wildfires. According to Smokey Bear, the federal government's mascot for wildfire prevention since the 1940s, those of us living in or visiting fire-prone areas should take extra precautions when burning anything outdoors. The campfire

safety page of Smokey Bear's website outlines how to build and extinguish campfires properly to minimize wildfire risks, and provides lots of other relevant tips on how to stay vigilant. You can also help reduce the risk of wildfire by reducing your carbon footprint (drive and fly less, plant trees) and speaking up for legislation and other actions that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

CONTACTS: NWF, www.nwf.org; Climate Central, www.climatecentral.org; Smokey Bear, www.smokeybear.com.

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Farmland from A1

the watershed portion in all of the Bay states gaining acreage.

"Other things being equal, intensifying ag land is going to make the Bay problem worse," Shortle said. "Where it happens specifically is important to assessing what the implications of that would be."

For instance, he noted, changes near waterways, and the Bay itself, have a greater impact than changes farther upland. But the agricultural census doesn't provide that level of detail, so weighing the exact impact is difficult.

States in the watershed bucked some of the national trends in the census, a voluminous compilation of survey data compiled every five years, but they tracked closely with the rest of the country on others.

Nationwide, the country experienced a loss of 7.6 million acres of farmland between 2007 and 2012. But the rate of loss is slowing.

"We were noticing a significant increase in the loss of land in farms over the previous censuses. This census, we've seen that slowing down nationwide," said King J. Whetstone II, director of the Northeastern Region of the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service.

Virginia ranked fifth in the country among states that saw increased farm acreage over the five-year period, adding nearly 200,000 acres. Most of that acreage was in its southwestern portion, but counties located in the Bay watershed accounted for about 33,500 acres of the gain.

The Bay portions of Maryland and New York were the only state portions that shed farmland between censuses, while Bay watershed portions of Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Delaware added acreage.

The census is used by the state-federal Bay Program to help project county-by-county land use changes across the Chesapeake watershed. Those changes can guide how nutrient applications — and their sources — change over time for a county or watershed.

Historically, those projections have shown a steady loss of

farmland throughout the region, and those decreases likely contributed to reduced nutrient runoff over the years, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s when the region suffered substantial farmland losses.

But the new census will likely change future projections, at least for some areas, said Matt Johnston, a nonpoint source data analyst with the University of Maryland stationed at the Bay Program.

Not only do agricultural acres change, but the data also show some shifts in animal populations, including an unexpected increase in cattle, where numbers were previously thought to be decreasing, Johnston said.

Most shifts are subtle and are not likely to result in dramatic changes across the watershed, he said, though some locations could see more substantial impacts after all of the data are analyzed.

"There are winners and losers in all of this," Johnston said. "It could be really big in some counties, and really small in other counties."

Overall, the country saw the number of small and beginning farm operators increase by more than 11 percent since 2007. But some of its biggest farms grew even larger as operations consolidated or plowed more land into crops, especially in the Midwest.

Chesapeake Bay states embodied both ends of this spectrum, with counties closer to the metro sometimes adding small farms, while farms in more rural areas sometimes added acreage.

The number of small farms with fewer than 50 acres grew exponentially in the New England states, a trend that is starting to spread to mid-Atlantic states like Virginia.

"There is something going on in terms of the small operations around the metro areas," said Jim Pease, an agricultural economist at Virginia Tech. "You are getting an increase in farms of fairly small operations, but primarily producing direct consumer products, be that livestock or vegetables."

Nationally, farms reported an 8 percent increase in their direct-to-consumer sales, like those that occur at farmers markets, between 2007 and 2012.

"When you compare it to the Midwest, you've got your corn and soybean and cattle," Whetstone said. "The diversity of agriculture in the Northeast is maybe superior to any other region, with the exception of probably the West Coast because of California."

Of the 19 states that gained agricultural lands in the 2012 census, several of them were in the Northeast and mid-Atlantic regions that also saw an increase at least in part because of the increase in small farms.

Meanwhile, changes in the traditional Farm Belt states continued to drive the biggest trends nationwide. This was the first time the census showed that the combined acreage of corn and soybean topped 50 percent of all harvested acres in the country. Beef cattle made up the largest category of farm operations, with 29 percent of all farms and ranches in the country specializing in cattle in 2012.

While the Chesapeake Bay region is known for its high enrollments of farmers in land conservation programs like the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, other swaths of the country showed much higher enrollment in terms of acreage in the 2012 Census.

A census map showing a blue dot for every 5,000 acres enrolled in Conservation Reserve, Wetlands Reserve, Farmable Wetlands or CREP included densely dotted areas in Washington state, Montana, North Dakota and near the shared borders of Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas. Southern Iowa and northern Missouri also reflected high enrollments, while the Chesapeake Bay region, where some of these programs originated, showed comparatively little.

"It could be because of the size of those farms," said Jim Baird, mid-Atlantic director for the American Farmland Trust. "You have to (enroll) a lot of farms to get one of those dots in the mid-Atlantic."

Baird mentioned that many of the regions with high enrollments are home to sprawling ranch or prairie lands in which one farmer holds hundreds of thousands of acres.

"If you selected another measurement, like percentage of streams with buffers or percentage of farmers with CREP, it might even out more," Baird said.

But the census data shows a decreasing trend in the amount of farmland in land retirement programs such as CREP and its Conservation Reserve Program. Bay watershed farmland enrolled in those programs declined 20 percent from 2007 levels, to about 257,000 acres.

The change could be, in part, a reflection of the first round of expiring 15-year contracts from when CREP was first launched.

These numbers hint at a change that could be a problem for some states. Retiring active cropland is an important source of nutrient reductions in both Pennsylvania's and Virginia's watershed implementation plans, which show how jurisdictions intend to meet Bay nutrient and sediment reduction obligations.

A separate analysis for the USDA by Shortle and several colleagues also showed that both Pennsylvania and Virginia needed to retire farmland to meet their Bay nutrient and reduction goals, with Virginia facing the greatest need.

"Virginia by a long ways has a hard time making the WIP goals unless you retire farmland," Shortle said. "Pennsylvania could meet its nitrogen allocation, but not the phosphorus allocation, though it is just by a little bit."

Dubin, with the Bay Program's Agriculture Workgroup, said that no one should count on the retirement of farmland in the future as a way to achieve nutrient reduction goals.

Even if commodity prices remain low, the spikes of recent years mean landowners will likely want to keep land available to bring back into production if prices get high rather than enroll in a land retirement program.

"I don't see [farmland retirement] increasing, I see that decreasing," Dubin said. As a result, he said, his agricultural workgroup is trying to identify new management techniques, such as more precisely managing fertilizer applications on field, to help meet nutrient goals.