

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY Since 1952

Vol. 82, No. 40 October 2 – October 8, 2014

Prince George's County, Maryland

Newspaper of Record

Phone: 301-627-0900

25 cents

\$9.8 Million will Reduce Pollution, Improve Water Quality in Chesapeake Bay

By PRESS OFFICER
Chesapeake Bay Program

Largo, MD – The Chesapeake Bay Program and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) have announced the recipients of \$3 million in grants for restoration, conservation and environmental outreach initiatives across the Maryland and the District of Columbia. The 13 projects will leverage more than \$3.8 million in matching funds to lower pollution and improve the health of rivers, streams and the Bay.

The funding for these projects was awarded through the

Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, which is financed by the Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants Program and the Small Watershed Grants Program. Officials and guests announced the awards at the Prince George's County Department of the Environment in Largo, MD, where a 2014 grant will support innovative green infrastructure practices.

"Through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, NFWF and our partners, especially the U.S. Environmental Protection

See CHESAPEAKE Page A3



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY TEDDY AMENABAR

Delegation Syria: Secretary of State John Kerry testifies Wednesday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on the Obama administration's plan to combat the Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria.

Republicans Grill Federal Officials Ahead of Second Obamacare Enrollment Period

By ASHLEY S. WESTERMAN
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - Two months before the second enrollment period begins to purchase health insurance through the online marketplaces set up by the Affordable Care Act, Congress is asking if it's going to go more smoothly this year.

The federal website, HealthCare.gov, has been plagued with problems and technical glitches since its initial launch on Oct.

1. This summer, the site was successfully hacked for the first time, raising further questions about its security.

At a Wednesday hearing of the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Health, subcommittee Chairman Rep. Kevin Brady, R-Texas, pressed Andrew Slavitt, deputy director of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, for answers.

See OBAMACARE Page A5

Some Members of Maryland Delegation Push for Limits on Mission in Iraq and Syria

By IDREES ALI AND
TEDDY AMENABAR
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - As President Barack Obama prepares to increase U.S. military action against the rapid expansion of Islamic extremists in Iraq and Syria, some members of Mary-

land's congressional delegation want to guarantee that American troops will not get involved in a ground war.

The Obama administration, which has already carried out more than 150 airstrikes in Iraq to "degrade and destroy" the Islamic State group, has argued that it has the legal authority to do the same in Syria

based on earlier congressional approvals. Authorization for Use of Military Force legislation, approved for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2002, respectively, gave the Bush administration the authority to carry out military action in each country.

However, before increasing involvement to neutralize the

Islamic State group in Iraq and Syria, some members of Maryland's congressional delegation are calling for a new authorization. They want to hold the Obama administration to its promise to keep ground combat forces out of the mission.

See MISSION Page A5

Attorney General Eric Holder Announces His Plans to Depart Justice Department

By PRESS OFFICER
U.S. Department of Justice

I come to this moment with very mixed emotions. Proud of what the men and women of the Department of Justice have accomplished over the last six years and, at the same time, very sad that I will not be a formal part of the great things that this department and this President will accomplish over the next two.

I want to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity you gave me to serve and for giving me the greatest honor of my professional life. We have been great colleagues, but the bonds between us are much deeper than that. In good times and bad, in things personal and professional, you have been there for me. I am proud to call you my friend. I am also grateful for the support you have given me and the department as we have made real the visions that you and I have always shared. I often think of those early talks between us and our belief that we might help to craft a more

perfect Union. Work remains to be done – but our list of accomplishments is real. Over the last six years, our Administration has made historic gains in realizing the principles of the founding documents, and fought to protect the most sacred of American rights: the right to vote. We have begun to realize the promise of equality for our LGBT brothers and sisters and their families. We have begun to significantly reform our criminal justice system and reconnect those who bravely serve in law enforcement with the communities they protect. We have kept faith with our belief in the power of the greatest judicial system the world has ever known to fairly and effectively adjudicate any cases that are brought before it, including those that involve the security of the nation we both love so dearly. We have taken steps to protect the environment and make more fair the rules by which our commercial enterprises operate. And we have held accountable those who would harm the



PHOTO COURTESY, WIKIMEDIA

Eric Holder announces resignation.

American people either through violent means or the misuse of economic or political power.

I have loved the Department of Justice ever since, as a young boy, I watched Robert Kennedy prove during the Civil Rights Movement how the department can – and must – always be a force for that which is right. I hope that I have done honor to the faith you placed in me, Mr. President, and to the legacy of all

those that served before me.

I would also like to thank the Vice President, who I have known for so many years and in whom I have found great wisdom, unwavering support, and a shared vision of what America can, and should, be. I want to recognize my good friend Valerie Jarrett, whom I've been fortunate to work

See ERIC HOLDER Page A5

Prince George's County Students Named to Dean's List At Berkeley College

By PRESS OFFICER
Berkeley College

Four exceptional Students from Prince George's County, MD, have been named to the Dean's List at Berkeley College for the Spring 2014 Quarter.

"Congratulations to these students who have worked hard in their pursuit of academic excellence," said Dario A. Cortes, PhD, President of Berkeley College. "This recognition of top-performing students sets a solid foundation for their future success."

The following students from Prince George's County have been recognized:

- Kristen Brewer of Upper Marlboro, White Plains location in Westchester County, NY

- Becky Escalante of Laurel, Berkeley College Online®

- Dasha Jennings of Bowie, Midtown Manhattan location in New York City, NY

- Akenya Phillips of Capitol Heights, White Plains location in Westchester County, NY

Berkeley College students who achieve a grade point average of 3.50 or better with a minimum of 12 academic credits qualify for the Dean's List.

A leader in providing career-focused education for more than 80 years, Berkeley College is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and enrolls approximately 8,000 students — including more than 900 international students — in its Baccalaureate and Associate degree and Certificate programs. The College has three New York locations — Midtown Manhattan, Brooklyn and White Plains. In New Jersey there are six locations — Woodland Park, Paramus, Woodbridge, Newark, Clifton and Dover. Berkeley College Online® serves a global population. Programs are offered in more than 20 career fields. The website address is www.BerkeleyCollege.edu.

INSIDE

Maryland Health Care Exchange Premium Rates Expected to Increase

Cynthia Cox, senior policy analyst and co-author of the study, said they found costs are projected to moderately increase in all 16 cities. In Baltimore, premiums for some of the most popular plans are expected to increase.

Community, Page A3

Silicon Valley Must Embrace Diversity

It is not enough to lament the numbers; Silicon Valley must be more intentional about increasing diversity. The industry would do well to follow the example of some of the large telecom companies, which have taken proactive measures in recent years to increase diversity within their organizations. ?

Commentary, Page A4

Equipping the Next Generation of Innovators

I believe that access to the Internet is something that everybody should have and should actively use in their day-to-day lives. It's a lifesaver, a game-changer and most importantly, it is us, because without you and me, where would the internet be?

Business, Page A5

Movie Review: "Birdman"

The man is Riggan Thomson, once the star of a blockbuster superhero franchise, now washed-up and trying revive his career by starring in a stage version of a Raymond Carver story that he adapted and directed himself. Also, either he's losing his mind, or he really does have superpowers. Or maybe both.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that some food purveyors are contributing to the destruction of tropical rainforests by ditching unhealthy "trans fats?"

— Billy S.,
Salem, OR

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Jaws of Life & lots of fun at Morningside VFD Open House,

Bring the family to the Morningside Fire Department's annual Open House on Oct. 18, noon to 3pm. I don't know what they'll have this time, but last year they had a huge slide for the kids, demos by the County Police motorcycles, face-painting, free smoke alarms, good food and, besides, they sliced open a car with the Jaws of Life. It was a fun event.

The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department has, so far this year, more than 4200 service calls, making it numbered among the busiest departments in the country. The firehouse is located at 6200 Suitland Road. For more information, call 301-736-4342.

Improvements coming to Branch Ave. (with lane closures)

Maryland State Highway Administration is kicking off a \$10 million road project that'll improve access for pedestrians and cyclists along Branch Avenue (route 5). More than 50,000 vehicles use this roadway every day.

The work on Branch Avenue, between Curtis Drive and Southern Avenue, includes the construction of nearly two miles of sidewalk, improved medians and islands, upgrades to the drainage system and road-widening to allow for bike lanes.

Some lane closures will be necessary during the work, which is expected to be completed by spring of 2017.

About two miles away, the state is also working on a \$37 million project at the Branch Avenue Metro Station where there are plans for a new pedestrian bridge and better access for drivers and pedestrians.

Halloween without Screams

Bring the kids, 12 and younger, to "Halloween without the Screams" on Friday, Oct. 31, 6:30-8:30pm, at the Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex, 7007 Bock Road in Fort Washington. Carnival games, arts & crafts, a costume parade and their Trunk-A-Treat Finale will be featured. Admission is \$5. For information, call 301-749-4160.

Neighbors

On September 25 at St. Philip's Church, I talked with Peggy Nanney, longtime resident of Maple Road in Morningside. She was attending Mass on the

second anniversary of the death of her mom, Melma Nanney. "Seems like yesterday," she said.

Skyline's COPS Officer Gonzales was not able to attend the Skyline Citizens Association's meeting on Sept. 17; he was recovering from an achilles tendon injury. It wasn't in the line of duty, however, but from a basketball game.

Speakers at the Skyline Citizens meeting were Morningside Fire Chief Michael White, Inspector Renee Vidato from the Dept. of Permitting, Inspections & Enforcement Division, Sgt. Jeff Schreiber and other County Police officers. As always, it was a valuable meeting.

In last week's column I mentioned my son Brian had brain cancer surgery at John's Hopkins on Sept. 24. He has made an amazing recovery and is now back home in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. Hopkins even made an appointment for him at a cancer center near Pensacola. He asked me to thank all who prayed for him.

Grand re-opening for Fairmount Heights Library

Kathleen A. Teaze, Director of the Prince George's County Library opened the ceremony, on Sept. 10, celebrating the re-opening of the Fairmount Heights Branch Library. A number of County VIPs were in attendance. The library boasts new technology and an updated interior.

Former Fairmont Heights High School librarian dies at 81

Patricia Shaughnessy, 81, longtime resident of Rayburn Drive in Temple Hills and member of St. Philip's Parish, died Sept. 15. In recent years she lived in Silver Spring. She was the wife of the late William David Shaughnessy, Capt., U.S. Navy (ret.); mother of William Jr., Ann Boland, Susan Baglini, Terri Collins, Kathryn Rioux, Lisa Nichols, Elizabeth Shaughnessy and the late Maureen Shaughnessy, M.D.; sister of Mary Elizabeth Crandall; 16 grandchildren and two great-granddaughters.

Pat was my inspiration. After raising her eight children, she went back to college to earn a master's degree in library science. She was librarian for some years at Fairmont Heights High School and she also helped found St. Philip's Library where I vol-

unteered. I followed in her footsteps, got my MLS at Catholic University, and was librarian at St. Philip's for 30 years.

Fairmount/Fairmont

As I am writing this column I am perplexed by the spelling of the town, the library and the high school. A little research let me know that the town is Fairmount Heights, incorporated in 1935, and its library is Fairmount Heights Library. However, the school is Fairmont Heights High School (which is actually in Capitol Heights). I'm still a little confused.

May they rest in peace

Helen L. York, 80, longtime resident of Suitland, died August 23 in Harwood. She served in the Air Force and as a U. S. Senate administrator for 21 years. Helen loved traveling with friends and visiting National Parks. Survivors include three brothers and nieces and nephews. Burial was Sept. 24 at Maryland Veterans Cemetery in Cheltenham. I never met Helen, but she often called me with items for this column. I'll miss those calls.

Herbert Hoover Miller, 85, of Riva and a 1946 graduate of the old Maryland Park High School, died June 8. He served with the Army during WWII and had a lengthy career with Bell Atlantic. He was a lifetime member of the Capitol Heights Fire Department. He was predeceased by his second wife Elizabeth Audrey Miller and five siblings. Survivors include his first wife, Connie Briguglio, four daughters, two stepdaughters, five siblings, and many grand- and great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Jasmine Wade, Nola Thomas and my grandson, Sam Mudd, Oct. 2; John Ihrig, Oct. 3; Marlene Titus, Oct. 4; Sue Gilmore and Muriel Ireson, Oct. 5; Bruno Parco, Rory Lohman, Carmen Buffington and George Nixon, Oct. 6; Dr. Alvin Thornton and Kam'Ron Blade, Oct. 7; and Greta Chambers, Oct. 9.

Happy anniversary to Larry and Jean Beardmore on their 55th, Oct 4; Bill and Terry Ratliff, their 28th on Oct. 4; and my daughter Elaine and Luke Seidman, their silver anniversary on Oct. 7.

times on Monday's, Wednesday's and Fridays from 8:00 AM-12:00 Noon. Ages are 60 and up. The cost is free. The location is Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex 8101 Sheriff Road Landover, Maryland 20785. Contact number is 301-583-2483.

RESIDENT TEACHER INFORMATION SESSIONS

The Resident Teacher Program is a Maryland Approved Alternative Certificate Program for individuals with a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree, but not teacher trained. Prince Georges County Public Schools will host information sessions for teacher preparation for the 2015-16 school year.

The remaining sessions are October 7, 2014 at 6:00 PM. Location is Langley Park-McCormick Elementary School 8201 15th Avenue Hyattsville, Maryland 20783. October 12, 2014 at Kingsford Elementary School located at 1401 Enterprise Road Mitchellville, Maryland 20721. October 21, 2014 at Dr. Henry Wise High School located at 12650 Brooke Lane Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

To register to attend one of the Information Sessions or for general information visit the Resident Teacher Program website or call 301-780-2727.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP

Rev. Constance Smith, Pastor New Hope Fellowship, members, children, family and friends went to the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC to see the production "Lion King." The children really enjoyed themselves. Thanks to Pastor Smith they got the opportunity tour backstage.

SHOW PLACE ARENA

Come and enjoy the 70's Soul Sounds on November 7, 2014 7:30 at Show Place Arena. Cost is from \$60.00 to \$75.00. You can buy tickets at ticketmaster. The address is Show Place Arena 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue Upper Maryland, 20772.

You can enjoy Harold Melvin's Blue Notes on November 29, 2014 at 7:00 PM. Cost is from \$35.00 to \$75.00. You can purchase tickets at ticketmaster. The address is Show Place Arena located 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

Neighborhood Events

Free Colorectal Screenings Provided at Doctors Community Hospital

Lanham, MD – Colorectal cancer is often preventable and curable. However, it is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in Maryland. To provide preventative medicine and high-quality care, Doctors Community Hospital and the Prince George's County Health Department have partnered to provide free colonoscopies.

Community members may qualify for free colonoscopies if they meet specific program requirements:

- Prince George's County residents
- Ages 50 or older
- Ages 50 or younger with a family history of colorectal cancer
- Income eligibility

All colonoscopies are performed by experienced gastroenterologists at Doctors Community Hospital.

To learn more or to register, call 240-542-3380 or 301-883-3526.

Barry Sailors of Bowie Maryland Visit Philadelphia to Honor Namesake

PHILADELPHIA (NNS) - USS Barry (DDG 52) Sailors traveled to Philadelphia Sept. 7, to pay tribute to their ship's namesake, Commodore John Barry.

They visited the site of Commodore Barry Bridge and held a reenlistment ceremony at historic Independence Square, in front of their namesake's statue. They left United States flags at each location to be flown at the ceremony honoring the commodore's death Sept. 13, 1803.

Traveling to the area during back to school week, they established ties with students, faculty and staff at the John Barry Elementary School, visited Sterling High School in Somerdale, New Jersey, to speak with Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps students and Villanova University, where they addressed the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps.

"Visiting John Barry Elementary School was an incredibly rewarding experience. I felt I was able to connect with the students and share my Navy experiences with them," said Chief Culinary Specialist Matthew Abel. "It was really great seeing their reaction when we walked into the gym in our dress whites. It definitely made me feel a sense of pride in serving my country."

While touring Independence Square, Barry's Commanding Officer, Cmdr. Patrick Foster, had the honor of reenlisting Philadelphia native and Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class Nicholas Perez, in front of the Commodore John Barry statue there. Attending the event was Perez's extended family, including his grandfather, retired Navy SEAL, Radioman 2nd Class Cesar Perez.

"It truly was an honor to reenlist Petty Officer Perez in his hometown, especially in front of his family and particularly his grandfather," said Foster. "His family was great - they really support him and are incredibly proud of everything he has done."

Another trip highlight was a dinner hosted by the Philadelphia Navy League, where the Sailors enjoyed dining with two decorated World War II veterans, one of whom was the recipient of two Purple Hearts, earned in the war in the South Pacific.

"It was cool having dinner with retired Navy World War II veterans," said Fire Controlman 1st Class Joseph Frisicco. "They had a lot of incredible things to say and it gave me a much better perspective of why I serve my country. It was awesome."

John Barry is known as the "Father of the American Navy" and generally recognized as the finest Sailing man of his time.

He was born in Wexford, Ireland in 1745 and, at the outbreak of hostilities between England and the Colonies, offered his services to Congress. His ship, the Black Prince, was purchased by the government and named "Alfred." It was on this ship that John Paul Jones, as a lieutenant, first hoisted the American (Grand Union) Flag. Upon reorganization of the Navy on June 5, 1794, Barry topped the list of captains. His commission was signed by Gen. George Washington, and dated Feb. 22, 1797. He died in his home near Philadelphia at the age of 53 and is buried in the city.

Enjoy the Majesty of Fall; Join the Arbor Day Foundation in October

The Arbor Day Foundation will brighten up your fall by offering 10 free autumn classics trees when you join the organization in October.

The free trees are part of the nonprofit Arbor Day Foundation's Trees for America campaign, a program dedicated to environmental stewardship through the planting of trees.

Everyone who joins the Arbor Day Foundation in October will receive 10 free autumn classics: Two sugar maples, two red maples and one each of scarlet oak, sweetgum, northern red oak, silver maple, white flowering dogwood and Washington hawthorn.

"Members will especially enjoy these trees during the autumn months because they'll add abundant, vibrant color to any yard or landscape for years to come," said Matt Harris, chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation.

The trees will be shipped postpaid at the right time for planting, between Nov. 1 and Dec. 10. The 6- to 12-inch trees are guaranteed to grow or they will be replaced free of charge. Planting instructions will be enclosed with each shipment of trees.

To receive 10 free autumn classics, send a \$10 membership contribution to Autumn Classics Trees, Arbor Day Foundation, 100 Arbor Ave., Nebraska City, NE 68410, by October 31, 2014, or join online at arborday.org/october.

THOMPSON CREEK WINDOW COMPANY AWARDED MADE IN USA CERTIFICATION

Maryland based replacement window manufacturer

supports American materials, jobs and economy

LANHAM, MD – Thompson Creek Window Company announced today that its windows have been officially certified as American-made. The certification – awarded by Made in USA Certified Inc. – followed a rigorous six-month supply chain audit, proving that the materials and goods used in Thompson Creek window manufacturing have been made in the United States. Thompson Creek Window Company is 1 of just 14 companies based in Maryland to be awarded such a certification and one of only 400 total companies nationwide.

"Supporting local businesses and the US economy is something we all strive to do, but too often, consumers are unaware of the true origin of the products they are purchasing. The Made in the USA certified label promises that when you purchase a Thompson Creek window, you are supporting American jobs," said Rick Wuest, President and CEO, Thompson Creek Window Company. "Thompson Creek has been committed to using American made materials to fabricate our windows since the days when my family started manufacturing windows in 1980. Supporting American jobs and businesses is in alignment with our core values and we are pleased to receive recognition for this commitment."

Made in USA Certified, Inc. is the nation's leading third-party certification source and the only enterprise that audits a company's entire supply chain to guarantee company claims. The certification process creates much needed transparency, accountability and truthfulness in the marketplace for 'Made in USA' claims.

Thompson Creek Window Company provides more than 400 jobs in Maryland, supporting economic growth and guaranteeing a locally manufactured quality product.

About Thompson Creek Window Company

The Thompson Creek Window Company is a privately owned and family-operated manufacturer and installer of energy-efficient home improvement replacement products. Founded in 1980, Thompson Creek Window Company began as a manufacturer of energy-efficient, maintenance-free vinyl windows. Since that time, Thompson Creek Window Company has evolved into one of the leading specialty home improvement contracting companies in the nation. The company's product mix includes replacement windows and doors and a clog-free gutter system. Thompson Creek Window Company is headquartered in Lanham, Maryland with an 80,000 square-foot manufacturing facility in Landover, Maryland. Thompson Creek employs over 400 people in the Washington D.C. region.

The USA-C™ seals show that a company bearing these trust marks has gone through a rigorous supply chain audit to verify compliance with national standards. Trust but Certify!™

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

2014 FALL REVIVAL

Westphalia United Methodist Church Rev. Dr. Timothy West, Senior Pastor invites you to the 2014 Fall Revival "Making Jesus First" (Matthew 6:31-34). Speakers will be Rev. Daryl Williams Pastor St. Paul UMC Oxon Hill, Maryland on October 14, 2014. Rev. Kevin Smalls Pastor Queens Chapel UMC Beltsville, Maryland on October 15, 2014. Rev. Wanda Frazier-Parker Co-Pastor Truth Tabernacle Ministries Rocky Mount, NC on October 16, 2014.

Music rendered by the choirs from St. Paul UMC, Queens Chapel UMC and Westphalia UMC. The Revival will be held 7:00 PM nightly at Westphalia United Methodist Church 9363 D'Arcy Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. If you need more information, please email info@westphaliaumc.org or call (301) 735-9373, x100 or visit us online at www.westphaliaumc.org.

SENIOR DAYS

Seniors (Prince George's County residents only) are allowed free use of both the pool and fitness center during these

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Before Cosigning a Loan, Know the Risks

Shakespeare probably said it best: "Neither a borrower, nor a lender be, for loan oft loses both itself and friend." Four hundred years later, people still wrestle with whether or not to help out a loved one by loaning them money or cosigning a loan.

Perhaps you want to help your kid qualify for a better student loan rate or assist your widowed mom with refinancing her mortgage. Before you cosign anything, however, make sure you understand the risks involved.

Here are just a few of the things that can go wrong and questions to ask before committing yourself — and your good credit — to what could be a decades-long commitment:

First, understand that the main reason you're being asked to cosign a loan is because lenders don't think the borrower is a good risk. By cosigning, you're guaranteeing that you'll repay the full loan — plus any late fees or collection costs — should the borrower default.



If that doesn't scare you sufficiently, read on:

- Even one late or missed payment can damage your credit.
- In most states, the creditor can — and probably will — go after you for repayment without first trying to collect from the borrower, because they know you're more likely to have the money.
- If the loan goes into default or is charged off, that fact will go into your credit report and can take seven years to erase.
- If you pledged personal property to secure the loan, you could lose these items if the borrower defaults.
- Should the lender agree to settle for a lesser amount, you'll have to report the difference as "debt forgiveness income" and pay tax on it.
- If you cosign a credit card account, primary borrowers over age 21 are allowed to raise the credit limit without notifying you.
- Government-backed student loans generally aren't eligible for bankruptcy protection unless you can prove "undue hardship."
- Some private student loans contain a clause allowing the borrower to originate additional years' loans without your signed approval.
- Even if you're not asked to repay the loan, your potential liability could stop you from getting additional credit if your debt-to-income ratio is too high.

If you do decide to cosign someone's loan, taking these steps can help lessen your risk:

- Calculate whether you can afford the loan's monthly payments, should the borrower stop paying. To be prudent, start setting aside enough money to cover it for one year, which will allow you to keep payments current while working out a solution.
- Insist that the lender agree, in writing, to notify you if the borrower missed a payment or the loan's terms change. That'll give you more time to make contingency plans.
- If you're unsure about the borrower's reliability to pay each month on time, ask the lender to send payment requests directly to you so you can manage the transaction. (It's a pain, but one way to guarantee timely payments.)
- Ask the lender to stipulate in the contract that you're only responsible for the loan's principal amount, should it default. It doesn't hurt to ask.
- Make sure you get copies of all paperwork in case of future disputes.
- Don't consolidate old loans accumulated by your spouse before you married. If something should happen (divorce, death), you would be responsible for paying them off.

There may be times you want to cosign a loan to help out a relative or friend, despite the risks involved. The Federal Trade Commission's "Cosigning a Loan" guide share precautions to take before entering such agreements www.consumer.ftc.gov

Maryland Health Care Exchange Premium Rates Expected to Increase

By ASHLEY S. WESTERMAN
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - Maryland officials this week announced they would stagger the opening of the enrollment period to purchase health insurance through Maryland Health Connection, the state's version of the Affordable Care Act marketplace.

The site will open Nov. 9 for consumers to browse. They won't be able to purchase insurance until Nov. 15.

But while browsing for plans, Marylanders may find an increase in premiums for next year. That's according to a Kaiser Family Foundation study released earlier this month that looked at premiums across 16 U.S. cities, including Baltimore.

Cynthia Cox, senior policy analyst and co-author of the study, said they found costs are projected to moderately increase in all 16 cities. In Baltimore, premiums for some of the most popular plans are expected to increase.

"The lowest-cost Silver Plan, and the second lowest-cost Silver Plan, which is the benchmark plan for subsidies, are actually going up a little bit," Cox said. "But the increase is very moderate, 3 percent for Baltimore."

This means a 40-year-old, non-smoker in Baltimore making \$30,000 a year will see their monthly payment for the second lowest-cost Silver Plan increase from \$228 to \$235 a month in 2015, before tax credits. Additionally, the study found the lowest-cost Bronze plan in Baltimore is projected to increase from \$146 per month to \$165 per month in 2015 - up 13.1 percent.

Cox said since plans offered in other parts of the state are similar to those offered in Baltimore, a moderate increase in premiums is likely statewide. The increase could have to do with changes caused by the new health care law and even the economy, but she said premium rates rely on a number of variables and can vary from person to person.

Cox said it's difficult to know what premiums would be in the absence of the Affordable Care Act.

In Maryland, there are accounts of premiums both decreasing and increasing.

Tim Reyburn, 53, is the owner of Ticoscen, Inc., in Laurel, where he repairs lab equipment and other scientific instruments for pharmaceutical companies. His 20-year-old business is run by he and his wife, Angelika Reyburn, so they purchase health insurance out of their own pockets.

When Reyburn heard he could get coverage through the Affordable Care Act's health insurance marketplace, he signed up without hesitation.

"Because our plans were going up significantly with Blue Cross, Blue Shield - anywhere from 20 to 40 percent a year - and we kept having to get a lesser and lesser plan to keep it on budget," he said. "And we got up to almost \$2,400 a month, \$1,200 per person."

Reyburn said their premiums decreased about \$7,000 a year when they switched, and now — even paying for the best plan at the full rate, with no subsidies — it's only about \$1,300 a month for both he and his wife. He said it's nice to not have to worry about a life-



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO
Tim Reyburn, owner of Ticoscen, Inc., in Laurel.

time cap or pre-existing conditions, especially since his wife has muscular dystrophy.

While he's not sure what his premiums will be for next year, Reyburn said even if they do go up, it won't be nearly as bad as it used to be before the Affordable Care Act.

A study published Thursday by The Commonwealth Fund found that 61 percent of adults who have purchased insurance through the Affordable Care Act's marketplaces think the premiums are affordable.

But Maryland Republican Party Executive Director Joe Cluster said everybody they've talked to has seen their health care premiums going up.

"It proves that people are having to get into plans where a lot of things are covered that they might not need so the cost is going up," he said. "And it's just more drain on the wallets of the average citizen."

Cluster is actually losing his current health insurance at the end of the year because the plan

doesn't meet the new health care law's standards. The cheapest basic plan he can get is \$117 a month, \$25 more than what he said he's paying now.

While advocates acknowledge premiums have risen, they also say more people are becoming insured and with better coverage.

"We're all better off when people have health care coverage, rather than use emergency rooms in hospitals for care, which increases all of our insurance premiums through the uncompensated care system," said Vincent DeMarco, president of the Maryland Health Care Coalition.

The Maryland Health Connection has reported insuring almost 78,700 individuals through the exchanges, but does not yet have an estimate for the second open enrollment period beginning Nov. 15. There will, however, be more carriers to choose from this time around as there are now five on the exchange, one more than last year.

Chesapeake from A1

Agency, continue to invest in efforts in Maryland, the District of Columbia, and across the Bay watershed to accelerate ambitious state and local water quality improvement efforts. A focus of the Fund's investments is in stormwater management, which is an essential strategy to improve the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay by reducing polluted runoff," said David O'Neill, Vice President for Conservation Programs at NFWF. "The Stewardship Fund is an innovative public-private partnership, supported by the Environmental Protection Agency, other federal agencies including the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and private companies including Altria, CSX, Alcoa, and FedEx. The Fund provides a critical local funding source for innovative and community-based approaches to conservation."

The Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction (INSR) Grants Program awarded \$2.1 million to six projects that will reduce the flow of pollution into rivers and streams. Whether it is through green infrastructure in urban areas or conservation practices that benefit soil, wildlife and water on farmland, this cutting-edge work will lower nitrogen, phosphorous and sediment loads and help communities meet water quality goals.

"EPA is committed to supporting local governments and other organizations in their efforts to use innovative and sustainable approaches for manag-

ing storm water and improving the health of their local waters," said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. "These projects are an investment that will return lasting benefits to communities throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed, helping them become healthier, stronger and more resilient, especially to the impacts of a changing climate."

The Small Watershed Grants (SWG) Program awarded \$1.7 million to seven projects that will use on-the-ground restoration, habitat conservation and community engagement to improve local watersheds. A number of grant recipients, which include nonprofit organizations and local governments, plan to remove invasive plants; restore stream banks, wetlands, oyster reefs and open spaces; and put rain gardens, shoreline buffers and other stormwater management methods in place.

"The Chesapeake Bay is and will always be an intangible cultural symbol for Maryland and the region as a whole," said Sen. Ben Cardin, chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Water and Wildlife. "I want to stress the importance of broad involvement of all stakeholders in the effort to restore the Chesapeake Bay. Pollution does not stop at a state borderline. The populations living and working in the Bay watershed are all in this together. No one source or single sector bears all the blame for degraded water quality in the Bay. But if we all work together and do our part, we will see progress and leave our children a Chesapeake Bay that is healthier than it is today."

Examples of this year's Chesapeake Stewardship Fund grant recipients in Maryland include:

- Prince George's County, Md (\$375,000) will retrofit a 7.8 acre office complex with bioretention facilities using innovative design configurations and cutting edge materials to enhance pollutant removal.
 - Civic Works, Inc. (\$200,000) will work with community organizations, nonprofits and small businesses in Baltimore City to design and install rain gardens that feature micro bioretention areas. This will reduce Baltimore City's stormwater runoff and allow Civic Works to develop a training and certification model for urban stormwater management.
 - Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy (\$300,000) will work to develop the next generation of agricultural best management practices uniquely suited to the production practices and landscapes of Delmarva farmers.
 - The District Department of the Environment (\$500,000) will retrofit seven drainage areas around a parking lot with low impact development techniques to slow down, cool off and clean up polluted stormwater. The project will restore the area's natural hydrology and prevent flooding and erosion.
- This year, NFWF will partner with the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC) and Low Impact Development Center to launch a web-based resource and training center that will provide consistent and proven strategies for collaboration, innovation and sustainable stormwater management funding in smaller municipalities throughout the wa-

tershed. This new resource center will draw on case studies and lessons learned by existing stormwater grantees to offer municipalities a range of tools, including education modules, financing resources and opportunities to develop partnerships and shared resources for municipalities with limited capacity to design and implement their own standalone stormwater management programs.

"This year, we are especially excited to invest in new dedicated Municipal Stormwater Training and Outreach Center developed in partnership with the University of Maryland and the Low Impact Design Center to provide local governments with tools and resources necessary to build sustainable, effective stormwater management programs and advance water quality goals," O'Neill added.

"The Low Impact Development Center and the University of Maryland Environmental Finance Center have a long history of working with Chesapeake Bay municipalities to improve the way stormwater is managed," said Joanne Throwe, Director of EFC. "Online training is both timely and necessary. It's the direction most programs are moving toward since it has shown to be the fastest and best way to reach the largest number of people. The new Municipal Stormwater Training and Outreach Center is anticipated to be well used by all of the Bay states and will go a long way in helping to change the way we manage stormwater at the local level."

For more information about the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, including a full list of this year's awardees visit www.nfwf.org/chesapeake

ADVERTISE!
in
The Prince George's Post
Call Brenda Boice at
301 627 0900

Serving Prince George's County

COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski
United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski, Cardin Announce Federal Funding to Purchase Life-Saving Firefighting Equipment in Prince George's County

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (both D-Md.) today announced the Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company has been awarded \$6,300 in federal funding through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program to purchase life-saving firefighting equipment. As the Chairwoman of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski fights each year to increase federal funding for the fire grants program. Senator Cardin is a member of the Finance Committee.

"I know how important this funding is to Maryland communities — often it's the difference between life and death. First responders protect our homes and communities, and the federal government has a responsibility to protect them by providing them with the tools they need to do their jobs safer and smarter," Senator Mikulski said. "Every day when our first responders report for duty, they don't know what they will face. That's why I fight every year for the equipment, training, and staffing our protectors and communities deserve."

"Ensuring our first responders have the equipment and training needed to get the job

done is a matter of national security. The Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire department risks their lives every day and deserves a strong federal partner," said Senator Cardin. "AFG funding saves lives and is a critical funding source for our nation's volunteer firefighters."

The Seat Pleasant Volunteer Fire Company will use the funding to purchase a forcible entry prop to train firefighters to forcibly enter multiple structure types during an emergency in which an entryway is locked, blocked or impassable. For more information, please contact Jeff Mehaffey at 301-336-2331.

AFG grants fund firefighting equipment, personal protection equipment, training, firefighting vehicles, firefighter/first responder safety projects, and staffing recruitment and retention, as well as public fire safety education.

Since 2001, Maryland fire departments and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) units have received almost \$146 million in fire grant funding, over \$27.5 million of which has gone to fire departments in Prince George's County.



NASA GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER
 The hub of all NASA tracking activities, Goddard is also responsible for the development of unmanned sounding rockets, and research in space and earth sciences including NASA's Mission to Planet Earth. Through interactive educational exhibits, visitors explore Goddard Space Flight Center with a focus on 1958 to present. Collections include space flight artifacts and photographs. Model rocket launchings, gift shop and special group tours available. Open 10-4 p.m. Admission is free. The Visitor Center is located at r Soil Conservation Road Greenbelt, MD. For information call 301-286-8981

Child Watch
 by Marion Wright Edelman



The High Moral and Economic Cost of Child Poverty in America

Just released U.S. Census Bureau data reveal 45.3 million people were poor in America in 2013. One in three of those who are poor is a child. Children remain our poorest age group and children of color and those under five are the poorest. More than one in five infants, toddlers, and preschoolers were poor during their years of greatest brain development and vulnerability. Black children saw no decrease and continue to have the highest child poverty rates in the nation. In 20 states more than 40 percent of Black children were poor and nearly one in five Black children were living in extreme poverty with an annual income of less than half of the poverty level or \$33 a day for a family of four.

Although the percentage of poor children dropped in 2013 for the first time since 2000, from 21.8 percent (16.1 million) in 2012 to 19.9 percent (14.7 million), there were still 1.3 million more poor children than in 2007 before the recession began.

It is a moral disgrace that child poverty in the U.S. is higher than adult poverty, higher than for children in almost all other competitor nations, and higher than our country with the world's largest economy should ever allow. Wealth and income inequality are still at record high levels and opportunity gaps are widening. What values and priorities do these unjust realities reflect? Isn't it time to reset our moral and economic compass? If we want to build a strong workforce, military, and economy and ensure the most basic tenets of opportunity for the most vulnerable, we must and can end child poverty now.

Poverty hurts children and destroys their dreams, hopes, and opportunities. Poor children are more likely to go hungry, which is associated with lower reading and math scores, greater physical and mental health problems, higher incidence of emotional and behavioral problems, and a greater chance of obesity. Poor children are less likely to have access to affordable quality health coverage, have more severe health problems, and fare worse than higher income children with the same problems. A poor child with asthma is more likely to be reported in poor

health, spend more days in bed, and have more hospital episodes than a high-income child with asthma. Poor children suffer a 30 million word interaction gap by age 3 and are less likely to enter school ready to learn and to graduate from high school. One study found children who were poor for half of their childhood were nearly 90 percent more likely to enter their 20s without completing high school than never poor children.

Child poverty increases the risk of unemployment and economic hardship in adulthood. Those who experienced poverty at any point during their childhood were more than three times as likely to be poor at age 30 as those who were never poor as children. The longer a child is poor, the greater the risk of poverty in adulthood and experiencing poverty as a child also increases the likelihood of lifelong health problems and involvement in the criminal justice system. Child poverty scars some children for life.

Child poverty has huge economic costs for the nation. Year after year the lost productivity and extra health and criminal justice costs associated with it add up to roughly half a trillion dollars, or 3.8 percent of our na-

tion's gross domestic product (GDP). What we can never measure though are the countless innovations and discoveries and contributions that did not occur for our nation because children's potentials were stunted by poverty.

It does not have to be this way. Child poverty is not an act of God. It is the choices of men and women and we can change it. Child poverty can be ended and prevented if we want to.

Poverty rates change over time with the economy and with changes in government policies. The U.S. has made substantial progress in reducing poverty over the past 50 years despite worsening inequality and increased unemployment. Child poverty dropped 36 percent between 1967 and 2012 when income from tax credits and in-kind benefits like nutrition and housing assistance are counted. Ending child poverty would save lives and money and increase productivity. For example, eliminating child poverty between the prenatal years and age 5 would increase lifetime earnings between \$53,000 and \$100,000 per child, for a total lifetime ben-

See WATCH, Page A20

The Prince George's Post
Serving Prince George's County

Marc Morial, President and CEO
National Urban League



Silicon Valley Must Embrace Diversity

"The industry that bills itself a meritocracy actually looks more like a mirrortocracy."

— Mitch Kapur, co-chair of the Kapur Center for Social Impact

While the number of African American, Latino and women consumers of Internet and broadband products and services is rising, their numbers at the major Silicon Valley companies continue to lag way behind. After years of resisting disclosure, tech giants including Apple, Facebook, Yahoo and Google recently released their employment diversity numbers. As we've long suspected, they show a striking lack of inclusion.

According to published figures, at Google, 3% of its staff are Hispanic and 2% are Black. Both Yahoo and Facebook reported that Hispanics and Blacks make up 4% and 2% of their workplaces, respectively. When Apple makes an announcement, as in last week's introduction of the iPhone 6, it usually wants the world to stand up and take notice. This was likely not the case with the release of its diversity numbers last month, which showed the company is 55% white, 15% Asian, 11% Hispanic and 7% Black. In his statement upon release of the report, Apple CEO Tim Cook candidly admitted, "I'm not satisfied with the numbers on this page." This acknowledgment is a first step, but the question for Cook and his Silicon Valley counterparts is — What are you going to do about it?

For years, Silicon Valley has used the specious claim of being a "meritocracy" to explain the lack of diversity in its ranks. It has never been true that African Americans, Latinos or women are somehow less able to excel at high tech jobs. It is true that communities of color and women continue to be underrepresented in the attainment of science and engineering degrees. The National Urban League is working to increase those numbers with efforts like Project Ready STEM, which is supporting 10 Project Ready STEM sites across the nation. The sites are successfully operating STEM programs for nearly 300 middle or high school

students, with the goals of ensuring that urban students have the necessary supports and opportunities available to them to succeed in STEM-related class work and exposing students to STEM-related careers. But as Freda Kapur Klein, co-chair of the Kapur Center for Social Impact explains, "The reality is that most of the barriers are structural... our sector is permeated by biases, both subtle and not so subtle." Her co-chair and husband, Mitch Kapur, the designer of Lotus 1-2-3, adds, "Even as companies scramble to find workers in the most competitive hiring market in recent memory, most are continuing to bring aboard people who look like they do."

It is not enough to lament the numbers; Silicon Valley must be more intentional about increasing diversity. The industry would do well to follow the example of some of the large telecom companies, which have taken proactive measures in recent years to increase diversity within their organizations. For example, AT&T's Workforce Inclusion website states, "We know that diverse, talented and dedicated individuals are critical to our success, so we look for people from various backgrounds and give them opportunities to grow...we serve our customers better when we build diversity into all we do." Verizon has also made great strides in both employee and supplier diversity. According to Verizon Chairman and CEO, Lowell McAdam "A diverse workplace is one of Verizon's biggest strengths as a global innovation leader. Our employees' unique backgrounds and perspectives are key to our success in delivering technology solutions that create value for our customers, shareholders and society."

Silicon Valley companies must not only make similar statements, they must make similar commitments. They can begin by developing comprehensive diversity plans to cover hiring, procurement, governance and philanthropy. As major consumers of technology, people of color and women should also have a fair share of the jobs and wealth that Silicon Valley generates.

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
 P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
 Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
 Phone 301-627-0900 Legal Fax • 301-627-6260
 email: pgpost@gmail.com
 Contents © 2014, The Prince George's Post

Publisher Legusta Floyd	Subscriptions/Legals Liz Brandenstein
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Senior Editor Legusta Floyd
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Editor Michal W. Frangia
	Web Manager Kyler Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151. Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790. Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Depression: A Serious Health Issue That Can't Be Ignored

The recent suicide of actor/comedian Robin Williams has helped bring attention to a major health issue in this country. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, almost 7% of Americans had at least one major episode of depression during the past year. And, as was evidenced by Williams, anyone can be affected by depression and the results can be tragic.

But how do you differentiate between simply feeling sad at times and depression as a serious mental health issue? The reality, of course, is that we all have brief periods when we feel low and things aren't going quite right. The difference between such brief periods of sadness and true depression as a health issue is the severity of the symptoms and their longevity.

Depression is defined as when the symptoms a person is facing last for a period of two weeks or more. Such symptoms can take a variety of forms, but the most common are:

- changes in sleep or eating patterns
- strong feelings of sadness, guilt, hopelessness or worthlessness
- trouble concentrating or making decisions
- losing interest in or being able to enjoy activities you normally find fun
- general lack of energy for no real reason
- frequent negative thoughts of being no good, not being appreciated, or of not being able to do anything right
- thoughts of death or suicide.

Just because you, or someone close to you, has one or more of these symptoms, it doesn't mean that clinical depression is what is occurring. But if more than one of these or similar symptoms is experienced over a period of two or more weeks, it's a sign that there may be a problem which needs professional treatment.

The good news is that depression is a condition with clear symptoms that can be treated successfully. More importantly, it's not a condition that normally just "goes away." Instead, depression can worsen and become life-threatening. It can be difficult for someone facing depression to make the decision to seek help. If you suspect that depression might be affecting your life, talk to a trained professional. It can be your minister, priest or rabbi, a professional counselor, or your family physician. They can help evaluate the problem and lead you to the variety of assistance that can help overcome depression and bring the return to a happier and more productive life.

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

Eric Holder from A1

from the beginning of what started as an improbable, idealistic effort by a young senator from Illinois who we were both right to believe would achieve greatness. I have had the opportunity to serve in your distinguished Cabinet and worked with a White House staff, ably led by Denis McDonough, that has done much to make real the promise of our democracy. And each of the men and women who I have come to know will be lifelong friends.

Whatever my accomplishments, they could not have been achieved without the love, support, and guidance of two people who are not with me today. My parents, Eric and Miriam Holder, nurtured me and my accomplished brother William and made us believe in the value of individual effort and the greatness of this nation.

My time in public service, which now comes to an end, would not have been possible without the sacrifices — too often unfair — made by

the best three kids a father could ask for. Thank you, Maya, Brooke, and Buddy.

And finally I want to thank the woman who sacrificed the most and allowed me to follow my dreams. She is the foundation of all that our family is and the basis of all that I have become. My wife, Sharon, is the unsung hero and my life partner. Thank you for all that you have done. I love you.

In the months ahead, I will leave the Department of Justice — but I will never leave the work. I will continue to serve and try to find ways to make our nation even more true to its founding ideals. I thank the dedicated public servants who form the backbone of the United States Department of Justice for their tireless work over the past six years, for the efforts they will continue, and for the progress they made that will outlast us all.

And I thank you all for joining me on a journey that now moves in another direction, but that will always be guided by the pursuit of justice and aimed at the North Star.

Equipping the Next Generation of Innovators

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Lt. Governor

On September 22, 2014, I had the pleasure of meeting the next generation of innovators at the Comcast Internet Essentials Back to School event in Baltimore. Students from across the city came together to demonstrate all that they had learned at the Digital Harbor Foundation's dynamic STEM after-school program. I was blown away by our student speaker, Nicholas Cato — a senior at Digital Harbor High School who travels over an hour every day to school, and still maintains a 4.2 GPA.

I want to share his insightful remarks on what the internet means to him, and what he believes it means to hundreds of students like him across our state. Students like Nicholas are a big part of the reason why we've made STEM education a key component of statewide our education goal — one of our 16 strategic goals for moving Maryland forward.

Thanks to programs like Internet Essentials, more students like Nicholas can fully compete with their peers in school today, which means they'll be poised to compete and succeed in the high-tech workforce of tomorrow.

The following is Governor O'Malley's Speech:

Thank you for this opportunity to say a few words and talk about what access to technology and to the Internet means to me. This question is both an easy and a hard question to answer. It is easy to simply say that the Internet is essential to life today. But at the same time, life existed before the Internet too. Without the Internet, my day-to-day



PHOTO COURTESY THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

Comcast Internet Essentials Speech

might actually not be that different. My alarm clock would still wake me up, I would still go to school, I would still have my family. Without the Internet, however, my life over all would be very different though. Today's workplace depends more and more on the Internet, and the career I want, wouldn't exist without technology.

What is the Internet, really? To me, the Internet has become a way of life that I can't be without. It's something that I go home to everyday and use to relax and connect with the rest of the world. One minute, I could be talking to my brother who's in Michigan, and the next, I could be connected to a friend in Japan, playing a game — or have a mild conversation with them.

But before I talk more about all of the things the Internet allows, I want to tell you about the first time I played a multiplayer, online game. I had played games before that, but they were always games that I played alone. The

fun, the excitement and the feelings that I get from playing with others is incomparable. There is a different experience with every lobby and it feels as if I'm at a completely different place every time. I couldn't imagine going back to just playing games the way we used to before they were connected through the Internet.

The Internet allows us to virtually travel the world in a matter of minutes and to explore a wide variety of resources with just the click of a button. We have access to Wikipedia, dictionaries, and electronic calculators that we would otherwise have to buy, if we were not connected to the broad network that is the Internet today.

- We could watch YouTube tutorials to learn completely new things like I did this summer with the game programming engine Unity
- We could ask questions and get answers in real-time
- We could shop and buy both common and unique things

that are then shipped directly to your house

- We could research and learn about colleges
- We could find and connect with people from all over the world
- We could stay connected socially with friends even after you or they move away
- We could get updates on the latest news from around the corner or around the world
- We could find out the best way to get from one place to the next, know about bus schedules and road closures, traffic accidents, etc.
- We could listen to music, view sporting events, and watch movies or television shows

But, of all of the things you can do, the thing that still amazes me the most is that I can work on a team towards a shared goal with someone I may actually never meet in person and who I wouldn't otherwise know. I want my career to be like this — where I work towards a common vision with a variety of other people from all different backgrounds. I wish school was more like this. People could work together better, find and share interests, and solve real-world problems.

I believe that access to the Internet is something that everybody should have and should actively use in their day-to-day lives. It's a life-saver, a game-changer and most importantly, it is us, because without you and me, where would the internet be? The internet has changed millions of lives and counting, and I look forward to where it's going to take us in the future.

Thank you.

Obamacare from A1

"I think the disastrous rollout of HealthCare.gov has created a lack of trust among the American people as well as promises not kept," Brady said. "So what are you doing to make sure the second year of the A.C.A. is not like the first year and steps will be taken to regain the trust of the American people, regardless of what party they are, they're just simply concerned about their health care?"

Slavitt said his agency has been rolling out new functionality for the website all summer and has built in more time for testing. He said the website won't be perfect come open enrollment on Nov. 15, but that

Mission from A1

"Congress should define the (Authorization for Use of Military Force) in a way that supports the mission as the president has stated it, and that includes preventing U.S. ground combat forces from being deployed in Syria or Iraq," said Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Kentucky.

While agreeing that previous authorizations could be used to attack the Islamic State group, Van Hollen said Congress must act quickly to revise the "broad authority" so it will not be used in an open-ended manner in future conflicts.

The Islamic State group, which broke off from al-Qaeda in Iraq, today controls large parts of Iraq and Syria with a goal to establish an Islamic caliphate across the region.

The authorizations in 2001 and 2002 were under "different circumstances," said Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md.

the right processes are "in place to get it as good as it should be."

Similarly, Maryland's website, Maryland Health Connection, experienced a rocky rollout, crashing on its first day and requiring repeated fixes. State officials announced earlier this year the site would get a rebuild.

"The contract with Deloitte (Consulting) for development of the new site is for about \$41 million," said Maryland Health Connection's director of Marketing and Outreach Andrew Ratner in an email to Capital News Service. That's on top of the \$125.5 million the state spent trying to fix the site before announcing the overhaul.

But despite the move, Ratner said "the development for this fall is on track."

However Joe Cluster, executive director of the Maryland Republican Party, isn't buying it.

"If you take the track record of this government and the implementation of it, I don't see that happening," Cluster said. "So it's been a complete disaster when it comes to getting people to actually sign up for the Affordable Care Act in Maryland."

Despite the troubled rollout, Maryland Health Connection has reported signing up nearly 78,700 Marylanders for insurance through the website — a number well below the number initially projected. In 2012,

Baltimore-based health research organization The Hilltop Institute said more than 389,000 individuals would be eligible to sign up for health insurance through the exchange, but predicted that only 147,200 of those would sign up in calendar year 2014.

Enrollment numbers under the A.C.A.'s Medicaid expansion, however, have seen the opposite. Maryland was just one of 27 states and the District of Columbia to expand Medicaid under the A.C.A. and the Maryland Health Connection reports almost 284,000 Marylanders have enrolled in Medicaid programs. The Hilltop Institute initially projected only about 101,700 would do so.

Cardin, who voted against the 2002 authorization in Iraq because it was "based on misinformation," said if previous authorizations could be used for airstrikes an argument could be made for ground troops as well, something he said was not acceptable.

While supporting military strikes in Iraq against what he termed a "barbaric terrorist" network, he is skeptical that military action alone can turn the tide in Syria. Cardin added that while there is no urgency in seeking congressional approval for strikes, it is vital to get that approval eventually.

Across the aisle, Rep. Andy Harris, R-Cockeysville, said there was a sense that further debate needed to take place on the question of authorization.

"It is unclear whether the Authorization for Use of Military Force gives authority for strikes in Syria. As a result, the President should have come to Con-

gress and asked for authority to combat this enemy," said Chris Meekins, deputy chief of staff for policy for Harris, in an email.

Wednesday, the House passed a much narrower bill to provide further training and arming of moderate Syrian rebels by a vote of 273-156.

"I was for this, which I think is a very limited step to help train and equip those that will confront (the Islamic State group) on the ground," said House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, a Democrat from Maryland.

Meekins said Republican Harris, who voted against the bill, believes the Obama administration does not have "in place a plan to ensure the proper vetting of Syrian rebels," and there is no guarantee the weapons won't eventually be used against the U.S.

The Senate was expected to vote and pass legislation later on Thursday that would arm Syrian rebels. It will be tied to a bill

that looks to fund the government through December, which is also expected to pass.

Last week, Obama announced direct U.S. airstrikes in Syria to weaken the Islamic State group.

"We're moving ahead with our strategy to degrade and ultimately destroy this terrorist organization," Obama said.

Obama said Wednesday, and Secretary of State John Kerry concurred at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, that the use of ground combat troops is out of the question.

"The U.S. will not go it alone," said Kerry, who recently returned from the region where he was shoring up support for an action plan. "That's why we're building a coalition."

Despite repeated questions from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Kerry didn't give specifics about the expected contributions from specific partner countries.

OUT ON THE TOWN

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

Birdman

Grade: B+

Rated R, abundant profanity, some nonsexual nudity, sexual dialogue, brief violence

1 hr., 59 min

Birdman opens in a dressing room at Broadway's St. James Theatre, where a 50-ish man in tighty-whites sits meditating. And levitating. And hearing a guttural, self-doubting voice in his head berating him for falling this far. The man is Riggan Thomson, once the star of a blockbuster superhero franchise, now washed-up and trying to revive his career by starring in a stage version of a Raymond Carver story that he adapted and directed himself. Also, either he's losing his mind, or he really does have superpowers. Or maybe both.

Riggan Thomson is played by Michael Keaton, who of course played a Birdman-like superhero 25 years ago and subsequently fell off the radar. Birdman is a showbiz satire, a backstage comedy, and a semi-absurd depiction of actor insecurity, directed and co-written by Alejandro Gonzalez Inarritu, whose previous films (Amores Perros, Babel, 21 Grams) were, uh, a lot more serious than this. Whatever inspired him to get silly, the manic energy and overriding sense of fun in Birdman are most welcome.

Things are chaotic on the last day of rehearsal before the play is to have its first public performance. Riggan isn't sure what he's doing, female lead Lesley (Naomi Watts) is nervous about making her Broadway debut, supporting actress Laura (Andrea Riseborough) might be pregnant with Riggan's baby, and the fourth member of the cast is sidelined by an injury (which Riggan may have caused via telekinesis).

His replacement is Mike Shiner (Edward Norton), an acclaimed Method actor and legitimate thespian who comes in already memorized and with notes for Riggan about how to tighten the dialogue. Mike sneers at movie stars like Riggan, at fame in general ("Popularity is the slutty little cousin of prestige"), and at Hollywood phonies who think they can just waltz onto Broadway and be real actors. He, too, might be insane, evidenced by his insistence on drinking real liquor onstage and by his flirtation with Sam (Emma Stone), Riggan's ex-junkie daughter who's half-working as his assistant now.



ROTTENTOMATOES

BIRDMAN or The Unexpected Virtue Of Ignorance is a black comedy that tells the story of an actor (Michael Keaton) - famous for portraying an iconic superhero - as he struggles to mount a Broadway play. In the days leading up to opening night, he battles his ego and attempts to recover his family, his career, and himself. (c) Fox Searchlight

The first chunk of the movie has a zippy Noises Off feel to it as the actors work on the play while grappling with their off-stage problems. Producer Brandon (Zach Galifianakis) runs around handling producer things; Riggan's ex-wife (Amy Ryan) stops by; there's an encounter with a vindictive theater critic (Lindsay Duncan) at the bar next door. Through it all, Riggan often hears his own Birdman voice in his head, berating him and second-guessing his decisions just as Mike Shiner is doing right in front of him. Something's gotta give, and it might be Riggan Thomson's sanity.

Now here's the part I didn't tell you yet. Through painstaking planning and rehearsal (and aided by digital trickery), the film is made to look like one continuous, unbroken take, with no cuts. The camera starts in Riggan's dressing room and follows him and the other characters around the theater, through hallways and onto the stage, up to the roof and around the block. Sometimes the camera will go by itself from one scene to the next, and we'll realize contextually that the next scene is taking place hours later. In that way the film manages to look like it's a single 119-minute shot even though the story spans three days. The effect is that the movie feels like one continuous performance—like a play, in fact.

It's amazing to behold, to marvel at the sleight-of-hand, seamless digital effects, and good old-fashioned legwork needed to pull off such a stunt. The performances have to be spot-on (because they can't be fixed with editing), actors have to hit their marks precisely, camera movement must be meticulously mapped out. Is it a "gimmick"? Yes, in that it's meant to attract attention (the dictionary definition of the word). An unusual shooting style, especially one that makes shooting harder, does tend to say, "Look at me!" But it's also a fun challenge for a director, a nifty trick that'll razzle-dazzle 'em if he pulls it off. It's showmanship! Ain't nothing wrong with that.

The trick is only a problem if it's intended to distract from a movie's weaknesses—if the movie's no good without the gimmick. With Birdman, the heightened sense of immediacy offered by an unbroken take does give the movie an extra thrill, but it's a loose, funny script anyway (if slightly disorganized), the sort of story that would be entertaining no matter how it was shot. The lunatic performances by Keaton and Norton are the highlights: unhinged, totally liberated (all the more impressive given how carefully choreographed they had to be), and completely devoted to the multifarious nuttiness of their characters. They're a lot more interesting to watch than a guy in a cape and tights.

So if no one is going to talk about the welfare of the person who is actually subjected to the violence on that tape, let's talk about it here. I spent the morning communicating with people who work on issues involving domestic violence and violence against women nearly every day of their lives. They all said the same thing, without dissent: releasing this tape to the world is incredibly damaging to Janay Rice. Just as we would protect the name of an alleged rape victim, just as we would not show a video of Ray Rice committing a sexual assault, we should not be showing this video like it's another episode of Rich People Behaving Badly. If Janay Rice wanted to show this tape to the world, in other words if she had offered her consent, that is a different matter. But showing and reshooting it just because we can is an act of harm.

Tragically, it seems—especially judging by my Twitter feed—that very few people agree with this sentiment. Their belief—and to be frank, this is shared by a lot of people whom I respect—is that seeing the video will shock people, advance the conversation and force action. Even some of the same people saying that nude photo hacks shouldn't be clicked on are saying people have an obligation to bear witness to what Rice did.

Presence of EV-D68 Confirmed in Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER
DHMH

Baltimore, MD (September) -- The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) confirmed the presence of enterovirus D68 (EV-D68) in Maryland. The virus, which has been associated with respiratory infections in children across the country, was identified in a specimen collected from a hospitalized child in suburban Maryland and was sent to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for confirmation.*

"Now that this virus is known to be in Maryland, it is important that we all take reasonable steps to limit its spread and control its impact," said DHMH Secretary Dr. Joshua M. Sharfstein.

DHMH is recommending that families:

- Practice preventive steps, as with other ailments, by regularly washing hands with soap and water.

- Provide special attention to children with asthma.
- Be alert to wheezing and other respiratory ailments in children.
- Keep sick children at home.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Cough and sneeze into sleeve or a tissue.
- Avoid kissing, hugging and sharing cups, eating utensils, etc. with people who are sick.
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as toys and doorknobs, especially if someone is sick.
- Stay up-to-date on vaccinations, especially influenza vaccine, to reduce respiratory illness.

DHMH has been working with healthcare facilities to

prepare for the expected arrival of enterovirus D68. Because there is no EV-D68-specific treatment, identifying EV-D68 doesn't change the treatment of the patient: If a patient is wheezing, the wheezing symptoms can be treated; if a patient is having difficulty breathing, respiratory support and oxygen can be given.

Healthcare providers, as recommended by the CDC should:

- Consider EV-D68 as a possible cause of acute, unexplained severe respiratory illness, even if the patient does not have fever.
- Consider laboratory testing of respiratory specimens for enteroviruses when the cause of respiratory illness in severely ill patients is unclear.

DHMH also will continue to work with school officials and other institutions that mon-

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

The Revictimizing of Janay Rice

I was listening to a nationally syndicated sports radio show this morning about the release of the Ray Rice videotape that shows the Baltimore Ravens running back knocking his then-fiancée Janay unconscious



in a casino elevator. We, the public, already knew this had taken place. We, the public, already knew Rice had been suspended for a much-criticized two games. We, the public, had not seen the actual physical blow that removed Janay Rice from her conscious self. Now we had, and the fallout was clearly going to be extreme.

The radio hosts posed question after question: What will the NFL do now that the tape has been released? How will the Ravens organization react to this? (Now we know. The Ravens have released Ray Rice.) How will the Baltimore fans who've been cheering Ray Rice respond? How will the media—oh, the poor media!—react to having perhaps been lied to about whether NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell had seen the videotape?

The one question they did not glaringly ask is, How will Janay Rice react to the release of the tape? The absence of concern for Janay Rice—in the press, on social media, among my own colleagues—is the most disheartening part of this entire ordeal.

No one cares that she is now going to have to relive this incident over and over again. No one cares that the world has now become privy to what may be the most humiliating moment of her entire life. No one cares that she's basically now being used as a soapbox with otherwise apolitical NFL commentators using her prone body to get on their high horse and safely blast the league. There is video, and those who never raised their voice publicly about the axis of domestic violence and the NFL before are now bellowing the loudest.

ESPN "NFL insider" Adam Schefter was enraged and called the entire situation "the biggest black eye in league history." Unfortunate phrasing aside, even the statement speaks volumes. What about every other act of domestic violence in league history that wasn't caught on videotape? What about the Kansas City Chiefs' Jovan Belcher two seasons ago actually killing the mother of his child, Kasandra Perkins, before taking his own life? Why are these actions seen as less of a black eye? The answer, of course, is that this one was caught on videotape. In other words, it damages the league's public relations. In other words, this is—again—not about Janay Rice. It is about the well-being of the league.

So if no one is going to talk about the welfare of the person who is actually subjected to the violence on that tape, let's talk about it here. I spent the morning communicating with people who work on issues involving domestic violence and violence against women nearly every day of their lives. They all said the same thing, without dissent: releasing this tape to the world is incredibly damaging to Janay Rice. Just as we would protect the name of an alleged rape victim, just as we would not show a video of Ray Rice committing a sexual assault, we should not be showing this video like it's another episode of Rich People Behaving Badly. If Janay Rice wanted to show this tape to the world, in other words if she had offered her consent, that is a different matter. But showing and reshooting it just because we can is an act of harm.

Tragically, it seems—especially judging by my Twitter feed—that very few people agree with this sentiment. Their belief—and to be frank, this is shared by a lot of people whom I respect—is that seeing the video will shock people, advance the conversation and force action. Even some of the same people saying that nude photo hacks shouldn't be clicked on are saying people have an obligation to bear witness to what Rice did.

I have serious doubts about this. If you were outraged by violence against women before, will seeing this video really change your mind? If you are not outraged by violence against women, does this video actually make a damn bit of difference? My fear, and this happens whenever you have videos that spark outrage until the next new cycle, is that all it will provoke are the kinds of reactions that don't necessarily help anybody, least of all the victims. I hear influential people like ESPN's Mike Greenberg asking the question, "Why isn't Ray Rice in prison?"

There is no thought given to restorative justice. Only how do we further punish, impoverish and crowd our prisons. As for Janay Rice, she has of course been standing with Ray Rice, even marrying him after the incident. I have no doubt that there are issues there, but they become our damn business only if Janay Rice wants them to be our damn business. I will ask again: What does Janay Rice want, and shouldn't that matter? If it doesn't matter, all we are doing is re-victimizing this person one click at a time.

UPDATE

Janay Rice has released a statement on her Instagram account about the last 24 hours. She comments on both the release of her husband from the Baltimore Ravens as well on seeing her abuse played and replayed on a loop. People will surely pick her statement apart and make all kinds of judgments about her state of mind in making this statement. They shouldn't. I would ask that people just read it, without analyzing it as if we are all now experts on domestic violence as well as having some kind of voyeuristic insight on the lives of two individuals many had not even heard of 24 hours ago.

*This case is not yet reflected on the CDC site at the time of this announcement.

Stay connected: www.twitter.com/MarylandDHMH or www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH.

Calendar of Events

October 2 — October 8, 2014

Xtreme Teens: Popcorn and a Movie Night

Date and Time: Friday, October 3, 2014 7-10 pm
Description: Who doesn't love movies? Enjoy a great movie and refreshments with friends; be sure to get your vote in on what movie we watch.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID
Ages: 10-17
Location: Rollingcrest-Chillum Community Center
6120 Sargent Road, Chillum 20782
Contact: 301-853-2005; TTY 301-445-4512

First Friday Line Dance Social

Date & Time: Friday, October 3, 2014 6-10 pm
Description: First Friday Line Dance Socials are back at South Tech/Rec! We kickoff with the Purple Rain Launch Party complete with live DJ, great food and plenty of instructors for all skill levels. Then, keep joining us every First Friday of the month!
Cost: Resident: \$10; Non-Resident: \$12
Ages: 16 & up
Location: Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex
7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-203-6030

Wine Tasting at Marietta House

Date and Time: Saturday October 4, 2014 5-8 pm
Description: Sample the wines from local Maryland wineries and learn the basics of wine tasting! Look, smell and taste. For your convenience wines will be paired with cheeses or chocolate.
Cost: \$10/person
Ages: 21 & up (IDs are required)
Location: Marietta House Museum
5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale 20769
Contact: 301-464-5291; TTY 301-699-2544 (Mary Amen)

Anacostia River Clean-Up

Date and Time: Saturday, October 4, 2014, 9:30 am-12 noon
Description: Join us as we help the community and the environment by cleaning up the Anacostia River! Bring your can-do attitude; supplies will be provided.
Cost: FREE
Ages: 13 & up
Location: Bladensburg Waterfront Park
4601 Annapolis Road, Bladensburg 20710
Contact: 301-779-0371; TTY 301-699-2544

Harold Lopez Nussa Trio

Date and Time: Saturday, October 4, 2014 8 pm
Description: Cuban-born Harold Lopez-Nussa has had a remarkable career. At age eight, he commenced piano studies at the Manuel Saumell Conservatory; then continued his studies at the Amadeo Roldán Conservatory. He graduated from the Higher Institute of Arts (ISA) with a specialty in Classical Piano. His musical accomplishments include first place award for Solo Piano Competition at the Montreux Jazz Festival (2005) and "Jazz Talent 2011" from the French Music Association (ADAMI). As a film composer, Harold received the award for Best Original Soundtrack at the 9th New Filmmakers Exhibit for his music in the Cuban documentary Salvador de Cojimar, by director Ernesto Sánchez.
Cost: Tickets: \$25/person; 10% discount for Montpelier members & seniors
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Montpelier Arts Center
9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708
Contact: 301-377-7800 or 410-792-0664; TTY: 301-490-2329

Adventure Seekers

Date and Time: Saturday, October 4, 10 am-5 pm
Description: Calling all adventure seekers! Enjoy hiking, museums, and trips to natural and historical sites. On this adventure, enjoy a trip to the National Museum of the American Indian/Chilean Festival in Washington, D.C.
Cost: Resident: \$3; Non-Resident: \$4
Ages: 8-12
Location: Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation Center
4701 31st Place, Mount Rainier 20712
Contact: 301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544

Kinderfest

Date & Time: Sunday, October 5, 2014 12 noon-5 pm
Description: Joins us for the 34th Annual Kinderfest. This family festival features activities from midway games, Kinderfests, live entertainment to interactive exhibits and hay rides. Food concessions will be on site. Be sure to enjoy the day.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Watkins Regional Park
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro 20772
Contact: 301-218-6700; TTY 301-218-6768

Intro to Financial Planning

Date and Time: Monday, October 6, 2014 7-9 pm
Description: Do you know where are financially or have an idea of where you'd like to go? This workshop will help; it will discuss the basic concepts of personal financial planning.
Cost: Residents: \$5; Non-Residents: \$6
Ages: 18 & up
Location: Harmony Hall Regional Center
10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-203-6040; TTY 301-203-6030

Party In Pink Zumbathon

Date & Time: Wednesday, October 8, 2014 7-8:30 pm
Description: Let's groove for a cure! Join us for a night of Zumba featuring a live DJ spinning the hits, guest instructors, door prizes, and refreshments. All proceeds will be donated to The Zumba Global Research Grant for Breast Cancer Prevention, managed by the Susan G. Komen.
Cost: Resident: \$10; Non-Resident: \$12
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex
7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington 20744
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-203-6030

EARTH TALK ... Palm Oil Production and Rainforest Destruction

Dear EarthTalk:

How is it that some food purveyors are contributing to the destruction of tropical rainforests by ditching unhealthy "trans fats?"

— Billy S.,
Salem, OR

Most public health advocates applaud efforts by processed food producers, restaurants and fast food chains to get rid of so-called "trans fats"—partially hydrogenated oils added to foods to improve texture and extend shelf life but which can aggravate heart disease. In 2013 the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) proposed eliminating trans fats altogether, but it is unclear if and when such a change will take effect. In anticipation, many big trans fat buyers have switched to palm oil, much of which comes from former tropical rainforest lands cleared for agricultural production across Southeast Asia.

"The concern is that a lot of companies will switch to palm oil in order to reduce trans fats without thinking more broadly about the health and environmental implications of that," says Bill Barclay, Policy and Research Director at the non-profit Rainforest Action Network (RAN).

Palm oil may be a good substitute for trans fats in that it stays solid at room temperature and is therefore useful as a food additive in things like

snack bars. But it isn't much healthier: A 2009 study by the federal Agricultural Research Service found that palm oil "would not be a good substitute for trans fats by the food industry" because consuming either type of fat pushes in similar spikes in artery-clogging LDL ("bad") cholesterol and a protein (apolipoprotein B) that distributes it throughout the bloodstream.

Meanwhile, the explosion in palm oil use over the past few decades for biofuels and as a food ingredient and additive has wreaked havoc on tropical rainforest ecosystems across Southeast Asia. Environmental leaders are concerned that even more demand for palm oil could push some endangered species—including orangutans, Sumatran tigers and pygmy elephants—over the brink. "They're losing critical habitat that threatens their survival and that's largely driven by palm oil expansion," says RAN's Barclay.

Higher carbon emissions are another down side. According to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), the tropical peat soils that predominate in Southeast Asia rainforests store huge amounts of carbon. Clearing and draining these fields to create palm oil plantations releases this carbon into the atmosphere.

Green groups continue to work with palm oil producers and the governments that regulate them to promote more sustainable production and processing and toughen standards



CREDIT: RAINFOREST ACTION NETWORK

Rainforest Action Network is working to expose undisclosed palm oil plantations on former tropical rainforest lands like this one in West Kalimantan, Indonesia.

for conversion of land to agricultural use, but progress has been slow. A recent commitment by five of the world's largest producers and traders of palm oil to stop clearing "critical forest areas" for one year during a study is a step in the right direction, but there's no telling whether other producers will step up their own expansion efforts to fill the void, let alone what kind of ramped up production will happen when the study is complete.

And while food scientists are working on other alternatives to trans fats that could be greener and healthier, none are as a cheap-to-produce and easy-to-process as palm oil, at least for applications requiring a food product to sit on store shelves at room temperature.

The best thing we as consumers can do to keep our arteries and our consciences clear is to dial back our consumption of foods that include palm oil or any other trans fat alternatives. Indeed, there's never been a better time to put down those packaged baked goods and processed snacks altogether.

CONTACTS: FDA, www.fda.gov/Food/ucm292278.htm; RAN, www.ran.org; UCS, www.ucsusa.org.

EarthTalk® is written and edited by Roddy Scheer and Doug Moss and is a registered trademark of **E - The Environmental Magazine** (www.emagazine.com).
Send questions to: earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Treating Maryland's Juvenile Delinquents at Home More Effective, Less Costly Than Jails, Advocates Say

By MADELEINE LIST
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS — The \$225 million set aside to build three new jails for juvenile delinquents and improvements to a fourth in Maryland should be spent on community-based treatment instead, a state review panel found.

Putting more money into juvenile jails would lead to less effective treatments, according to a report by the Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit, which tracks the needs of children under the Department of Juvenile Services and produces quarterly reports on the conditions of the department's facilities.

The budgeted money, which includes the proposed construction of three new juvenile jails in Baltimore, Prince George's County and Wicomico County, should be re-directed to provide more non-residential, evidence-based treatment programs in the communities, said Nick Moroney, director of the Maryland Juvenile Justice Monitoring Unit.

More emphasis on community-based treatment could help reduce juvenile recidivism rates, according to the report.

Report is available at: http://www.oag.state.md.us/jjmu/reports/14_Quarter2.pdf

"Maryland should follow the national trends and be moving away from large, congregative facilities and move more towards services in the community," Moroney said.

Not all juvenile offenders are suited for community-based treatment, and some, who are very high risk or have certain mental health needs, need to be incarcerated out of state because Maryland lacks the specific services to treat them, said Eric Solomon, public information officer for the Department of Juvenile Services.

Last year, 126 youth were incarcerated out of state, according to the department's data resource guide. The construction of the proposed facilities could mean that more youth are able to stay in state in the future, Solomon said.

"We would love to be serving as many kids as we can in state,"

Solomon said. "Some of these possible treatment centers that we could be building could help us in bringing back some of those kids to treat here."

Maryland has seven state-operated facilities for convicted youth offenders, including five lower-level security facilities controlled mainly by staff, and two that are heavily secured by hardware such as fences and bars, according to the Department of Juvenile Services.

In 2013, 630 youths were placed in staff and hardware secure facilities and 716 were in community-based treatment in Maryland, according to the Department of Juvenile Services.

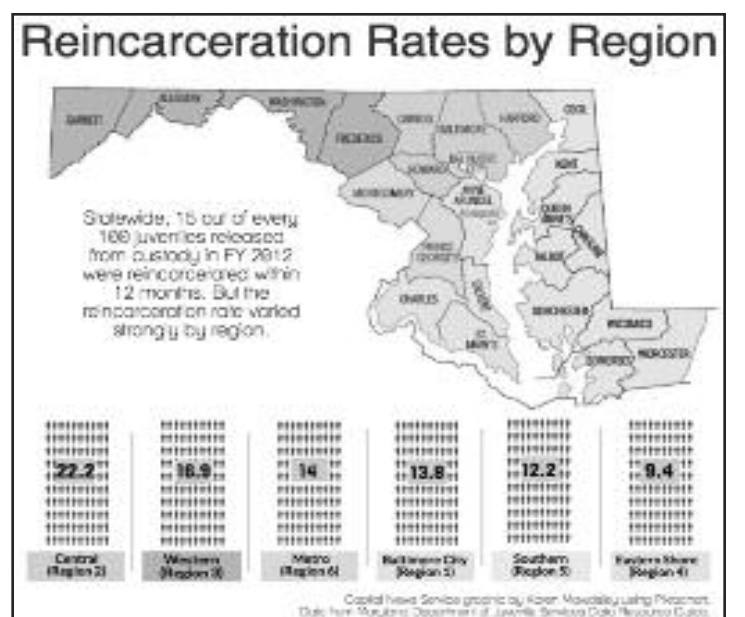
Studies have shown that intensive, community-based treatment programs, such as multisystemic therapy and functional family therapy, are more successful at reducing recidivism among juveniles than incarceration, according to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a Baltimore-based philanthropy working on national children's issues.

Functional family therapy involves the youth's family members and aims to turn around juveniles who are at risk or already exhibiting delinquency, substance abuse or behavioral issues without sending the child away from home. Multisystemic therapy is designed to work with chronic and more serious juvenile offenders in their own communities to address every aspect of their lives, from their families and friends to schools and neighborhoods.

But their success rates vary: One is better than incarceration, and the other worse, research indicates.

More than 19 percent of youth were reconvicted and 14.7 percent were re-incarcerated 12 months after release from a state-operated facility, according to the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services' 2013 data resource guide.

More successfully, 12 percent of Maryland youth were reconvicted and 7 percent were incarcerated within 12 months of completion of functional family therapy in 2012, according to a 2013 report from the Uni-



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE GRAPHIC BY KAREN MAWDSLEY
Graphic created using piktochart Data from Maryland Department of Juvenile Services Data Resource Guide

versity of Maryland Baltimore County. Twenty-seven percent of youth were reconvicted and 19 percent were incarcerated in 2012 within 12 months of completing a multisystemic therapy program in Maryland, according to a similar report.

The statistics did show that functional family therapy produced lower rates of recidivism among youth offenders than incarceration and multisystemic therapy produced higher rates, but it's impossible to fairly compare these rates because of the many variables at play, said Jennifer Mettrick, director of implementation services at the University of Maryland Baltimore County.

How a child responds to community-based therapy depends on the kind of offender he or she is and whether he or she has been through the justice system before, and there is no concrete system to decide who gets what kind of treatment, Mettrick explained.

"You can't do a straight comparison because there's not a systematic way that kids are being referred to these services verses out of home," she said.

There are sets of criteria that make youth ineligible for community-based treatment, such as exhibiting suicidal, homicidal or psychotic behavior, being charged as a sex offender or not being of the appropriate age. Youth must be

10-18 years old for functional family therapy and 12-17 years old for multisystemic therapy. Once a youth's eligibility for community-based treatment is determined, it is up to the court to decide where he or she is sent.

Sometimes, the decision comes down to wherever there is availability. This means that less serious offenders can wind up in residential facilities, while more serious offenders are being treated in their communities, Mettrick said.

"Sometimes they're an apples to apples comparison, sometimes they're not," she said. "But there are a lot of very similar kids that just by chance happen to get into one or the other service."

Treating children in the community is much cheaper than treating them in a residential facility. The average cost per child per day for multisystemic therapy is \$110, compared to \$34 per child for functional family therapy, while each day at a state-operated facility per child costs \$274 or \$531, depending on the security level of the facility, according to the university's report.

"If we can keep 50 percent of kids from coming back into the system, and we're doing it at a much reduced cost and a much smaller length of time and kids are able to stay in their communities, that's a win-win," Mettrick said.