

# The Prince George's Post



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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY DSNI SHAE THOMPSON.

WASHINGTON – Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., talks U.S. foreign policy with Capital News Service reporter Idrees Ali.

## Afghans Must Take Responsibility for Own Country, Sen. Cardin Says

By IDREES ALI  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., is a senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and chairman of the U.S. Helsinki Commission. This week, Cardin sat down with the Capital News Service to discuss

some of the most pressing foreign policy issues facing the United States. Below, in a question and answer format, are excerpts from the interview.

### Military Action in Syria

#### QUESTION

You introduced legislation that would repeal the 2002 AUMF (Authorization

for Use of Military Force), for a war (Iraq) you voted against. The Obama administration has used the 2001 (Afghanistan) and 2002 AUMF as the bases to carry out strikes in Iraq and Syria. How important do you think it is for the Obama administration to come to Congress at some point and seek new authorization?

#### ANSWER

Well the circumstances in 2001 and 2002 were very different than they are today. The authorization that (was) used for Afghanistan was in direct response to the attack on our country. The authorization for

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## Bi-Annual "Partners for Success Awards" Dinner a Victory for PGCC

By TAMIEKA BRISCOE  
Capital News Service

Largo, MD – Prince George's Community College hosted its bi-annual Partners for Success Awards Dinner and Gala where the Honorable Senator Barbara Mikulski, Stephanie C. Hill of Lockheed Martin and Martha Gay of Kaiser Permanente were the official guests of honor. Debbi Jarvis, vice president, Corporate Citizenship and Social Responsibility of Pepco Holdings, Inc. served as the guest MC. The highlight

of the evening occurred when Dr. Charlene Dukes, president of Prince George's Community College and Haden Land, chair of the Prince George's Community College Foundation, Inc. announced that the comprehensive Purpose, People, Possibilities campaign raised significant capital, from both the private and public sectors, a remarkable \$31,509,680.24—planned for scholarships, infrastructure, and technology initiatives.

See AWARDS Page A5

## U.S. Needs to Fight Ebola in West Africa, Senators Say

By MIKE PERSLEY  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers on Capitol Hill said that with the threat of Ebola in the United States diminished for now, the government's resources should shift toward fighting the disease in West Africa.

"Here in the United States of America, there are currently no cases of Ebola. There was nine, now there's none," said Maryland Sen. Barbara Mikulski, who chairs the Senate Appropriations Committee. "Now we have to do this worldwide."

The committee convened to discuss the \$6.2 billion in emergency funding President Barack Obama is requesting to help shore up the government's domestic response to the disease and to build public health capabilities in countries where the threat is still great.

The hearing came three days after Dr. Craig Spencer, who contracted the disease in October after working with patients in Western Africa with Doctors Without Borders, was released

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## Hogan Begins Transition Team with Democrat at Head of Budget and Tax Policy

By LEJLA SARCEVIC  
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Governor-elect Larry J. Hogan Jr. named Robert Neall, a Democrat and former state senator, delegate and Anne Arundel County executive, to his transition team on Wednesday afternoon, November 12th.

Neall will head up Hogan's budget and tax team, making the appointment one of the most important during his transition. The Republican Hogan's surprise win in a majority-Democrat state was based largely on a campaign message of fiscal restraint.

"He's the most respected fiscal mind in the state of Maryland," Hogan said. "There's nobody in the state that knows tax and fiscal budget issues better than Bobby Neall."

Neall said that the transition team will look at the remaining seven months of fiscal 2015 to "see if there are any mid-course corrections that the governor-elect could

do if he chose to in landing that budget in a different place than where the trajectory is."

Hogan won't have an opportunity to present a budget entirely of his own making until fiscal 2017, as most state budgets, which run based on a July-June fiscal year, are prepared by the previous Christmastime.

"There will be precious few opportunities for the new governor to tweak a budget that was really put together by his predecessor's staff," said Neall.

Hogan, who ran on a policy of cutting spending and taxes, has crossed the aisle by selecting Neall, a Democrat who switched parties during his state senate tenure in 1999 due to feeling increasingly "uncomfortable and unwelcome" within the Republican party, according to Capital News Service reports from the time.

Neall served in the state House of Delegates from 1975 to 1987, was Anne



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY LEJLA SARCEVIC

Robert Neall, left, newly appointed to head up budget and taxation for the transition team of Gov.-elect Larry J. Hogan Jr., middle, with Boyd Rutherford, the lieutenant governor-elect, right, in Annapolis on Nov. 12, 2014.

Arundel County executive from 1990 to 1994, and then a senator from late 1997 until early 2003.

Hogan also named Carville Collins, a Baltimore lawyer with DLA Piper, as general counsel to his transition team. Collins has represented clients in the energy, water, telecommunications and transportation sectors, accord-

ing to a profile on the DLA Piper website.

Matthew Crenson, professor emeritus with the Department of Political Science at Johns Hopkins University, said that Neall's appointment is a clear signal that Hogan is reaching out to Democrats.

See HOGAN Page A3

## Pilot Initiative Helps Homeless Veterans in PG County

By PRESS OFFICER  
DHCD

Crownsville, MD (November 10, 2014) – In recognition of Veterans Day, Acting Secretary Clarence J. Snuggs is announcing the Families First initiative, an innovative pilot program that will help homeless veterans in Prince George's County - particularly those with children - find stable housing for their families.

Families First is a housing-centered program designed to help veterans better navigate the various programs that help them adjust to civilian life. Its unique focus on families offers additional support for households that sometimes are headed by single parents.

"Our country's homeless veterans include men and women of all ages and they have served in every conflict," said Acting Secretary Snuggs. "But too often, these brave men and women can find it difficult to navigate the many services available to help them after they return home, particularly

when they're trying to raise children at the same time. Our pilot initiative focuses on helping families make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing housing support and customized Navigators who will help them be successful."

Families First is provided to eligible military veterans through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development with generous support from the Freddie Mac Foundation and with service navigation provided by Friendship Place, a nonprofit organization already working with veterans in Prince George's County.

"If there is any group of individuals that deserve our deepest gratitude, respect, and dedication to their health and well-being – it would be our military veterans," said County Executive Baker, III. "Prince George's County is home to more veterans than any other jurisdiction in the national capital region and the State of

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### INSIDE

#### HUD Reports Homelessness in U.S. Continues to Decline, Down 27.6 Percent in Maryland

State and local communities throughout the U.S. also reported a 15 percent decline in the number of families with children experiencing homelessness since 2010, as well as a 53 percent reduction among these families who were found to be unsheltered. Community, Page A3

#### Embracing Who You Are

Black women still remember the hours they spent sitting between a mother's or grandmother's knees having their hair braided. I certainly do. The elaborate styles decorated with beads, barrettes, and bows have long showcased the creativity and love that goes into caring for Black girls' hair. Commentary, Page A4

#### Board of Public Works Approves \$383,990 in Agricultural Cost-Share Grants

The Board of Public Works approved \$383,990 in Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share grants, which help farmers install best management practices that significantly reduce nutrient runoff in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and accelerate Bay restoration. Business, Page A5

#### Movie Review: "Interstellar"

Interstellar is hugely ambitious, a 169-minute sci-fi adventure that takes old tropes (space travel, alien planets) and applies fresh new studio money to them. Visually, it's a triumph. Nolan and his team use seamless special effects and models to create an awe-inspiring view of the solar system and beyond. Out on the Town, Page A6

#### Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are the potential health and environmental impacts of so many genetically engineered organisms in our food supply?

— Frank C.,  
Charlottesville, VA

Features, Page A7

# Towns and NEIGHBORS

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

### It sure feels like winter— dig out the ice skates!

Tucker Road Ice Rink, 1770 Tucker Rd., offers programs for all ages including public skating, learn-to-skate classes, adult pick-up hockey, Give it a Shot youth hockey classes and clinics, in-house youth hockey teams affiliated with USA Hockey, birthday parties, and ice- and room- rental packages.

The Rink has a warming area, skate rental, locker rooms, party & conference room, bleachers and a café with vending machines. Hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, and 8:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Sunday.

Admission varies, but mostly is \$5 for adults and \$4 for ages 6-17. Skate rental is generally \$2 but is free for some of the sessions.

Sounds like a great family outing!

### Neighbors

Sister Merit was in town this week from South Sudan, in Africa, for a visit with the Daughters of St. Anne whose convent is in St. Philip's Parish. The Motherhouse of the order is in Rome, but the Daughters of St. Anne come from and serve in countries throughout the world. Sister Merit and the sisters who currently live here are from Eritrea, in East Africa.

Guest speakers at Skyline's meeting Nov. 19 included Derrick Coley, Public Affairs Liaison for County Councilman Obie Patterson; Mark Dennison, principal of Skyline School; Police Officers Miller and Gonzalez, and Morningside Fire Chief Mike White.

Chief White, by the way, steps down as fire chief at the end of the year. The current assistant chief, Michael R. Poterker will be the new chief.

The Town of Morningside has donated \$110,000 to the

Fire Department to rehab the pumper that Co. #27 just bought from the Allentown VFD.

I have just received word that former Camp Springs resident, Jim Maruca, died Nov. 19. Jim lived in the area for a long time, and was active at St. Philip's Church. I'll write more about him later.

Some news from ten years ago this month: For ten years Chester and Winifred Lanehart, of Skyline, had roasted a turkey and delivered it, with all the fixing's, to the Morningside Firehouse on Thanksgiving Day. They planned to do it again, in time for Thanksgiving dinner 2004.

### Come for chili, blues and open mic

Davies Community Chili Chow/Blues Jam/Open Mic will be held Saturday, Dec. 6, 1:30 to 5 p.m., at 7400 Temple Hill Road in Camp Springs. A great bowl of chili (con carne or vegetarian) with sides will be served for a suggested donation of \$10. Beverages also available. The Blues Concert and Open Mic are no-charge, though donations accepted. Ebra Rhythms is the featured performer. Info: 301-449-4308

### Changing landscape

Office Depot, in Clinton, has a Closing Sale in progress. The store opened only three or four years ago and apparently couldn't compete with Staples across the street in the shopping center.

Royal Farms, soon to open in Camp Springs, has new sidewalks along Old Branch and Allentown Road.

Looks like something new will soon be under construction next to Clinton Hardware. The John Deeres are busy.

### May they rest in peace

Betty Jo "Nanny" Call, longtime resident of Maple Road in Morningside, died Aug. 30. She was the wife of

Clarence "Ray" Call; mother of Ron, Don, Mike, Steve, Lisa and Ginny Call, Lynda Beatty, and the late Dave Call; 24 grandchildren, 42 great-grandchildren and one great-great-granddaughter; a brother and a sister. Services were at Kallas with burial at Cheltenham. I recall Betty working checkout at G. I. Market—she could give you the amount of your bill before she rang it up. She later worked at the bowling alley in Suitland.

My second cousin, Samuel Joseph "Joe" Summers, Sr., 80 of Brandywine, died October 14 in Clinton. A great-grandson of Dr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Mudd, he was born in Westwood, Md., to John Francis and Lucile Augusta (Mudd) Summers. He worked as a heavy equipment operator for Ray Vest, Reliable and Locust Lane Construction Company and took pride in running the family farm. He kept in touch with his Gwynn Park High School Class of 1953. His wife Rose Angeline (Nimmerichter) Summers, brothers John and Edwin Summers, and grandson Samuel Summers III predeceased him. Survivors include his son Samuel, brother Larry, sisters Nancy Hedrick and Marie Summers, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Thomas Shipman, Sr., Nov. 28; Devin Kane Blade, Nov. 29; aren Windsor, Alexis R. Paige, Ramona Britt and Patricia Branch, Nov. 30; Mary Doyle,

Susan McKay and Jon Foster, Dec. 1; John Anthony, Jr., Vonn Branch and Tyonda Simms-Taylor, Dec. 2; Louise Lantz, Mary Straud and Sen. Mike Miller, Dec. 3; Mark Witherow, Jr. and La'Keshia Johnson, Dec. 4.

Happy anniversary to Gary and Ivy Kline on Nov. 28.

## Neighborhood Events

### Prince George's County Library Names IT director

HYATTSVILLE, Md.—Prince George's County Memorial Library System named Carla Moore director of information technology. In her new role, Moore will oversee the daily operations of the library's IT department, including managing staff members and vendors, implementing policy, and planning and leading projects.

Moore, who has more than 25 years of IT experience, specializes in IT strategy and execution, nonprofit and campus systems and operations, and leadership and talent development.

Prior to joining the library, Moore was director of administrative technology for Potomac School in McLean, Virginia. Previously she was senior network manager and held other IT positions with the American Academy of Otolaryngology in Alexandria, Virginia.

Moore holds a Bachelor of Science in computer networking from Strayer University and an Associate of Arts in computer information systems from Strayer College (now Strayer University).

Prince George's County Memorial Library System provides materials and information for study and personal enrichment, offering strategies for lifelong learning through access to varied media and professional guidance. The library system consists of branches in 19 communities including Accokeek, Baden, Beltsville, Bladensburg, Bowie, Fairmount Heights, Glenarden, Greenbelt, Hillcrest Heights, Hyattsville, Largo-Kettering, Laurel, Mount Rainier, New Carrollton, Oxon Hill, South Bowie, Spauldings, Surratts-Clinton and Upper Marlboro. ([www.pgcmcls.info](http://www.pgcmcls.info))

### Bowie State Seniors Go Out with a 35-30 Season Finale Victory against Elizabeth City State

BOWIE, Md. (November 2014) – In the final game of the season for both teams, Bowie State claimed a 35-30 victory over Elizabeth City State. The win, Bowie State's third in a row and winners of five of their last six games, closeout the season with a 5-5 overall record and 5-2 in the CIAA.

As a team, the Bulldogs rolled up 434 yards of total offense with graduate student Matthew Goggans (Pine Grove, Calif.) responsible for a personal season-best 368 passing yards and four touchdowns. Junior Garry Cropper (Odenton, Md.) was Bowie State's top receiver with a career-best 119 yards on eight catches. The Bulldogs defense was led by graduate student Christopher Townsend (Washington, D.C.) with a team-high 10 tackles.

Bowie State University used a big third quarter and held off a late Viking rally to topple Elizabeth City State University 35-30 Saturday afternoon at Bulldogs Stadium.

Elizabeth City State's Tyrell Houghton (Reidsville, N.C.) topped all performers posting career highs in both passing and rushing. Houghton had four passing touchdowns finishing with

485 yards though the air and carried the ball eight times for 105 yards on the ground both game-highs. As a team the Vikings totaled an impressive 617 yards of offense, their largest output since October 19, 2013 when they hung 585 yards on The Lincoln University.

However despite their big offensive numbers, two costly turnovers were major momentum swings that would turn in the favor of the Bulldogs.

Defensively the Vikings were paced by Stephen Williams who led all defenders with a game high 14 tackles.

Elizabeth City State (4-6, 3-4 CIAA) held a 10-7 lead in the second quarter faced third and goal at the Bowie State one yard line. A bad exchange between Houghton and Kenny King was recovered by BSU's Townsend, costing the Vikings a scoring opportunity. Another chance at putting points on the board was squandered when in the BSU red zone when Houghton's pass was intercepted in the end zone and returned by redshirt freshman Austin Phillips (Pomfret, Md.) to the ECSU 43.

For the day the Vikings were 4-for-7 in the red zone and were flagged 10 times for 118 yards.

The Bulldogs had seemingly put the game away after Goggans' fourth passing TD of the day gave Bowie State 35-17 lead with 7:26 left in the game.

The Vikings rallied back scoring two touchdowns in less than a minute in the final 1:41 of the contest. Antonio Gunter (Raleigh, N.C.) hauled in a four yard scoring pass and after a successful inside kick, the Vikings struck again with 53 ticks left. Javoris Bryant (Decatur, Ga.) recorded a five yard TD reception from Houghton, his second score of the day, pulling Elizabeth City State within striking distance. Bryant had a career day, catching nine passes for a game-high 222 yards. Montario Hunter (Ahoskie, N.C.) also eclipsed 100 receiving yards, recording 167 yards on the loss.

However the Vikings did not convert the two point attempt and their try for another inside kick was covered by BSU's Cropper. The Bulldogs then ran out the clock for the five point win.

Prior to the game, 11 Bulldogs seniors (Keith Brown, Joseph Coates, Nigel Cross, Mario Diaz-Aviles, Jeremy Dorsey, Khari Lee, Jeffrey Ojiribe, Paxton Queen, Jair Ramos, Christopher Townsend and Leroy Williams) were honored.

### WebstauranStore Opens Western Maryland Distribution Center, Plans to Add 150 Jobs

Annapolis, Md. (November 10, 2014) – Governor Martin O'Malley today joined with Allegany County Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Director Matthew Diaz to announce that WebstauranStore, the largest online supplier of food service equipment, is opening a distribution facility in Western Maryland. The company has purchased a 525,000 square-foot space in Cumber-

land which will become its second distribution location on the East Coast.

As part of the company's expansion into Maryland, WebstauranStore plans to create 150 new jobs in the next two years. To assist with project costs, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) is providing a \$300,000 conditional loan through the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority and Fund (MEDAAF). Additionally, Allegany County is offering a \$30,000 conditional loan to the company on the same terms as the State.

"Our investments in education, innovation, and infrastructure get results: they create jobs, spur innovation, and provide the most competitive, highly-skilled workforce in the nation," said Governor O'Malley. "More and more fast-growing companies like WebstauranStore are setting up operations in Maryland to take advantage of our dynamic economic climate that fosters business to growth. We welcome WebstauranStore and look forward to seeing their business expand and grow in our great State."

"Along with my fellow Commissioners, Crede Brodie and Bill Valentine, we are delighted to have a company like WebstauranStore locate in Allegany County," said Allegany County Commissioner President Michael W. McKay. "As Commissioners, we work daily to promote job growth and the redevelopment of properties that will allow our tax base to grow."

"This will prove to be a great win for not only Allegany County, but the entire region. Projects like this show the importance of tax credit incentives programs such as the Enterprise Zone and One Maryland," said Director Diaz. "Without these programs and a true partnership with our friends at DBED, these projects would be extremely hard to make happen."

"We are happy to be opening a distribution center in Cumberland. The State and County worked together to put together an attractive incentive for bringing jobs to Western Maryland," said Dave Groff, President of WebstauranStore. "Our company is excited to commence operations in Cumberland and looks forward to being part of the community for many years to come."

WebstauranStore formed in Lancaster, Pa. in 2004. The online retailer provides food service professionals with restaurant equipment, cookware, janitorial supplies, consumable products, and other necessities for the restaurant industry. Known as the leading restaurant supply store, the company currently has three other distribution centers in the country, located in Pennsylvania, Kentucky and Nevada. WebstauranStore's parent company, Clark Associates, employs over 900 people and was recently named one of Central Penn Business Journal's fastest growing companies.

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

### 2014 CHRISTMAS CANTATA

Please invite your families, friends and neighbors and co-workers to attend this event of the Westphalia Cantata Choir Saturday December 20, 2014 at 6:00 PM. Rev. Dr. Timothy West, Pastor. The church is located at 9363 D'Arcy Road Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774. Call 301-735-9373 or email [www.westphaliaum.org](http://www.westphaliaum.org) for more information.

### JAZZ CAFE

Save the date for a Jazz Caf  featuring Chuck Farmer and the New Prospect Band Saturday, December 27, 2014 at New Hope Fellowship-Nottingham Myers Campus Family Life Center at 7:00 PM. Come out and enjoy the smooth Jazz sounds of our local musicians. Ticket cost \$30.00. Family Life Center is located at 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland.

### ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, BADEN PARISH

Come and join us for family and friends line dance social night. The dates are Friday, December 12 and Friday, December 26,

2014. The hall is located at 13801 Baden Westwood Road Brandywine, Maryland 20613-8426.

Points of contact are Ruby E. Hinnant (301) 627-1235 (301) 943-2816 (Cell), Shirley A. Cleaves (301) 888-1475, (302) 690-4260 (Cell) and Michele K. Chase (301) 888-2510, (240) 882-3369 (Cell).

### MEDSTAR SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Some of the support groups offered are Prostate Cancer Support Group-Free on the second Tuesday of every month 6:30PM to 8:30 PM. Join us at Colony South Hotel & Conference Center. The address is 7503 Surratts Road Clinton, Maryland 20735. Call 301-877-5556 for information.

NAMI/Mental Health Support Group for Family Members and Caregivers is free. This support group meets second Tuesday of every month 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM at Colony South Hotel and Conference Center. Call 301-856-8221 for information.

### FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation will display the Festival of Lights

Friday, November 28, 2014 thru Thursday, January 1, 2015 from 5:00 PM-9:30 PM. This spectacular holiday drive-through event featuring more than one million twinkling lights is something that you will not want to miss.

Admission fees (cash only) are \$5.00/car or van, \$10/multi-visit, transferable pass for cars and vans (3 visits), \$15/min-bus (seats 13-24) or limo, \$25/bus (seats 25 or more, no reservations required), Multi-visit passes on sale nightly at the gate and free on December 25. Please bring canned goods for donation to local food banks and make a difference this season.

The address is Watkins Regional Park 301 Watkins Park Drive (Route 193) Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20774. Telephone number is 301-699-2456; TTY 301-218-6768.

### ROMANO VINEYARD & WINERY

The winery is open for tastings every Saturday noon to 5:00 PM. The address is 15715 Bald Eagle School Road Brandywine, Maryland 20613. For more information call 301 752-1103 or e-mail [info@romanowinery.com](mailto:info@romanowinery.com).

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# COMMUNITY

## Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

### What You Need to Know Before Reading New Social Security Statements

No matter how far away you are from retirement, it's important to understand your Social Security benefits — and there's a particularly good reason to do it now.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) is bringing back annual paper benefits statements for the first time in three years. It stopped in 2011 to save money on printing and postage, but Congress and consumer advocates complained that workers needed better access to their data. In September, the agency reversed its decision and announced it's resuming the practice of mailing paper statements to workers in two categories:

- Those who are not receiving benefits and are within three months of turning 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, and 60. (After age 60, workers will receive a statement every year.)
- Those who still haven't registered for a My Social Security ([www.ssa.gov/myaccount/](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/)) online account.

Why is this important? First, if you've paid into the Social Security and Medicare system, you should understand the benefits you've earned. Second, as the SSA has been closing field offices and reducing services to the public, despite the fact that Baby Boomers are starting to flood the system. It's a good time to confirm and correct benefits due to the longer wait times on the agency's toll free telephone line and field offices.

Start by waiting for your next paper benefits statement or sign up at My Social Security website to review your current data. Here's a quick overview of what your statement tells you:

- **Introduction and your estimated benefits.** This section covers four categories. The first is your retirement benefits, which are based on your age when you start drawing them. The calculations are based on three critical ages as examples: 62 (the earliest age you can draw retirement benefits), 67 (the full retirement age for anyone born after 1960) and age 70 (the oldest anyone can start drawing benefits, generally at the highest level if you can wait). The second is disability, which refers to the amount of your monthly disability benefit if you qualify. Third, your family/survivors benefits if a loved one dies. And lastly, your Medicare eligibility and the particular facts to support that conclusion.

- **Your Earnings Record.** This is a summary of your earnings that you need to verify for accuracy. Pull your annual tax returns as far back as you can to confirm this information, and if you work with a tax or financial planning professional, double-check their conclusions if you plan to challenge any errors with the SSA.

- **Some Facts About Social Security.** Provides additional definitions and guidelines to better understand your statement and includes key contact information.

Most experts will tell you that when it comes to retirement, time is your biggest ally — it gives you the opportunity to invest, save and adjust your plan strategy. Use your statement to do the following:

- **Spot and correct errors.** If you and your tax professional spot disparities in your benefit statement make careful notes, gather your evidence and consult the SSA's contact page ([www.ssa.gov/agency/contact/](http://www.ssa.gov/agency/contact/)) to start the correction process remotely or in person.

- **Blend Social Security into a broader retirement plan.** Most experts agree Social Security alone won't provide a comfortable retirement. It's never too late to plan.

**Bottom Line:** Even if you're years away from retirement, make sure you understand your Social Security benefits, and that they're accurate and fit into a broader financial plan for your retirement.

#### Hogan from A1

"I would expect that the transition team will include other Democrats as well," Crenson said.

By creating a bi-partisan transition team, it becomes harder for Maryland Democrats to take shots at Hogan, Crenson said.

Hogan has reached out to key state Democrats, he said, having scheduled meetings with Comptroller Peter Franchot, and Speaker of the House of Delegates Michael E. Busch (Anne Arundel).

He also had a breakfast meeting with Senate President

Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (Calvert and Prince George's), on Wednesday but did not offer up any details of what was discussed.

"We had a frank, open and honest discussion," Hogan said.

The governor-elect continues to decline to offer up any specific policy platform, saying that it doesn't make any sense to roll out policy initiatives until he's assembled a team of advisers to help him make those decisions.

"I think you're trying to put the cart before the horse," Hogan said.

## HUD Reports Homelessness in U.S. Continues to Decline, Down 27.6 Percent in Maryland

By PRESS OFFICER  
US DHUD

WASHINGTON — U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julián Castro today announced HUD's latest estimate of homelessness in the U.S., noting a continued overall decline in the total number of persons experiencing homelessness and significant reductions particularly among veterans and those persons living on the streets.

HUD's 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress finds that there were 578,424 persons experiencing homelessness on a single night in 2014 in the U.S. During this same one-night period, local homeless planning agencies reported that there were 7,856 persons experiencing homelessness throughout Maryland. This represents an overall 27.6 percent decrease in the state since 2010.

HUD's annual 'point-in-time' estimates seek to measure the scope of homelessness on a single night in January. Based on data reported by state and local planning agencies across the country, last January's one-night estimate reveals a 33 percent drop in homelessness among veterans since 2010 and a 10.5 percent decline since last year. State and local communities through-

out the U.S. also reported a 15 percent decline in the number of families with children experiencing homelessness since 2010, as well as a 53 percent reduction among these families who were found to be unsheltered.

"As a nation, we are successfully reducing homelessness in this country, especially for those who have been living on our streets as a way of life," said Castro. "There is still a tremendous amount of work ahead of us but it's clear our strategy is working, and we're going to push forward till we end homelessness as we've come to know it."

"In the Mid-Atlantic region, communities are targeting their resources strategically to give persons experiencing homelessness the support they need," said Jane C.W. Vincent, Regional Administrator of HUD's Mid-Atlantic region. "As a result, the numbers have declined steadily since 2010, ranging from a 27.6 percent decrease in Maryland to an 8.2 percent drop in Delaware."

During one night in late January 2014, volunteers across the nation conducted a one-night count of their local sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations. These one-night 'snapshot' counts are then reported to HUD as part of state and local grant applications. While the data re-

ported to HUD does not directly determine the level of a community's grant funding, these estimates, as well as full-year counts, are crucial in understanding the scope of homelessness and measuring progress in reducing it.

The Obama Administration's strategic plan to end homelessness is called Opening Doors — a roadmap by 19 federal member agencies of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness along with local and state partners in the public and private sectors. The Plan puts the country on a path to end homelessness among veterans by 2015; chronic homelessness by 2016; and to ending homelessness among children, family, and youth by 2020. The Plan presents strategies building upon the lesson that mainstream housing, health, education, and human service programs must be fully engaged and coordinated to prevent and end homelessness.

The decline in veteran homelessness nationwide is largely attributed to the close collaboration between HUD and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs on a joint program called HUD-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH). Since 2008, more than 59,000 rental vouchers have been awarded and approximately 45,000 for-

merly homeless veterans are currently in their own homes because of HUD-VASH.

Long-term or chronic homelessness among individuals is declining quite substantially since 2010. This decline is partially attributable to a concerted effort to develop more permanent supportive housing opportunities for those who otherwise continually cycle from shelters to the streets. Research demonstrates that for those who have been homeless the longest, permanent housing coupled with appropriate supportive services, can effectively end a person's homelessness. This 'housing first' approach also saves the taxpayer considerable money by interrupting a costly cycle of emergency room visits, detoxes, and even jail terms.

Many communities are also making a special effort to identify homeless youth on the night of their counts. Great strides have been made connecting young people to youth service providers, with particularly strong efforts focused on unsheltered youth. In addition, communities are finding creative ways to identify and engage these unsheltered youth, through efforts like youth-targeted events to an increased use of social media outlets.

## HUD Awards \$3.1 Million to Fight Housing Discrimination in Mid-Atlantic Region

By PRESS OFFICER  
US DHUD

PHILADELPHIA — The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded today \$3.1 million to nine fair housing agencies in the mid-Atlantic region to address housing discrimination. Nationally, \$38.3 million was awarded.

The grants are awarded through HUD's Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) to help enforce the Fair Housing Act through investigations and testing of alleged discriminatory practices and to help educate housing providers, local governments and potential victims of housing discrimination about their rights and responsibilities under the Fair Housing Act.

"Ending housing discrimination is at the core of HUD's mission, and it takes dedicated people on the ground to address it," said HUD Secretary Julián Castro. "These funds support community-based organizations that do great work every day on the front lines in the fight for fairness and equality in our nation's housing market."

HUD's Assistant Secretary for Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Gustavo Velasquez added,

"The Fair Housing Initiatives Program provides the only federal grant support to private fair housing enforcement and education. Dispersed throughout the country, these grants enable our partner agencies to stand beside us in the fight against housing discrimination, and we couldn't do it without them."

"In the mid-Atlantic region, 413 fair housing discrimination complaints were filed with HUD and our partners in FY 2014," said Jane C.W. Vincent, Regional Administrator of HUD's mid-Atlantic region. "These complaints underscore the importance of funding enforcement activities that will put an end to discrimination in the region."

Under the FHIP program, three categories of grants were awarded:

□ Private Enforcement Initiative grants (PEI) — Helps local non-profit fair housing organizations carry out testing and enforcement activities to prevent or eliminate discriminatory housing practices.

□ Education and Outreach Initiative grants (EOI) — Helps groups educate the public and housing providers about rights and responsibilities under federal, state and local fair housing laws.

State	Recipient	City	Amount
Delaware	Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.	Wilmington	\$322,449
District of Columbia	Equal Rights Center, Inc.	Washington	\$325,000
Maryland	Baltimore Neighborhoods, Inc.	Baltimore	\$325,000
Pennsylvania	Fair Housing Council of Suburban Philadelphia, Inc.	Fort Washington	\$325,000
	Fair Housing Rights Center in Southeastern Pennsylvania	Philadelphia	\$325,000
	Fair Housing Partnership of Greater Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	\$449,915
Virginia	Southwestern Pennsylvania Legal Services, Inc.	Washington (PA)	\$450,000
	Housing Opportunities Made Equal of Virginia, Inc.	Richmond	\$325,000
West Virginia	Northern West Virginia Center For Independent Living	Morgantown	\$324,956
<b>TOTAL:</b>			<b>\$3,172,320</b>

PHOTO COURTESY HUD

HUD is awarding FHIP grants to the following nonprofit agencies in the mid-Atlantic region

□ Fair Housing Organizations Initiative (FHOI) — Helps build the capacity and effectiveness of non-profit fair housing organizations—particularly organizations that focus on the rights and needs of underserved groups such as rural and immigrant populations.

The Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity and its Fair Housing Assistance Program partners investigate nearly 9,000 housing discrimination complaints annually.

Persons who believe they have experienced discrimination may file a complaint by contacting HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity at (800) 669-9777 (voice) or (800) 927-9275 (TTY). Housing discrimination complaints may also be filed at [www.hud.gov/fairhousing](http://www.hud.gov/fairhousing) or by downloading HUD's free housing discrimination mobile application, which can be accessed on Apple devices.

## Supreme Court Hears Md. Case - Taxing of Out-of-State Income

By ASHLEY S. WESTERMAN  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON — People who earn out-of-state income and pay income taxes in those other states should not be subject to income taxes in their state of residency, argued a lawyer for a Maryland couple before the Supreme Court Wednesday.

Brian and Karen Wynne, of Howard County, are plaintiffs in Comptroller of the Treasury of Maryland v. Brian Wynne. Court documents show the case seeks to answer the question: "Does

the United State Constitution prohibit a state from taxing all income of its residents — wherever earned — by mandating a credit for taxes paid on income in other states?"

Maryland has an out-of-state income tax credit that can be used to offset state income taxes. But there is no equivalent credit that can be used to offset county income taxes, so counties can tax the out-of-state income.

Mr. Wynne, who is a co-owner of Maxim Healthcare Services Inc., which operates in several states, argues that is a vi-

olation of the dormant Commerce Clause.

University of Maryland Carey School of Law Professor Mark Graber said the dormant Commerce Clause says "there are some state regulations of interstate commerce that are unconstitutional even when Congress does not act."

"So there is no federal law that prohibits or requires states to give tax credits for taxes paid in other states," Graber said. "But the claim the Wynnes are making is that, in fact, Maryland's failure to do

so sufficiently burdens interstate commerce."

During oral arguments, Dominic Perella, counsel for the Wynnes, told justices that the clause "operates to force (the state) to structure their taxes in a way that avoids double taxation."

However, Maryland argues that states have the authority to tax all income of their residents, no matter where that income is earned. Further, the

See TAXING Page A6

# COMMENTARY

## Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator for Maryland



### Cardin Offers Birthday Greetings to the U.S. Marine Corps

BALTIMORE — U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.) issued the following statement to commemorate the founding of United States Marine Corps, which occurred on November 10, 1775.

"In honor of the U.S. Marine Corps' birthday, I want to offer my most sincere thanks to Marines past and present. For 239 years the Marine Corps and Marine Corps families have made innumerable sacrifices in defense of our nation," Senator Cardin said.

On November 10th, 1775, the Second Continental Congress established the Continental Marines with the decree, "That two battalions of Marines be raised consisting of one Colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, two majors and other officers, as usual in other regiments; that they consist of an equal number of privates as with other battalions, that particular care be taken that no persons be appointed to offices, or enlisted into said battalions, but such as are good seamen, or so acquainted with maritime affairs as to be able to serve for and during the present war with Great Britain and the Colonies; unless dismissed by Congress; that they be distin-

guished by the names of the First and Second Battalions of Marines."

"The U.S. Marine Corps is one of the most revered and respected military units in history," Senator Cardin continued. "From the Battle of Trenton to the Battle of Iwo Jima, Marines have distinguished themselves as a matchless sea and land fighting force. Generations of Marines have endured conflict around the globe and at sea to ensure our nation enjoys peace and security. The title 'United States Marine' is and will always be synonymous with sacrifice, dedication and courage that is beyond reproach. As President Ronald Reagan famously said, 'Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference to the world, but the Marines don't have that problem.'

"On this 239th Birthday of the Marine Corps, on behalf of the United States Senate and the State of Maryland, I send my heartfelt thanks to those who have served and are serving under the banner of the United States Marines," Senator Cardin concluded.

### Civil Rights Groups Take Action to Support Family of Victim in Police Killing Case Before Maryland High Court

By PRESS OFFICER  
ACLU of Maryland

Ferguson, Missouri, the American Civil Liberties Union of Maryland, the Public Justice Center, and the Caucus of African American Leaders this week asked the Maryland Court of Appeals to step in to ensure that victims of police abuses can hold law enforcement accountable when the government does not. The filing came in the form of a "friend of the court" brief in a case involving the malicious killing of an unarmed Latino man by a white Prince George's County police officer with a record of past misconduct.

A Prince George's County jury found that police officer Steven Jackson maliciously beat Manuel Espina, then shot him to death, awarding his wife and son \$10 million in damages to account for their devastating loss. However, the reviewing courts slashed the jury's award to just \$200,000, reasoning that awards against the government are subject to strict damages caps, even for the most egregious civil rights violations. The ACLU brief argues that applying the caps to these types of cases would severely undermine the civil rights guarantees of the Maryland Constitution.

"Police abuse is one of the most significant civil rights and racial justice issues of our time," said Sonia Kumar, ACLU Staff Attorney. "In this case, the government not

only failed to criminally charge the police officer who killed Mr. Espina, but kept him on the job, and also defended his actions in court. A jury disagreed. For the courts to allow the government to avoid its responsibility to Mr. Espina's family here would send a message that we don't take police abuse seriously, even where the abuse is so egregious that it ends in death."

On August 16, 2008, Manuel Espina was with friends outside his apartment complex in Langley Park, as his wife and son were preparing a birthday party for him. He was violating no laws. Officer Jackson, who had a documented history of excessive force including two incidents in the previous three months, told the men to disperse, followed the men inside, and then brutally assaulted Mr. Espina before shooting him in front of his son. When Mr. Espina's son attempted to give his father CPR, he was himself arrested and imprisoned. A recording of the 911 call reveals the Jackson cursing at the Espina family after he shot Mr. Espina.

Jackson was never criminally charged for his actions. He is still employed with the Prince George's police.

The brief filed by civil rights groups argues that from its founding, the State of Maryland has sought to guarantee its people strong protections against governmental abuse of power, and full remedies when such abuses do occur. Accept-

ing the rulings of the lower courts in this case would be a departure from this tradition. In making these arguments, the brief traces the history and wording of the Maryland Constitution's guarantee of "justice and right" to those who fall victim to governmental abuse of power: "Allowing the government to avoid its responsibility to remedy Mr. Espina's shocking killing by police would render the Framer's Article 19 promise of 'justice and right' a nullity and inflict yet another agonizing wrong upon the Espina family."

"Given what has happen with the Michael Brown case in Ferguson, Missouri, the Espina case is not only timely, but will serve to set an important legal precedent in the State of Maryland," said Carl O. Snowden, Convener of the Caucus of African American Leaders.

"The Public Justice Center hopes that the Court of Appeals will enforce the strong protections of the Maryland Constitution and reverse the lower courts' reduction of the jury's award to the Espina family," said Anna Jagelewskia, Francis D. Murnaghan, Jr. Appellate Advocacy Fellow at the Public Justice Center. "The government must be held fully accountable for the actions of police officers who abuse the power they are given. The words of the Maryland Constitution will ring hollow if there is no meaningful remedy for their violation."



Winter Festival of Lights

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: ???

WINTER FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS AT WATKINS PARK

301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Dates to be Announced. HOURS: 5-9:30 p.m. daily. \$5 per car; \$15 for mini-buses and limos; \$25 for buses; \$10 for multi-visit passes for cars and vans (good for three visits). The festival is FREE on December 25. You may bring canned food items to donate to local food banks for the holidays. Winter Festival of Lights is Prince George's County, Maryland's spectacular drive-through Christmas light display featuring more than a million twinkling lights.

The park is also home to the following facilities: Watkins Nature Center, the Chesapeake Carousel, Old Maryland Farm, the Watkins Regional Park miniature train and the Watkins Miniature Golf Course. Those who enjoy nature, sports, picnics, hiking, camping, or outdoor family activities will find plenty to do at Watkins Regional Park. Throughout the year the park hosts a variety of exciting special events including summer concerts in the park, the Winter Festival of Lights, National Senior Health Fitness Day, and charity runs/walks.

### Child Watch by Marion Wright Edelman



### Embracing Who You Are

For many years I've been blessed by my friendship with Pamela Ferrell, one of the country's leading experts on natural Black hair. Pamela and her husband Taalib-Din Uqdaq co-founded the Washington, D.C. hair salon Cornrows & Co. in 1980, pioneering the natural hair care movement with African-inspired braids and hairstyles. They point out that their philosophy and the natural product line they created for their styles long predated today's green movement: Cornrows & Co. has always featured a chemical-free salon focusing both on protecting each client's health and using products that are locally made and safe for the earth. Today, using chemical-free products and embracing "natural beauty" have gained traction in many mainstream circles—yet both are still sometimes considered countercultural for African Americans, especially when it comes to Black women's hair. But that tide has been slowly but surely changing, and over the years Pamela has been a leading and persistent voice championing Black women—and girls, and boys and men—embracing who they are.

In September 2014, Pamela was honored at the Pentagon for her admirable work. As an experienced business owner and published author, she assisted the Army's review of hairstyle policies by providing valuable information and samples of natural hairstyles before a panel of Army personnel leaders reviewing new grooming rules that had declared twists and locks unauthorized. Her presentation covered the factual differences between "circle" and "straight" hair types and the negative results that can come from policies restricting natural hairstyles made by authorities with no actual expertise on hair, "like women being forced to straighten their hair with caustic chemicals while in remote places like Iraq where running water is unpredictable." The Army ultimately revised its guidelines. Pamela gave similar testimony in 1993 when the Navy banned braids, and over the last thirty years her company initiated lawsuits against Hyatt

and Marriott Hotels, American Airlines, the Smithsonian Institution security guards' supervisors, and the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department in support of allowing braided hairstyles in the workplace. She's said that she believes her role supporting "hair diversity" is to educate corporations and organizations so they can make grooming policies based on factual knowledge about hair instead of uninformed or racially-based generalizations about "bad" hairstyles. But as a hairstylist specializing in natural Black hair, Pamela has understood from the beginning that much of her work involves changing her clients' own misguided stereotypes about what their hair is "supposed" to be and do and what constitutes "good" and "bad" hair.

It's hardly secret that the straighter hairstyles once considered the main standard for professionalism—and beauty—for Black women often came from changing their hair's natural texture to mimic the texture of White people's hair. Ironically, as difficult as it was for natural braids and similar styles to become widely accepted for Black women, those styles have

always been the standard of beauty for young Black girls. Many Black women still remember the hours they spent sitting between a mother's or grandmother's knees having their hair braided. I certainly do. The elaborate styles decorated with beads, barrettes, and bows have long showcased the creativity and love that goes into caring for Black girls' hair. But for many little Black girls, the day finally came when a bowl of lye or a straightening iron from the stove turned their rows of braids into straight ponytails or short little bobs. Abandoning styles based on their natural textures in favor of "Whiter" styles was a rite of passage on their way to Black womanhood.

With the "Black is beautiful" mantra that emerged in the 1960s, those attitudes slowly started to change. I was among many who proudly wore an "afro." Long, straight hairstyles were no longer the universal standard as more and more Black and multiracial women celebrated the individuality, creativity, beauty, and diversity of their natural God-given textures.

See WATCH, Page A12

### The Prince George's Post

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# BUSINESS

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Actions and Attitudes For Keeping Your Children Healthy

Fall and winter tends to mean more sick kids. Every school-aged child is exposed to lots of viruses and germs every day. And while we realize that minor infections and illnesses are probably inevitable, there are a number of ways we can help our children avoid or fight off some of those cold and flu bugs.

Teaching preventative hygiene, like frequent hand washing and not sharing mouth-touched drinks and foods with friends, can certainly help. Preventative medicine, like flu shots, is also important.

A healthy diet and plenty of rest are also vital. Our bodies are usually great at fighting off the bacteria and viruses we encounter daily, but poor nutrition and lack of rest can rob them of the strength to combat those illness-causing bugs.

Another goal, one that many parents fail to recognize, is in helping your child reduce his or her stress. Research has found that stress weakens the immune system, yet even very young children encounter school and friend situations that raise stress levels.

Most of the time, parents don't need to fix the stress-inducing problem for their children, but rather they just need to be a sympathetic and understanding audience. Really listening to your child's concerns can reduce feelings of anxiety and stress.

If your child does fall ill, helping create a more positive attitude can lead to a quicker return to good health. Simply smiling, for example, can make a big difference.

When a parent of a sick child looks worried and concerned as they talk to that child it helps convince the child that he or she should also feel worried and concerned. A big smile, instead, helps relieve tension and anxiety, and creates an attitude of wellness rather than sickness.

You also want to use positive phrases with your child. Instead of repeatedly asking what hurts or what's wrong, try asking what's feeling better or what's good.

The simple acts of touching and hugging can also be great medicine. Studies have found that touching and bonding literally help strengthen the immune system. Holding an ill child while watching TV or reading a book together can mean getting better faster.

Viruses and bacteria are always going to be out there. But healthy eating, plenty of rest and loving parents who are there to help a child have a positive, less-stressful attitude can do a great deal to keep those bugs at a distance.

*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*

### Ebola from A1

from Bellevue Hospital Center in New York. Spencer's release means there are no confirmed cases of Ebola in the United States.

Mikulski pointed out that there still are more than 13,500 people who have contracted the disease in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and more than 5,000 who have died. In order to prevent more cases from coming to the U.S., we have to combat them at their root source, she said.

Of the \$6.2 billion requested, \$2 billion would go to the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development to

help train health officials and build up hospital resources within the countries most affected. The Department of Health and Human Resources would receive \$2.43 billion to speed up testing of vaccines and other therapeutics. Another \$1.54 billion would go into a contingency fund that would only be used if unplanned events occur.

"When I visited Liberia, I came to the conclusion that the Liberian government was doing all that it could with its limited resources," said Michael Lumpkin, assistant secretary of defense. "If we don't act now, our incremental responses will be outpaced by this dynamic epidemic."

### Mel Franklin Extends Condolences Upon the Loss of Ebola Victim, Surgeon Martin Salia, M.D.

My colleagues and I on the Prince George's County Council extend our deepest sympathy to the family of surgeon and Ebola victim, Dr. Martin Salia, whose wife and children reside in Prince George's County. Dr. Salia lost his fight to Ebola this morning.

Dr. Salia has been considered a global hero for his dedication to family; his native country Sierra Leone; his faith; the medical profession; the United States and his community here in Prince George's County.

Dr. Salia selflessly gave his life to save others. The bravery, caring compassion and strong sense of duty demonstrated by this fine doctor, are inspiring and deserving of our honor and respect. We offer our earnest gratitude for his service and our prayers for his family, friends and colleagues at this most difficult time.

## Board of Public Works Approves \$383,990 in Agricultural Cost-Share Grants

By PRESS OFFICER  
MDA

ANNAPOLIS, MD — The Board of Public Works yesterday approved \$383,990 in Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share grants, which help farmers install best management practices that significantly reduce nutrient runoff in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and accelerate Bay restoration. The O'Malley-Brown Administration has supported more farmer pollution reduction projects cost-share program than any other administration in the nearly three decades since the program began.

The Board approved grants for 13 projects in 6 counties that will prevent soil erosion, manage nutrient pollution and safeguard

water quality in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. Together, these projects will prevent 2512.99 pounds of nitrogen, 1017.67 pounds of phosphorus, and 852.7 tons of soil from entering the Bay and its tributaries. These projects are funded by state general obligation bonds.

"Our farmers are true partners in protecting our natural resources, and Maryland continues to support their efforts by providing grants to install proven conservation measures and innovative, state-of-the-art practices," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "Working together, we can ensure a smart, green and growing environment for future generations, preserve open space, and maintain the rich agricultural heritage of our State."

For the past 28 years, the Maryland Agricultural Water Quality Cost-Share (MACS) Program has been providing farmers with grants to cover up to 87.5 percent of the cost to install conservation measures known as best management practices (BMPs) on their farms to prevent soil erosion, manage nutrients and safeguard water quality in streams, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Since the program started in 1984, farmers have installed 21,900 water quality projects. The average lifespan of a BMP is 10 to 15 years. Over the last 15 years, farmers spent \$15.8 million of their own money to match \$72.8 million in state cost share to install more than 10,800 water quality projects (not including annual practices like

planting cover crops). Installation of agricultural BMPs on farmland is a key feature of Maryland's recent plan submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to reduce nutrient pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

**Grassed waterways constructed to prevent gully erosion in farm fields, streamside buffers of grasses, trees planted to filter sediment and farm runoff, and animal waste management systems constructed to help farmers safely handle and store manure resources are among more than 30 BMPs currently eligible for MACS grants. For a summary of Maryland Agricultural Cost Share Program Grants by county for Oct. 01, 2014.**

### Awards from A1

Presented by Prince George's Community College Foundation, Inc., in partnership with Prince George's Community College, the prestigious event garnered some of Washington, D.C.'s most influential civic and business leaders together for a night of celebration and learning about the college's fundraising efforts and community impact. The awards dinner and gala was held at the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center in National Harbor, Maryland on Wednesday, October 29, 2014.

"The honorees—the Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski, Lockheed Martin Information Systems and Global Solutions, and Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States—all exemplify true partnership, stakeholder engagement, and a desire to impact the landscape of education and jobs in our county, state, and region," said Brenda S. Mitchell, executive director, Office of Institutional Advancement and Foundation at Prince George's Community College. "The

work of strengthening the college's ability to respond to community concerns and demonstrate innovative, win-win collaborations through federal and state-funded grants, privately funded grants, donations from corporations and a host of individuals who gave generously when we asked for their support—is a reflection of the commitment of our "Partners for Success".

In addition to the distinguished honorees and those representing the field of higher education, a host of dignitaries attended Partners for Success — The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, County Council Member Derrick Leon Davis, County Council —District 6, County Council Member and PGCC Alum Andrea Harrison, States Attorney Angela Alsbrooks, Alexandria City Councilman John Chapman, former Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan, and Prince George's County Council Chair Mel Franklin.

### About the 2014 Partners for Success Honorees:

#### Afghans from A1

the use of force in Iraq, that I opposed, was aimed at one specific circumstance. I think it's critically important that Congress update the authorization for the use of force. I think it's important we alter the 2001 and 2002 authorizations and I hope that we will do that to meet the current needs ... I have very strong concerns about going into a country where we don't have consent, Syria ... So I think we need to modernize the authorizations and Congress should do that.

#### QUESTION

So should the Obama administration come back to Congress to seek authorization to carry out further strikes in Syria?

#### ANSWER

I think the president has certain inherent powers, but I think we are always stronger when Congress and the administration

#### Veterans from A1

Maryland. I want to thank the O'Malley/Brown administration, and specifically, Lt. Governor Anthony Brown, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and Friendship Place for this innovative pilot program that will be essential in improving the lives of veterans and their families here in Prince George's County."

#### The Honorable Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland, Senator Barbara Mikulski will be recognized for her track record on issues such as access to higher education for students, healthcare, STEM, Cyber Security and veterans affairs.

#### Stephanie C. Hill

Vice President and General Manager of Information Systems & Global Solutions—Civil, Lockheed Martin; Lockheed Martin was acknowledged for their commitment of time, personnel and resources to build innovative educational and career pathways for STEM students in Prince George's County.

#### Maritha Gay

Senior Director of External Affairs, Kaiser Permanente of the Mid-Atlantic States; Kaiser Permanente was recognized for their support of health care human capital through their significant investment in scholarships and innovative instruction.

To learn more, please contact the foundation office at (301) 322-0858 or foundation@pgcc.edu.

#### About Prince George's Community College

Named a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance designated by the National Security Agency and Department of Homeland Security (2010-2015), Prince George's Community College (PGCC) provides high quality education and training for the progressive and career-oriented residents of Prince George's County. From new high school graduates and career seekers, to more seasoned professionals and senior citizens looking to enhance their skillsets, PGCC comprises students representing a wide range of ages, backgrounds and goals. Serving more than 44,000 individuals annually, the college is the first choice for higher education for residents of Prince George's County. Collaborative partnerships, responsive degree and training programs, and a commitment to student success enables PGCC to address diverse education and workforce development demands. For more information, visit the college website at www.pgcc.edu.

#### QUESTION

So lets talk about the allies, and specifically Turkey. They've agreed to allow peshmerga forces to cross their territory. But do you think Turkey has done enough to combat ISIS (Islamic State)?

#### ANSWER

When you're a border country you got to be sensitive to the impact it has on your country. I've been to Turkey, I've been to the refugee camps in Turkey and I know what they have done in regards to opening up their borders so those fleeing problems and danger in Syria have been able to come into Turkey. So I think it's very important that we are mindful of the challenges that the bordering countries have, and yes, I think Turkey has made a major effort to try to help in that regard.

See AFGHANS Page A7

don't believe we should commit to a ground war.

#### QUESTION

So then how is ISIS or ISIL moved out of Iraq and Syria?

#### ANSWER

Well there's no one answer. It's not just going to be a military solution. Clearly our air attacks are having a major impact. I think it's the responsibility of the host countries to develop their own capacity to defend their countries against the internal problems. But you also need to cut off their support, you need to cut off their financial support. We know how ISIL has been able to gain financial support. We got to make sure moderate Arab states are not inadvertently helping in regards to the financial support. And secondly, you got to cut off the political support. You cut off political support by having governments that represent all the people of a country.

training, career development, childcare, and transportation.

"The goal is that upon graduation, the family will be able to afford a fair market rental unit and, therefore, achieve self-sufficiency," said Kally Canfield, veterans' services division director at Friendship Place.

"Most service members adjust well during their transition to civilian life, however some experience challenges," said Edward Chow, Secretary of the

Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs. "We are pleased to know the Families First program is in place to provide the support needed to make this transition. We, as a nation, have an obligation to ensure our veteran families have access to resources. Through efforts such as Families First, they will have access to these services."

To learn more visit <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/familiesfirst>

# OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S  
IN THE DARK

## Movie Review

### “Interstellar”

*Interstellar*  
Grade: B-  
Rated PG-13, a little  
profanity, an F-bomb,  
perilous sci-fi action  
2 hrs., 49 min

Like most of his movies, Christopher Nolan's *Interstellar* is about the conflict between human weakness and human ambition. Whether it's an amnesiac tracking a killer, a troubled billionaire dressing as a bat to wipe out injustice, or the last remnants of mankind seeking a new Earth, what we want to do is often far greater than what we're capable of.

Some Nolan characters brood and beat themselves up over these shortcomings (I can easily imagine Nolan being the same way), but Cooper, the protagonist in *Interstellar*, is more of an optimist. He'd almost have to be, being played by Matthew McConaughey. Cooper named his daughter after Murphy's Law (“Anything that can go wrong will go wrong”) because he sees it as an affirmation: “Whatever CAN happen, WILL happen!” Late in the film, in a bit of dialogue that's almost thrown away yet seems to encapsulate the whole thing, he calls for a course of action and is told, “It's not possible.” His response: “No, it's necessary.”

*Interstellar* is hugely ambitious, a 169-minute sci-fi adventure that takes old tropes (space travel, alien planets) and applies fresh new studio money to them. Visually, it's a triumph. Nolan and his team (including cinematographer Hoyte Van Hoytema) use seamless special effects and models to create an awe-inspiring view of the solar system and beyond. They even manage to convey a four-dimensional concept in three dimensions (well, 3D for the characters; 2D for us), just the sort of mechanical wizardry you'd expect from the guy who made cities collapse on themselves in *Inception* merely as a visual aid.



ROTTENTOMATOES

With our time on Earth coming to an end, a team of explorers undertakes the most important mission in human history; traveling beyond this galaxy to discover whether mankind has a future among the stars. (C) Paramount

But like so many Nolan characters, *Interstellar* (which he cowrote with his brother Jonathan) bites off more than it can chew and comes up frustratingly short. We're supposed to feel a strong emotional connection to the story (perhaps a first for Nolan, who's usually stark and unsentimental), and all the elements are in place to make it happen ... and then it never quite does. Instead, we have a film that's often fascinating, sometimes thrilling, sometimes tedious, but always strangely aloof, despite its best efforts. The movie's easy to admire, hard to love.

Cooper and his kids, science-minded Murph (Mackenzie Foy) and undefined Tom (Timothée Chalamet), live with their grandfather (John Lithgow) on a dusty farm a few generations from now. After being decimated by famine and drought, what's left of the population is rebuilding society, hoping it's not too late for Earth to be made habitable. (There's that optimism again!) Meanwhile, NASA types played

by Michael Caine, Anne Hathaway, Wes Bentley, and David Gyasi have been working on a secret plan to find a suitable new planet, aided by a wormhole out near Saturn that'll get you to another galaxy lickety-split. Cooper, once the military's best pilot, is tapped to lead the expedition to determine which (if any) of the newly discovered planets will work.

So ... SPACE ADVENTURE! That means cryo-sleep, deceptively analog-looking robots, and weighty conversations about dimensions, limited resources, and Einstein's Theory of Relativity. Time works differently near a wormhole, you know. A few hours out here could be years back on Earth. It's a reversal of McConaughey's famous line from *Dazed & Confused*: the people on Earth get older while he stays the same age. And it matters because Cooper wants to return home before his children have lived out their lives.

Nolan periodically intercuts between the action with Cooper

and his fellow astronauts and the scene back on Earth, where time has indeed passed and Cooper's children Tom and Murph have grown up into Casey Affleck and Jessica Chastain. The parallel stories and themes (stubbornness, frailty, hubris) add depth, but it's undercut by the curious neglect of Tom as a character, leaving him as dead weight. Why give Cooper two children when you only needed him to have one?

Missteps like this are disappointing because when *Interstellar* is good, it's magnificent. The action scenes set on alien planets are exhilarating, outer space looks gorgeously vast, and the idea of love being a powerful force in the universe is ennobling. This is certainly the most humanistic movie Nolan has made, the one that feels closest to the real emotions of actual people. But it's still off the mark, a sci-fi spectacle full of fine, teary-eyed performances but powered by a cold, mechanical heart.

### Taxing from A3

state says that if it offered a full tax credit against out-of-state income, certain residents could take advantage of state and local benefits without having contributed to them.

Maryland's acting Solicitor General William Brockman said during oral arguments that “because all residents are treated the same, they are taxed on their entire income regardless of where it is earned.”

The Obama Administration supports the state's arguments, filing an amicus brief on its behalf. Eric Feigin, assistant to the Department of Justice Solicitor General, told the justices that, in some cases, Marylanders will be

taxed more because they conduct more business outside of Maryland than inside.

“But I don't see why that's discrimination attributable to Maryland,” Feigin said. “It arises from the combination of the income taxes of two states.”

In their questioning, the justices seemed split on where they thought this case might be heading.

For example, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said that suppose there was a Maryland resident who earned only out-of-state income. She said, according to the Wynne's argument, that Maryland resident owes nothing to Maryland because he can just apply for a tax credit.

“Leaving the residents without anything,” Ginsburg said. “With-

out a penny from this resident who may have five children that he sends to school in Maryland.”

On the other hand, both Justice Stephen Breyer and Justice Samuel Alito, said it sounds like Maryland is operating a tariff.

“Because it provides an incentive to earn income in Maryland and not outside of Maryland,” Alito said.

Additionally, Justice Antonin Scalia questioned why the state of residence, in this case Maryland, has to provide a tax credit, rather than the state where all the out-of-state income was made.

“Now, maybe it doesn't work the same way with respect to the imaginary negative Commerce Clause,” Scalia said. “But as far

as fairness is concerned, I don't see the difference.”

Depending on how the high court rules, this case could have widespread impact.

If the justices side with the Wynnes, advocates of state and local governments say it will cost them. The Maryland Bureau of Revenue Estimates says it could cost local governments up to \$190 million plus interest in one-time protected claims and retroactive refunds.

The Maryland Association of Counties estimates a smaller cost of \$120 million to local governments in retroactive refunds, but says it could also reduce local income tax revenues by about \$50 million a year.

A decision is expected by June.

## The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

### The Bridge: A Political Appreciation of Steve Nash

Anyone who loves the game of basketball when played to its free-flowing, near-narcotic full-potential is in mourning over the announcement that the career of Steve Nash has in all likelihood come to a close. People



will miss Nash above all else, because the future Hall of Famer had the capacity to both control the pace of a game and inspire onlookers like few players of his generation. I spoke to Jack McCallum, the legendary hoops writer at *Sports Illustrated* and author of the sumptuous book about Nash's run-and-gun Phoenix team, *Seven Seconds or Less*. “During the season I spent with the Suns it was Nash's utter professionalism that struck me hardest,” he said.

The unchangeable pregame shooting drill. The postgame ice baths and the esoteric stretches he did to keep his body tuned. His subtle, though constant, reminders to his teammates about diet and getting enough sleep... but damn, the man could play, let's not forget that. He was not a one- or two-year wonder; he's third in career assists. And he and the Suns kind of bridged a gap in the NBA. Michael had hung it up. The Lakers had finished their threeppeat. The Spurs never could catch the imagination of the collective fan base. LeBron wasn't quite ready to be LEBRON. And along came Nash and the Suns. Damn, they were fun.

The appreciations of Nash and his arsenal of ambidextrous passing will continue to fly fast and furious, but we should also take a moment to appreciate Nash for reasons apart from his ability to do this. We should also thank him for daring to be a voice of resistance when it mattered most. As the war on Iraq was being planned early in 2003, there was silence throughout the sports world. This was not surprising. It had been years since athletes had put themselves out there to use their hyper-exalted brought-to-you-by-Nike platforms to make political statements. Today, as jocks—from Richard Sherman to Serena Williams to Robbie Rodgers to Jason Collins to the Miami Heat—have used social media to speak difficult truths in unwelcome spaces, it is difficult to remember just how deafening the political quietude was back in 2003. While several million people converged on New York City to say no to what we then called “Bush's war,” the sports world institutionally, from team owners to media puff pieces, was a center of unquestioned patriotism. For people who only read the sports page, and stay off the front page, being confronted with dissenting views was a non-option.

Into this stifling atmosphere came Steve Nash, then with the Dallas Mavericks, showing up at the 2003 All-Star game wearing a T-shirt that read, “No war. Shoot for peace.” When challenged by a shocked press corps, Nash said, “I think that war is wrong in 99.9 percent of all cases. I think [Operation Iraqi Freedom] has much more to do with oil or some sort of distraction, because I don't feel as though we should be worrying about Iraq.”

He leveled a tragically prescient statement to the powers that be, saying, “I think that Saddam Hussein is a crazy dictator, but I don't think he's threatening us at this point in time. We haven't found any nuclear weapons—no matter what anyone says—and that process is still under way. Until that's finished and decided I don't think that war is acceptable.”

Nash did not say that Bush, Cheney and Condoleezza Rice were just mistaken, but actually had very nefarious, and ulterior motives, stating, “Unfortunately, this is more about oil than it is about nuclear weapons.” Nash also took issue with the pro-war media. Two years before *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* apologized publicly for their craven, utterly embedded pro-war coverage, Nash said, “I think a lot of what we hear in the news is misleading and flat-out false, so I think it's important for us to think deeper and find out what is really going on.”

Nash also did not buckle when Mavs owner Mark Cuban—who fancies himself as a renegade free-thinker—came down on Nash for his views. The Canadian citizen also did not budge when then Spurs center David Robinson said, “If it's an embarrassment to [Nash] maybe [he] should be in a different country.”

Nash continued to stand strong when starring in Phoenix. The execrable Governor Jan Brewer of Arizona—with majority statewide support—signed into law a series of draconian laws criminalizing anyone who even looked like a Latino immigrant. Nash responded by organizing his team on Cinco de Mayo to all wear shirts that said Los Suns. He said, “I think the law is very misguided. I think it is unfortunately to the detriment to our society and our civil liberties, and I think it is very important for us to stand up for things we believe in. I think the law obviously can target opportunities for racial profiling. Things we don't want to see and don't need to see in 2010.”

I appreciate Steve Nash for the same reasons as Jack McCallum: because the man was a bridge. Not just a bridge, though, from Jordan to LeBron. He was a bridge from an airless atmosphere of corporate conformity and fearful furtiveness among athletes to a time today when there is more a sense that you don't swear off your right to have an opinion just because you sign a contract. Steve Nash will be missed on the court. Here's hoping that when it comes to speaking his mind, he never retires.

### Statement From County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III on the Passing of Dr. Martin Salia

Upper Marlboro, MD - Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, released this statement in honor of the passing of Martin Salia, M.D. Dr. Salia's family resides in Prince George's County:

“We are saddened by the death of Dr. Martin Salia and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family, friends, and colleagues. Dr. Salia dedicated his life to saving the lives of others in his native country, Sierra Leone. His compassion to utilize his medical skills for the benefit who needed it most is the embodiment of humanitarianism. His life is an inspiration to us all, and his legacy of service will not be forgotten here in Prince George's County or around the world.

Dr. Salia may not have been a citizen of our country but his family are residents of our County. Like many Prince Georgians, this family epitomizes the values of global humanity and dedication to improving the lives of the less fortunate and most vulnerable. Our County, the nation, and the world owe them our gratitude and sympathy for the loss of their loved one.”

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# Calendar of Events

November 27 — December 3, 2014

## Needleart Exhibit

Date & Time: November 1-November 30, 2014 11 am-4 pm (Closed Wednesdays.)

Description: Sponsored by Stitching Pretty of Laurel, Montpelier hosts the 19th Annual Needleart Exhibit. See the rooms of Montpelier filled with a dazzling array of stitched art, from needlepoint to ribbon work. Judges choose winners in several categories, and you the visitor are invited to vote for the "People's Choice" award. Demonstrations of various needle art techniques, call for dates.

Cost: 18 & up; \$6; 60 & better: \$5; 12-17: \$3

Ages: 12 & up

Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site  
9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708

Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

## 15th Annual Gingerbread House Contest & Show

Date and Time: Friday-Sunday, November 28-November 30; Friday-Sunday, December 5-December 7; Friday-Sunday, December 12-December 14, 12 noon-5 pm

Description: For a sweet treat, come view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses! Although tempting, no nibbling allowed! You will have the opportunity to vote for best house in the Viewer's Choice Award Competition.

No reservations required.

Cost: \$1/person; Children 4 & under free

Ages: All ages welcome

Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum  
14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive,  
Upper Marlboro 20772

Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

## Rock Climbing

Date and Time: Friday, November 28, 2014 2:30-7 pm

Description: Learn how to tie knots, belay and bouldering, and other vocabulary and skills that are required to become an excellent rock climber.

Registration is due by Friday, November 14, 2014.

Cost: Resident: \$32; Non-Resident: \$39

Ages: 10-17

Location: Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation Center  
4701 31st Place, Mount Rainier 20712

Contact: 301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544

## Xtreme Teens: Movies and Munchies: Blast from the Past

Date and Time: Friday, November 28, 2014 7-10 pm

Description: Who says we need to travel to a local movie theater? Join us for movie night! The popcorn will be popping and you will have a nice selection of films to choose from. Light refreshments will be served.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID

Ages: 10-17

Location: Columbia Park Community Center  
1901 Kent Village Drive, Landover 20785

Contact: 301-341-3749; TTY 301-445-4512

## Xtreme Teens: Teen's Choice Night

Date and Time: Friday, November 28, 2014 7-10 pm

Description: Enjoy a full night of fun, because it's your choice. That's right, whether it's a movie in the gym, games in the lobby, video games, or arts and crafts, it's YOUR choice.

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID

Ages: 10-17

Location: Good Luck Community Center  
8601 Good Luck Road, Lanham 20706

Contact: 301-552-1093; TTY 301-445-4512

## Xtreme Teens: Skate Night

Date and Time: Friday, November 28, 2014 7-10 pm

Description: Have a fun night on skates. Roll bounce the night away listening to music, and enjoying a light snack. It's fun you don't want to miss!

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID

Ages: 10-17

Location: Langley Park Community Center  
1500 Merimac Drive, Hyattsville 20783

Contact: 301-445-4508

## Black Friday Sale

Date & Time: Friday, November 28, 2014 10 am-7 pm

Description: Holiday shopping is meant to be a stress-free, enjoyable experience. That's why you should delight in our Black Friday Sale, which supports local artists. Everything in our Fine Craft Store from handmade jewelry to ceramics and other collectibles, will be 20% off!

Cost: Free

Ages: All ages welcome

Location: Brentwood Arts Center  
3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood 20722

Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-277-2863

## Family Naturalist Hike

Date and Time: Saturday, November 29, 2014 10 am-1 pm

Description: Explore the great outdoors with a park naturalist. Enjoy trail hiking while learning about local plants and animals.

Cost: Resident: \$2; Non-Resident: \$3

Ages: All ages welcome

Location: Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation Center  
4701 31st Place, Mount Rainier 20712

Contact: 301-927-2163; TTY 301-699-2544

## Xtreme Teens: Arts & Crafts

Date and Time: Thursday, December 4, 2014 3:30-5 pm

Description: Love doing arts and crafts? Well, come show your creative side with College Parks Arts Exchange's very own Ms. Potter!

Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID

Ages: All Ages

Location: College Park Youth Services Center  
4912 Nantucket Road, College Park 20740

Contact: 301-345-4425; TTY 301-445-4512

# EARTH TALK ... Assessing the Risks of Genetically Engineered Crops

Dear EarthTalk:

What are the potential health and environmental impacts of so many genetically engineered organisms in our food supply?

— Frank C.,  
Charlottesville, VA

Proponents of genetic engineering (GE)—whereby DNA from unrelated species is combined to produce improved or novel organisms—insist that the benefits of increased crop yields and less agricultural waste outweigh the potential risks, but many environmental and public health advocates aren't convinced.

According to the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), one risk of GE is that our new "frankenfoods" could become invasive, toxic to wildlife, or dangerous in other as-yet unknown ways. "But the most damaging impact of GE in agriculture so far is the phenomenon of pesticide resistance," reports UCS, adding that millions of acres of American farmland are infested by weeds that have become resistant to Monsanto's popular herbicide glyphosate (known to most by its trade name Roundup). "Overuse of Monsanto's 'Roundup Ready' trait, which is engineered to tolerate the herbicide, has promoted the accelerated development of resistance in several weed species."

## Afghans from A5

### Russia Sanctions

QUESTION

You've been involved with the Sergei Magnitsky Act in Russia. A couple of days ago the Russian government said it would recognize the results of the upcoming elections in the separatist controlled areas of eastern Ukraine. What effect are the sanctions against Russian and Crimean officials having? Are they having the intended effects?

ANSWER

Oh absolutely. Russia has paid a very heavy price for their aggression. The sanctions that not only the U.S. has imposed but also Europe (have) had a major impact on the Russian economy ... We knew it would not be a short-term success, that it would take some time, and I do think that we now need to look at how we can strengthen Ukraine and the institutions within Ukraine so that it can have a government that truly represents all the people of their country.

### Drawdown from Afghanistan

QUESTION

President Barack Obama has said troop drawdown begins later this year. By 2016, the U.S. basically exits Afghanistan. Is a timetable a good idea, seeing what happened in Iraq?

ANSWER

Well I'm not so sure a time schedule has been the cause, root problems of Iraq. Iraq has had its own internal problems. The Maliki government was not representative of all of its people, it had a lot of corruption issues ... In Afghanistan, it is well past time for the Afghans to take responsibility for the security of their own country. The United States cannot and should not use our military to try to resolve internal disputes. Yes, we want to be present and helpful in regards

As a result, farmers are now turning to older, more toxic herbicides—and agribusiness companies are responding in kind with new rounds of GE crops engineered to tolerate these older chemicals. UCS worries that the process repeating itself is only leading us down the path of plants evolving quickly to overcome our defenses however technically brilliant they may be.

As for health risks, UCS acknowledges that eating refined products derived from GE crops is unlikely to cause health problems, but maintains that inserting a gene from one organism into another could still have unintended health consequences. For example, those with food-borne allergies could be at increased risk for reactions given the combination of genes in what looks like any other vegetable or piece of fruit. "This phenomenon was documented in 1996, as soybeans with a Brazil nut gene—added to improve their value as animal feed—produced an allergic response in test subjects with Brazil nut allergies," reports UCS.

Given these risks, some 21 countries and the European Union (EU) have instituted policies requiring foods created with GE technology to be labeled as such so consumers can know what they are buying and putting into their mouths. EU rules mandate that if any ingredient in a food has 0.9 percent or higher of genetically modified organisms, it must be marked accordingly on its packaging. Environ-

mentalists in the U.S. would like to see the federal government put in place a similar policy—research from the non-profit Just Label It found nine in 10 Americans to be in favor of mandated GE labeling—but lobbying interests from agricultural states with a vested interest in selling more GE products still hold lots of sway over elected officials.

QUESTION

And when U.S. troops leave there have been reports, in The (New York) Times and The Washington Post, that there has been a Taliban resurgence in Kunduz, in the north and north-eastern provinces. When the U.S. troops do leave, how much confidence do you have in the Afghan security forces and Afghan institutions that they can deal with the Taliban?

ANSWER

You need to separate the internal conflicts within a country from the support for international terrorism. That's an issue the United States and international community needs to stay engaged in dealing with international terrorists groups, wherever we may find them. But internal conflicts are matters that need to be resolved by a country. It's done not just by having a strong military, but it's also done by having a representative government, providing economic opportunity for all the people and providing a fair society.

QUESTION

(President) Ashraf Ghani has been in power for a few weeks. How do you see his tenure so far, and what hopes do you have?

ANSWER

Well I think we've seen some positive steps. We've seen certainly some improvements ... The Afghan government really needs to deal with corruption ... It's not one person, it's not one government, it's been there for a long period of time. They need to deal with the sustainable economy, get off the drug trade, and deal with sustainable economic activities within their country. They need



CREDIT: QUINN DOMBROWSKI, COURTESY FLICKR

Twenty-one countries and the European Union have instituted policies requiring foods created using genetic engineering (GE) be labeled accordingly so consumers can know what they're putting into their mouths. Pictured: A California campaign (defeated in 2012) demanding labeling of GE foods.

So for now, Americans concerned about what's in their food will need to do their own homework regarding what's safe to put on their dinner tables.

Luckily some natural foods retailers are making it easier for consumers intent on avoiding GE foods. Whole Foods, for one, is working toward full disclosure via labeling in regard to which

of the foods on its store shelves contain GE ingredients. While Whole Foods may be a pioneer in this regard, environmentalists are hoping other U.S. grocery store chains will follow suit so that Americans can decide for themselves whether or not to take the risk of eating GE foods.

CONTACTS: UCS, [www.ucsusa.org](http://www.ucsusa.org); Just Label It, [justlabelit.org](http://justlabelit.org)

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try's responsibility, the region needs to be more engaged.

### U.S.- Israel Relations

QUESTION

I know Israel is very close to your heart and there's been a bit of controversy about U.S.-Israel relations. Where do you see them and how do you see them improving in the future.

ANSWER

Israel has no greater friend than the United States. The strength is both in the administration and in the Congress - it's Democrats, it's Republicans. I just got back from two days in New York, talked to the Israeli mission.

There is no country like the United States that uses its leadership in the United Nations to protect our friend Israel from the unjust attacks. That relationship is as strong as ever.

QUESTION

There were some reports in The (New York) Times that there were some phrases used by administration officials against Benjamin Netanyahu. Is that not a sign of tension between (the two countries)?

ANSWER

Well I don't like the fact that when you have these unidentified sources, I think what they tend to do is, they are tools to be used by those who want to weaken the bipartisan, bicameral support for Israel and the strength of both (in the) administration and in Congress. Look at the facts: look at what the Obama administration has done in providing Iron Dome and funding for Iron Dome to the

Israeli, look what the Obama administration and Congress has done to bring Iran to the bargaining table to rid the possibility of nuclear weapons ... So no, I think the strength in (the) relationship between the Obama administration and the Congress with Israel is as strong as ever.

Well, when we are talking about ISIL or you are talking about the terrorist organizations, we need to deal with them. Part of that response is a military response, which the international community can provide help and support. But we need to cut off their political and financial support ... So it's not just one coun-

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