

The Prince George's Post



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Camp Springs Elks Lodge Host Southwest Hoop Shoot February 6

By DEWAYNE WILCHER
Camp Springs Elks Lodge

The Camp Springs Lodge hosted the Southwest district Hoop Shoot Championship on Sunday, February 4, 2024 at Oxon Hill HS. Hoop Shoot is an Elks Lodge National program that inspires youth 8–13 to exhibit grit through all they do as demonstrated by the competition and mastery of free throw shooting. Over 25 youth ages 8–13 representing Calvert, Camp Springs, Washington-Rockville, Waldorf and Prince George's Lodges were on hand. Congratulations to Mariana Stutzer (8–9 girls) of Camp Springs Lodge; Knox Martus (8–9 boys) of Calvert Lodge; Annabelle Townsend (10–11 girls) of Washington Rockville Lodge; Cody Jenkins (10–11 boys) of Calvert Lodge; Layla Ortiz-Frasier (12–13 girls) of Calvert Lodge; and returning national finalist Ayden Hickman (12–13 boys) of



PHOTO CREDIT: DEWAYNE WILCHER AND KRISTAL MCINNIS

Youth ages 8–13 participate in the Southwest district Hoop Shoot Championship on Sunday, February 4, 2024 at Oxon Hill HS.

Waldorf Lodge who came out victorious.

Special thanks to the following individuals for their support of the District Shoot: Camp Springs Exalted Ruler Pat McInnis, Sharon McInnis, Les Derricotte, Krystal McInnis and DeWayne Wilcher as they and Pastor Staten President Mary Cardinal Vogt, and Waldorf Exalted Ruler Tammy Hunt supported the shooters and approximately 50 family members and friends.

Moving forward the Camp Springs Lodge will host the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia State Association Hoop Shoot Championship on Saturday February 24 at Oxon Hill HS at 12:30 p.m. Winners of this competition will go on to compete against youth in North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia for the National Hoop Shoot finals in Chicago. To learn more about the Elks and our programs go to: www.Elks.org.

Camp Springs Elks Americanism Winners

Congratulations to the following youth who participated in our Americanism Poster Competition. Madison Jackson, 1st place 0–3 year old category; Zachary Daily, 1st place 4–5 year old category; Cory Dixon 1st place and Gavin Ingram 2nd place 6–7 year old category; Ajanay Wilcher 1st place 8–9 year old category; Aaron Wilcher 1st place 10–13 year old category. The theme of this year's competition was "My Favorite American symbol". The overall winner in all categories from our lodge was Cory Dixon with his drawing of the Statue of Liberty. All 1st place participants will be advancing to the Southwest District competition in February. Thanks to our judges, members Sharon McInnis, Deborah Cunningham and Dorothy Swinson for their participation.



CREDIT: DEWAYNE WILCHER AND KRISTAL MCINNIS

Waldorf Elks Exalted Ruler Tammy Hunt and Ayden Hickman, a 2023 National Finalist and returning Southwest District Champion.

Council Member Krystal Oriadha Introduces New Bills Focusing on Parental Leave and Mandatory Lactation Rooms

Bills aim to promote equity and accommodations for new parents

By PRESS OFFICER
Prince George's County Council Media

Prince George's County Council Member Krystal Oriadha has presented new legislation that will provide equitable leave time to County employees after they welcome a child, and mandate lactation rooms in County buildings.

The Parental Leave Bill amends the County's current parental leave policy and allows government employees to take parental leave after three months of employment instead of one year.

"As a mother to a three-month-old, I know adjusting to the role of parent is a pivotal moment in a person's life. All County employees deserve time with their family and time to transition to the expectations of parenthood," Council Member Oriadha said. "A year of employment as a requirement can be detrimental to a family. We must secure reasonable and fair arrangements that not only pro-

vide job security, but put employees first."

The Council Member continues to prioritize maternal health with a new bill that creates mandatory lactation rooms in County buildings. This legislation would require all County buildings have a lactation/pumping room for both employees and those visiting the building. The bill also requires milk refrigerators and other necessities for lactating mothers.

"Coming back to work is already stressful for new mothers. Having reasonable accommodations at the workplace is essential to helping with that process," said Council Member Oriadha.

These bills will help provide equitable accommodations to government employees who are new and expecting parents and are part of the Council Member's overall maternal health and reproductive care priorities.

When Families' Love of the Game Conflicts With the Science

By TORRENCE BANKS and
ANDREW CHODES
Capital News Service

Tackle football offers children as young as 5 the chance to make friends, learn teamwork, maybe attract a college scholarship. It also can lead to injuries that can damage developing brains.

That leaves families to balance the risks against the opportunities. Many are opting out. Participation in youth tackle football has been declining for years. However, in other communities, especially in communities of color, tackle football's lure remains strong and the balance tips toward opportunity, a four-month investigation by The Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism and the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland has found.

Among the results of a Povich and Howard centers nationwide poll:

- Black parents are more likely than white parents, by substantial margins, to believe that youth tackle football could lead to a college scholarship or an NFL career. Hispanic parents are also far more likely than white parents to see college scholarships and pro careers as a potential benefit of youth football.
- Nearly one in four Black parents said the appropriate age for children to start playing tackle football is 9 years old or younger. Only 14% of white parents answered that children should start at age 9 or younger.
- Black parents are more likely than other parents polled to favor limiting contact in youth football practice to no more than 30 minutes per day.

Terrence Byrd is the president of Maryland Heat, a youth tackle program that suits up boys as young as 5 in pads and helmets. He said he knows injuries are possible in tackle football, as they are in all sports, and he added his coaches are training

children to play as safely as possible. But he believes the opportunities that youth football provides outweigh the risks.

"I would confidently say that we are changing lives," Byrd said.

Trauma to developing brains

Medical studies over the years have linked head trauma suffered by NFL players to a brain condition called chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), with symptoms including dementia, depression, anxiety and aggression.

Last year, the Boston University CTE Center released a study that said the danger isn't just to professional players. The developing brains of children are at risk for damage from repeated lower impacts to the head and brain, repeated impacts that have been associated with impulsive behaviors and cognitive problems in younger people.

The study notes that children who start playing tackle football at an early age or participate in the sport for more than 11 years run an increased risk of such impairment.

Though hitting in youth football is less violent than at high school and college levels, it can be damaging to developing bodies, researchers found. A child's brain and head are disproportionately outsized for the rest of the body, especially from ages 5 to 8, and a child's weak neck cannot brace for a hit the way an adult's can, according to Dr. Robert Cantu, clinical diagnostics and therapeutics leader of the BU CTE Center and the author of more than 540 scientific articles on neurology and sports medicine.

Because youth necks are relatively weak, falling to the ground or turf and slamming a player's head can cause concussions as often as collisions with other players, Dr. Cantu said. Even repetitive hits to the head that aren't diagnosed as concussions can damage the brain, researchers found.

About This Project

Youth Tackle Football: Balancing risks and rewards depends on race and place

Youth participation in tackle football has been declining for years as medical studies have linked the sport with brain injury and long-term behavioral issues. But not all parents balance risks versus rewards the same way.

A four-month investigation by student journalists at the University of Maryland's Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism and Howard Center

for Investigative Journalism probes what parents know and how they make decisions about when—and if—their children should play tackle football.

In dozens of interviews with parents, coaches, youth players, medical researchers, former pro football players, and in reporting that includes an in-depth national public opinion poll of parents, the project reveals how tackle football represents opportunity in many communities. But decisions about whether to play vary by race and place.



PHOTO CREDIT TORRENCE BANKS/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Terrence Byrd speaks to his 14U team after practice in Fort Washington, Maryland on November 9, 2023.

Not all researchers agree, leaving room for skepticism. A recent study of 52 high school athletes found head impacts were not consistently associated with changes in cognitive, emotional or behavioral symptoms.

Danielle Ransom, a pediatric neuropsychologist at Johns Hopkins All Children's Hospital in St. Petersburg, Florida, and one of the study's researchers, said the Boston University UNITE Brain Bank is "really important science." BU's Brain Bank is "the largest tissue repository in the world

focused on traumatic brain injury (TBI) and CTE."

But Ransom said that while head trauma contributes to CTE, other factors—including genetics and substance abuse—should also be considered.

At the University of Maryland, head football coach Michael Locksley said he feels the data is inconclusive and, "from a medical standpoint, the game has been under attack."

See LOVE OF THE GAME Page A5

INSIDE

- Little Chapel Food Pantry at St. Philip's Sunday, February 18, 2024
 - District 2 Council Member Wanika Fisher Responds to Fatal Shooting of 3-Year-Old in Langley Park
 - ASD Is Looking for Volunteers
 - PGSPCA Low Cost Shot Clinic
 - Local Students Honored
- Around the County, Page A2

Marietta House Museum Programs

Senior Care Authority Announces Opening of New Franchise Location

Open House Events for the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment Community, Page A3

To Be Equal:

NFL's Head Coaching Ranks Starting to Look a Little More Like the League They Lead

Thanks in large part to our advocacy, the 2024 season will begin with nine head coaches of color, including six Black coaches.

Commentary, Page A4

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline

Dorothy Troutman, Prince George's activist, dies at 101

Dorothy Beavers Troutman, civic activist and founder of the Maryland Horse Council, died January 31 at her home in Upper Marlboro.

She was the daughter of a veterinarian but grew up before the era of electricity and running water. She attended a one-room schoolhouse, learned Gregg shorthand, won the Iowa Shorthand State Championship, and was valedictorian of her high school.

At 18, she moved to Hollywood. An accomplished whistler, an orchestra would accompany her while she performed her vaudeville act along the west coast. She worked at Selznick Studios, loved Big Band music and ballroom dance.

She worked for the FBI, met an Army Air Corps bomber pilot at a bus stop at Hollywood & Vine. They married a few months later. She loved being an Air Force Officer's wife, while raising three children and moving around the country, which eventually led them to Prince George's County.

Dorothy became concerned about commercial development near her residential neighborhood and thus began her years as a civic activist. She became an expert in zoning. Armed with facts and zoning maps, she testified at zoning hearings before the County Council and the Park and Planning Commission.

Focusing on horses, she used the Old Marlboro Racetrack as the site of the Prince George's Equestrian Center which permanently changed the County. She got funding for the Show Place Arena on the other side of Route 4, rather than tear down the existing track and barns. She educated the County authorities on the benefits of developing a rural tier. She coined the phrase "Keep Marlboro Country."

Dorothy is survived by her children, Glenn, Sandra and Diane, four grandchildren and five great-grands. Church service will be Saturday, March 2, at St. Thomas Parish in Croom. Interment will be at Arlington Cemetery.

From her obit: "One day, while working for Barry Goldwater in the Senate, a man entered the office and stole her purse. Dorothy took chase and ran down the marble halls in her high heels, keeping the thief in sight until he was appre-

hended. She was short in stature, but a strong force of nature."

Town of Morningside

The Morningside Volunteer Fire Department is seeking new Volunteers. They are hosting a Live-In Weekend at the firehouse March 1-3. You could ride along with their members. Learn how their Live-In Program builds a company of excellence. No certifications required. To register for the Live-In-Weekend or for information, call 301-736-4342.

The Morningside Town Hall meeting is coming up Feb. 20, at 7 p.m. For information, 301-736-2300.

A Memory from The Morningside Messenger, Feb.-March 1983: "Our Mayor and Mrs. Glaubitz returned just in time for the Christmas holidays, from a trip to Texas where they celebrated the 41st anniversary of the Survivors of Pearl Harbor."

Neighbors and other good people

Gerry Jolliffe, formerly of Suitland, is the only person I've ever known born on Leap Day. Since he came into the world on Feb. 29, 1952, he would be either 72—or 18. Sadly, I believe Gerry died a few years ago.

Father Leonard James Downs, 84, a Catholic priest who grew up in Hillcrest Heights and served the dioceses of Washington and Wilmington, Del., died January 28. Mass of Christian Burial was at St. Mary's Church in Rockville.

Changing landscape

Room of Rage has opened at 4771 Al-lentown Road, near the McDonald's. It's designed for you to smash, destroy, break, shatter, and demolish breakable items in a safe environment. Supposedly, a healthy way to get rid of anger. It has a Smash Room, Axe-Throwing Room, Gaming Lounge, and Splatter Room (to throw paint). Info: www.roomofrage.com.

A small-plane airport, Washington Executive Airport—also known as Hyde Field—is the site of a proposed mixed-use development across 425 acres, at the intersection of Steed and Piscataway Roads in Clinton.

County Exec Angela Alsobrooks reports that when the FBI's headquarters comes to Greenbelt, the move "promises to bring 7,500 jobs to Greenbelt, along with 61 acres of mixed-use development

by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

for the site itself, plus an additional million square feet of nearby development, presenting a huge opportunity to close our region's east-west economic divide."

Legislation has moved ahead in Congress which would allow the redevelopment of the old RFK Stadium site and potentially clear the way for a new football stadium for the Washington Commanders.

A home at 10507 Moores Lane, in Clinton, has just sold for \$420,000.

Weather Groundhog

On Friday, February 3, Punxsutawney Phil didn't see his shadow. Which means we'll have an early spring. According to Kasha Patel in The Washington Post, "In the Northeast, an early spring bloom could activate your allergies."

Bring your own!

Effective January 1, 2024, Prince George's County prohibits all retail establishments from providing plastic carryout bags to shoppers and, with certain exceptions, to charge at least 10 cents for each paper carryout. In other words, bring your own reusable bags.

Places to go & things to do

Smithsonian Gardens and the U.S. Botanic Garden, on the Mall in Washington, are presenting "The Future of Orchids: Conservation and Collaboration" through April 28. Joy Columbus, director of Smithsonian Gardens, said "The exhibit celebrates the diversity of orchids, which, with an estimated 30,000 species, is one of the largest and most diverse families in the plant kingdom." Info: 202-633-2220 or gardens@si.edu. (Editor's Note: See article on page A4)

The Knights of Columbus Hall in Forestville still has Bingo on Wednesdays, 6 to 10 p.m. For information, call Bingo Chairman George Hoehl, 301-599-0307. They also have Family Steak & Salmon Dinners in the Club Room on the third Sunday of each month, 1 to 5 p.m. Adults, \$12; children, \$6.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Charlene Holmes and Danny Fowler, Feb. 18; Clifford Lantz, Feb. 19; Melissa Harnes and Paul Bornman, Feb. 20; Ray Short Jr., Feb. 21; and Larry Miller, Feb. 24.

E-mail me (muddmm@gmail.com) with birthdays and anniversaries.

Around the County

Little Chapel Food Pantry at St. Philip's Sunday, February 18, 2024

The next St. Philip's Little Chapel Food Pantry Distribution will be held this Sunday, February 18, 2024, from 9 a.m. to Noon, or while supplies last. Our Pantry is located behind the main church building at the corner of 6th and Prince George Streets in Historic Laurel (by the playground), one block off of Main Street. We will have non-perishable items, frozen items, and some produce items available while supplies last.

District 2 Council Member Wanika Fisher Responds to Fatal Shooting of 3-Year-Old in Langley Park

My Council colleagues and I are outraged by the senseless act of gun violence that has claimed the innocent life of a three-year-old and injured his young mother in Langley Park. My heart aches for her as she must now endure this unimaginable tragedy.

Every child deserves to feel safe and grow up in a community that nurtures and protects them. The fact that such a heinous act of violence could be inflicted upon a young, innocent life is a stark reminder of the urgent need for greater efforts to address gun violence and to build safer communities for our children. I stand in solidarity with the mother, family and loved ones of the young victim, offering my deepest condolences and unwavering support during this difficult time. We must come together as a community to condemn such acts and work tirelessly to ensure that our streets are safe for all, especially our youngest and most vulnerable members.

Law enforcement is conducting a full investigation of this matter. Anyone with information related to this case is asked to call the Prince George's County Police Department or contact Crime Solvers online at www.pgcrimesolvers.com.

—Angela Rouson, MPA, Council Office of Communications

ASD Is Looking for Volunteers

Our Animal Services Division (ASD) is looking for volunteers to help walk and socialize dogs, play with cats, assist with feeding animals, cleaning, office work, off-site events, and more!

If you are 18 years old or older and are interested in helping with animals at the Animal Services Facility and Adoption Center (ASFAC), visit our website at www.princegeorgespetpets4us.com or call 301-780-7200 for more information.

Upcoming Orientations:

Saturday, February 17, 2024—10 a.m.

Wednesday, March 6, 2024—6 p.m.

PGSPCA Low Cost Shot Clinic

Sunday, March 3, 2024

No Appointment Needed

The Prince George's County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PGSPCA) is holding walk-in, low-cost vaccination clinics for cats and dogs on the first Sunday of the month, from 1-3 p.m. at 8210 D'Arcy Road in Forestville, Maryland. No appointment is needed. The gates open at 1 p.m., and anyone in line by 3 p.m. will be served. All dogs MUST be leashed or in a carrier. All cats MUST be in a carrier.

Cash or credit card only; no checks. Without documentation of a prior rabies vaccine, your pet's rabies vaccine will expire in one year.

For more information, visit www.pgspca.org/clinic/shots.

—From DoE - Animal Chatter News, Feb. 8, 2024

Local Students Honored

Minnesota State Mankato Announces 2023 Fall Semester Dean's List

MANKATO, Minn. (Feb. 8, 2024)—The Academic High Honor and Honor lists (Dean's lists) for the past fall semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato have been announced by Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs David Hood.

Among 3,995 students, a total of 1,227 students qualified for the High Honor List by achieving a 4.0 straight "A" average, while 2,768 students earned a 3.5 to 3.99 average to qualify for the Honor List.

Beltsville, MD: **Quinn Corrigan**, Honor List

Bowie, MD: **Sosena Gebremariam**, Honor List

To qualify for academic honors, undergraduate students must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours for the semester.

For additional information, please visit: <https://mankato.mnsu.edu/academics/course-planning-and-registration/registration-and-academic-records/current-students-registration-resources/grades/deans-list/>

Local Students Complete Degrees at Wichita State University

WICHITA, Kan. (Feb. 7, 2024)—More than 1,280 students completed a total of 1,380 degrees at Wichita State University in fall 2023.

Beltsville, MD: **Rajendra Thokala**, Master of Science, Data Science

Undergraduate students who have attained a grade point average of 3.9 out of a possible 4.0 received the summa cum laude award; those with an average of 3.55 received the magna cum laude award; and those with an average of 3.25 received the cum laude.

Local Students Achieve Dean's List at The College of New Jersey

EWING, N.J. (Feb. 6, 2024)—The following students have earned the esteemed honor of placement on the Dean's List at The College of New Jersey for the fall 2023 semester. To achieve this honor, a student must carry 12 or more credits that semester and earn a 3.5 (or above) grade point average:

Bowie, MD: **Maya Randall**, Interactive Multimedia

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

FEBRUARY: A CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Let us take the time to remember the achievements and contributions of great African Americans. Celebrate Black History Month with a tour of some top destinations: The largest Black history museum named the National Museum of African American History and Culture in the country located in Washington, DC. There are around 40,000 artifacts many of which you can view online in an extensive database.

JOHN ISABELLE ACRES

John Isabelle Acres Farm "Real Black History, My Black History" by Todd Johnson. John Robert Johnson, my great Grandfather: John Robert Johnson purchased seventy acres of the Rosemount Plantation in 1901. John Robert was the son of Richard H. and Elsie Diggs Johnson. The father of Richard H. Bernard Matthew Johnson, a slave from Nairobi Kenya.

John Robert Johnson and his wife Isabelle Pinkney Johnson raised eleven children on the Johnson farm. The family harvested tobacco, raised chickens, cattle, pigs, and vegetables. John Robert died in 1925, leaving Bernard (Bud) Matthew Johnson, the second son, to become the farm patriarch.

Bud and his brothers continued to work the farm as children. For most of them a formal education was sacrificed for the sake of "saving the family farm." Bud remained on the farm, until his death in September 1993, raising tobacco, tending the animals, vegetable garden with seasonal assistance from his siblings. The Johnson Farm was subdivided in 1975. It then became John Isabelle Acres where 3rd, 4th, and 5th generation descendants of John Robert and Isabelle Johnson live today.

TRIBUTE TO THE MIGHTY O'JAYS

Join us Saturday, April 6, 2024, Ticket price is \$30. All ages. Event Category: Arts Performances. The event is from 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. at Harmony Hall Arts Center (301) 203-6070 harmonyhallarts@pgparks.com. The address is 10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington, Maryland.

KAREN LOVEJOY GROUP

Karen Lovejoy Group will perform at Harmony Hall Arts Center Wednesday, April 17, 2024, from 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Ticket price is \$22. All ages. Karon Lovejoy is the vocalist and band leader of the group. She migrated from the Midwest where she began singing contemporary ballads, R&B, and top forty. However, when she discovered Jazz, she found a new

home. The freedom to reinterpret music on a whim, turning a tune inside out, and choosing generous lyrics appealed to her expansive spirit. Harmony Hall Arts Center is located at 10701 Livingston Road Fort Washington, Maryland.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

We need your help. The BSU Office of Alumni Engagement and Stewardship is looking for dedicated individuals to join us in our mission to make a positive impact as a host of the CIAA 2024. Sign up today to be part of this exciting opportunity. Join the team now. www.bowiestate.edu.

WOODVILLE COLORED SCHOOL NO. 1

The fourth school to be established by the Freedmen's Bureau in Prince George's County was constructed in the Aquasco Election District 1. The school was in the town of Woodville and was established around the same time as the John Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church. James Gray, Richard Douglas, Henry Chapman, James Douglass and Walter Thomas were trustees of the Methodist Episcopal congregation at Woodville and were instrumental in the establishment of the Woodville School.

James Gray was the former slave of Elizabeth L. Garner of Aquasco. On February 22, 1866, Gray purchased two acres of land from George Morton, a local planter, for \$66. Prior to emancipation, Morton owned one of the largest slave holdings in the county: sixty men, women, and children. Many of these slaves were members of the Douglas and Gray families.

ODE TO OUR ANCESTORS

Words by Kendra Y. Neal: "Our complexion may range in many shades from vanilla to mahogany can be found, even in the hues of our almond shaped eyes from light hazel to chestnut brown. Our ancestors fought long and hard for the freedoms we have privilege today but what still stands out above all the rest is knowing how to pray. Unfairly treated, sold off, and torn. Not aware of what was ahead. Separated from family, deserted, and lonely and the looming fear and dread. But then, came those old spiritual songs that rang out from morning till night while working those tired old bones seemed to make everything all right."

"Nowhere to go, but simply look up to the one, who always there. Would comfort those worn-out souls with the promise that Jesus cares. So, as we come to the end of this special month let us continue to run this race for the struggle still carries on until we meet him face to face."

COMMUNITY

Marietta House Museum Programs

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

Black History Month Program: Research on the Queen Family & Descendants

Please join Marietta House Museum on **Monday, February 19**, 1 p.m.–3 p.m. for a fascinating black history genealogy talk “Research into the Queen Family & Descendants.” This hybrid event features two influential genealogists, Judy Riffel and Kevin Porter, who have researched the Queen family.

Many Queen family members can trace their ancestry to their enslaved ancestors in Louisiana. Join Louisiana genealogist Judy Riffel and Kevin Porter—a Queen family member and Maryland genealogist. Riffel and Porter will present side-by-side to discuss the history of the Maryland Jesuits of White Marsh’s infamous sale of the enslaved to Louisiana sugar plantations.

Recommended for ages 8 & up. \$5/person. Please register at this direct link: <https://tinyurl.com/2av366hb>

Online attendees must register to receive TEAMS link. For more information call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com. Walk-ins are welcome.

Women’s History Month Presentation: “Black Women and Northern Aid Workers in Civil War Washington, D.C.”

To mark Women’s History Month, please join us on **Wednesday, March 6**, noon–1p.m. for a Lunchtime Lecture “Black Women and Northern Aid Workers in Civil War Washington, D.C.” Public historian Katie Campbell will discuss the experiences of Black women in the D.C. contraband camps from 1861 to the immediate years following the Civil War.

Katie is the Museum and Digital Collections Assistant at the Maryland Center for History and Culture. Highlighting the histories of underrepresented communities in museum spaces is her passion.

Ages 12 & up. Free in-person event. Please register on this direct link: <http://tinyurl.com/mun4u6n9> or call 301-464-5291 or email mariettahouse@pgparks.com. Walk-ins are welcome. Guests are invited to bring a bag lunch.

Marietta House Museum is located at 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD. 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Prince George’s County Planning Department Hosts Open House Events for the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment

By PRESS OFFICER
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

LARGO, Md. (Feb. 7, 2024)—The Prince George’s County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission will host two in-person public open house events for the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) on Wednesday, **March 13, 2024**, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday, **March 16, 2024** from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Prince George’s Sports and Learning Complex in Landover. Community members and stakeholders are invited to review, ask questions, and provide feedback on revised vision statements, draft plan goals, market study results, and preliminary urban design visualizations. Planners will deliver summary presentations twice each day: Wednesday, March 13 at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 16 at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. The community is encouraged to select one date and session as the same information will be shared at each event.

The community’s input and feedback will guide the development of the plan’s strategies and priorities; help shape the future of the Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan area; and address future development in and around Capitol Heights, Addison Road-Seat Pleasant, and Morgan Boulevard Metro Stations—which are designated as Local Transit Centers in Plan Prince George’s 2035 (Plan 2035). The open house events will be the last opportunities for the community members and stakeholders to contribute comments before the plan is drafted for public review and input in the fall of 2024.

For more information on the open house event or the sector plan, visit the project webpage <http://pgplan.org/blueline> or email the project team at CABL@ppd.mncppc.org.

WHO: Prince George’s County Planning Department
The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
WHAT: Central Avenue-Blue/Silver Line Sector Plan and SMA Open House Events

WHEN: Wednesday, **March 13, 2024**, 4–8 p.m., Presentations at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Saturday, **March 16, 2024**, 11 a.m.–3 p.m., Presentations at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

WHERE: Prince George’s Sports and Learning Complex
8001 Sheriff Rd, Landover, MD 20785

To register online, visit: <https://pgplan.org/bluelineopenhouse>

The Prince George’s County Planning Department of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is responsible for preserving, protecting, and managing the county’s resources through high-quality planning services and growth management guidance. Our mission is to promote economic vitality, environmental sustainability, design excellence, and quality development in Prince George’s County. Visit our website, www.pgplanning.org, to learn how you can become engaged in shaping the future of your community.

Assistance

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission encourages the participation of persons with disabilities in all its programs and services. Register at least a minimum of two weeks in advance of the program start date to request and receive a disability accommodation. Call the Public Affairs Office at 301-952-3038, email PublicAffairs@ppd.mncppc.org, or complete the online form.

Senior Care Authority Announces Opening of New Franchise Location Serving Greater Annapolis and Washington, DC Metro area

Senior Care Authority®, an eldercare consulting and assisted living residential placement service franchise, announced the recent opening of a new franchise location serving Greater Annapolis and the Washington, DC Metro area.

By PRESS OFFICER
Senior Care Authority

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Jan. 31, 2024)—Senior Care Authority®, an eldercare consulting and assisted living residential placement service franchise, announced today the recent opening of a new franchise location based in Bowie, MD. This location will serve the Greater Annapolis and the Washington, DC Metro area.

New area owner Eddie Dayton wants to ensure his senior clients and their families receive the quality of care they deserve. As a Certified Senior Advisor, Eddie is here to help guide and coach families through this often stressful and challenging process. “My main goal is simple. I hope to assist families during a

difficult time and to help relieve some of the stress they may feel,” explained Dayton. “My grandfather became blind as a result of injuries he sustained in WWII and was placed in assisted living after my grandmother passed away. My father-in-law was diagnosed with dementia. These two personal family situations had a profound impact on me. I saw the toll it took on my own family as we tried to find care and living arrangements for our loved ones. When presented with the opportunity to bring Senior Care Authority and its excellent services to our community, I knew I wanted to help other families in these same situations. I will work to ensure your loved ones receive the exceptional care and attention they deserve.”

To learn more about the new Senior Care Authority® franchise location, please visit <https://www.seniorcareauthority.com/annapolis>

For more information about Senior Care Authority, please visit: <https://www.seniorcareauthority.com/franchise>

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State Senators and Delegates Honor Maryland History Students at State House

Maryland Humanities Reaches 25th Year as State Affiliate of National Program
Prince George’s Teacher Honored at Maryland State House

By SARAH WEISSMAN
Maryland Humanities

BALTIMORE (Feb. 9, 2024)—Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Howard County, and Montgomery County all boasted students who received commendations from State Senators and Delegates at the Maryland State House in Annapolis. The 16 middle and high school students were acknowledged on February 5 for awards or honors they received at the 2023 National History Day competition.

Teachers Diane Kresslein of Carroll County and Tom Stavely of Prince George’s County were also recognized for being named the Maryland History Day Middle and High School Teachers of the Year, respectively. Kresslein serves as Advanced Academics Teacher at North Carroll Middle School and Westminster

East School. Teaching Social Studies at Parkdale High School, Stavely also works as Teacher Coordinator there.

Maryland History Day is a year-long educational program where students create original documentary films, exhibits, performances, research papers, or websites exploring a historical topic of their choice on an annual theme. The program culminates in a statewide history contest. The program has more than 27,000 students, who work individually or in small groups: public, private, parochial, and homeschool students are welcome to participate. Maryland Humanities has coordinated Maryland History Day since 1999.

Advancers to the National History Day Contest typically have won first or second place at the Maryland History Day State Contest. This year’s contest takes place on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at

the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The theme of the competition is Turning Points in History.

The 2024 National History Contest occurs June 9–13 at the University of Maryland, College Park. The national competition involves more than 3,000 students from 50 states plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and international schools in China, Korea, and South Asia.

Maryland History Day is an affiliate of National History Day is supported in part by Maryland State Department of Education, and The Citizens of Baltimore County. Maryland History Day activities in Baltimore City are supported in part by The Creative Baltimore Award, provided by the Baltimore Office of Promotion and the Arts on behalf of the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio Celebrates 24 Years of Excellence at Laurel Shopping Center

By PRESS OFFICER
Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio

LAUREL, Md. (Feb. 12, 2024)—Laurel Shopping Center proudly announces the celebration of Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio’s 24th anniversary. For more than two decades, Mr. Smith’s has been an integral part of Laurel Shopping Center, offering exceptional grooming services and fostering a warm, inviting environment for clients of all ages.

Established in February 2000 by the esteemed barber Howard L. Smith Jr., Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio has become synonymous with quality haircuts, traditional shaves, and unparalleled customer service. Through dedication to professionalism and meticulous attention to detail, Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio has cul-

tivated a loyal clientele and earned a reputation as a premier destination for grooming needs in Laurel and beyond.

Owner Howard L. Smith Jr., known by many for his motto ‘Pride-Passion-Purpose,’ has served as a mentor and positive role model for many young barbers and sweepers in the community. He expressed his gratitude: “I have always wanted to create an atmosphere where my barbers could reach their full potential and our amazing clients could receive high-quality services in a family-friendly environment.”

“We extend our heartfelt gratitude to loyal patrons who have supported Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio over the past 24 years,” said Federal Realty’s Christine Stuart, Property Manager for Laurel Shopping Center. “Their unwavering



PHOTO CREDIT LAUREL SHOPPING CENTER
Mr. Smith was honorably gifted with a key to the city of Laurel.

support has allowed Mr. Smith’s to thrive and become an essential part of our community.”

“To acknowledge this significant milestone, a large group of past/present clients and many community members gathered to show support this weekend as Howard L. Smith Jr. was presented with a proclamation from City of Laurel Mayor Keith Sydnor. The proclamation recognized his outstanding contribution to the Laurel community and dedication to excellence in his field. Additionally, Mr. Smith was honorably gifted with a key to the city of Laurel—a symbol of civic recognition and gratitude reserved for individuals whose service to the public and the common good rises to the highest level of achievement.

“Congratulations to Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio for over 24 years of business services to the City of Laurel. His business is not just a barbershop but a business that gives back to our underserved residents in the Laurel community by providing free haircuts and backpacks for back-to-school drives. His philanthropic service has not gone unnoticed



PHOTO CREDIT: LAUREL SHOPPING CENTER
(Left to right) Mr. Smith’s Barber Studio owner Howard L. Smith, Jr. and City of Laurel Mayor Keith Sydnor at the celebration.

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

NFL's Head Coaching Ranks Starting to Look a Little More Like the League They Lead

"It's hard to tell what, if any, trends will emerge from this hiring cycle. Maybe the emphasis on diverse candidates will continue. Maybe team owners have opened their minds to defensive-minded coaches. Perhaps the 'leader of men' model will continue. Nothing has been solved, per se. But there's cautious optimism the league is in a place to grow from here."

—Jonathan Jones, CBS Sports

Two years ago this week, I met with NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, along with my fellow civil rights leaders, to discuss the failure of the "Rooney Rule" to diversify the ranks of the League's head coaches.

At that time, despite nearly 20 years under a

requirement that teams interview at least one candidate of color for head coaching and senior football operation positions, only one of the NFL's 32 head coaches was Black. Brian Flores had just been fired after three seasons as Miami Dolphins head coach and was suing the NFL and several teams for racist hiring practices.

Thanks in large part to our advocacy, the 2024 season will begin with nine head coaches of color, including six Black coaches.

It's a far cry from the parity we continue to seek in a League where more than half the players are Black, but it is significant progress for which Commissioner Goodell, team owners and senior leadership should be acknowledged.

The first move of the year to replace a white

head coach with a coach of color came from Patriots owner Robert Kraft, who has been outspoken about inequality and prejudice. He recently founded the group Foundation to Combat Antisemitism and endowed a Chair in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Massachusetts General Hospital.

He downplayed the significance of Jerod Mayo becoming the Patriots' first Black head coach, saying "I chose the best head coach for this organization." But Mayo acknowledged the moment: "What I will say, though, is I do see color because I believe if you don't see color, you can't see racism ... It does matter so we can try to fix the problem that we all know we have."

On cue, anti-racial justice activist Stephen Miller, a former advisor to Donald Trump, filed an EEOC complaint against the NFL, trying to keep the League from fixing the problem we all know we have.

Miller is calling for the same thing the National Urban League called for two years ago: elimination of the Rooney Rule. However, we were seeking a better way to achieve equal opportunity for candidates of color. Miller is seeking to eliminate opportunities for candidates of color.

Since we met with Commissioner Goodell, the NFL expanded the Rooney Rule to require teams interview at least two external minority candidates for head coach and general manager jobs. As we noted at the time, the effect of the rule as it had existed was for team decision-makers to regard

interviews with candidates of color as an extraneous step, rather than an integral part of the hiring process.

The coach that Mayo replaced, Bill Belichick, inadvertently proved the ineffectiveness of the Rooney Rule and triggered Flores' lawsuit when he texted Flores to congratulate him on being named head coach of the New York Giants—three days before Flores was scheduled to interview for the job.

Belichick thought he was texting Brian Daboll. Not only had the Giants already decided to hire Daboll before even interviewing Flores—presumably to comply with the letter, if not the spirit, of the Rooney Rule—but the team already was sharing the news.

The League also created the Coach and Front Office Accelerator, which allows diverse candidates for positions across the League to network with club owners and executives and participate in personal and professional development workshops.

A federal judge ruled in July that Flores, now defensive coordinator for the Minnesota Vikings, may proceed to trial with his claims against the NFL, Denver Broncos, New York Giants and Houston Texans, but must pursue his claims against the Dolphins through arbitration.

Regardless of the outcome of Flores' legal action, he has helped propel the League toward equity and opportunity. —February 9, 2024

Growing Statewide Coalition Against Physician Assisted Suicide Lay Out Opposition in Senate Hearing

Community leaders from across Maryland representing people of color, other marginalized groups highlight bill's clear and present danger to their communities

By PRESS OFFICER

Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Feb. 8, 2024)—Medical, faith and other leaders from Maryland—part of the diverse and growing Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide coalition (MAPAS)—are speaking out in today's Senate hearing against the "End of Life Options Act." This legislation once again is being promoted by out-of-state interests.

MAPAS members, representing health care professionals, senior and disability rights advocates, faith leaders, and others steadfast in their belief that this bill must be repudiated—will make the case that our state officials need both to avoid endangering Maryland's most vulnerable residents and amplifying disparities in our healthcare system that would result from legalizing physician assisted suicide.

"Talking to parishioners in Baltimore and Prince George's County, as well as across the state, there is significant fear that this bill would create substantial harm," said Rev. Thea Wilson, Director of Civic Engagement, First Baptist Church of Glenarden International,

the largest church in the state. "Black and Latino communities have for too long faced adverse medical outcomes at an alarmingly higher rate than any other community, and the risk of doctors, health insurance companies and even family and friends seeing physician-assisted suicide as an affordable option for terminally ill patients is real. Physician-assisted suicide is not just immoral but also dangerous for the most vulnerable and marginalized in Maryland."

Year after year, session after session, Maryland lawmakers have rejected physician-assisted suicide with the understanding that no amendments could make this bill acceptable for state residents, as it is dangerously flawed, a risk to vulnerable populations—including the elderly and people with intellectual and developmental disabilities—and a severe threat to efforts to curb our state's opioid epidemic by releasing lethal drugs without monitoring. Proponents of this bill continue to pretend these concerns are unwarranted.

This growing coalition of everyday Maryland residents reaches all corners of the state—from rural western Maryland to the populous DMV suburbs, southern Maryland and beyond. "This flawed bill presents significant patient safety issues that must be taken into

consideration," said Dr. Janet Conway, Bone and Joint Infection Division Head at the Rubin Institute for Advanced Orthopedics, Sinai Hospital of Baltimore. "A patient considering this choice in a weakened state should not be pressured to end their life. Unfortunately, we see time and time again that people feeling like a burden to their family feel pressured to relieve them of that burden. The effort and time being put into this dangerous policy should be spent finding ways to make hospice and palliative care even better, so we can provide a loving and comfortable environment for patients to live their remaining days maximizing each moment with family and friends."

MAPAS members, who come from across Maryland, including Baltimore, Prince George's, Montgomery, Howard and other counties, are urging the Senate to recognize the significant red flags that this dangerous legislative proposal continues to ignore, including flooding the state with dangerous—deadly—drugs. The reasons why this law is too dangerous are well established. Other jurisdictions are experiencing pressure to expand assisted suicide beyond the terminally ill to those with mental health, eating disorders or other non-terminal conditions. Maryland residents deserve lawmakers who protect the life and safety of all who live here.

Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide is a nonpartisan coalition organized in opposition to legislation that would legalize physician-assisted suicide in Maryland. The coalition is a diverse group of health care professionals, disability rights advocates, mental health professionals, advocates for seniors, and members of faith communities. For more information visit: www.stopassistedsuicideMD.org

New Smithsonian Exhibit Features Rare and Unusual Orchids

By YESENIA MONTENEGRO
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Feb. 9, 2024)—Nothing like a stroll through wild orchids to chase the February blues away.

Smithsonian Gardens and the United States Botanic Garden have opened their annual orchid exhibit. This year's theme is "The Future of Orchids: Conservation and Collaboration."

The exhibit, which opened Jan. 27 and is displayed in the Kogod Courtyard at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery,

includes around 350 live orchids and original artwork by Baltimore-based artist Phaen Howng.

The installation addresses the importance of plant conservation and the issues affecting orchids around the world. Each flower bed is categorized by a collaboration with a specific group working toward the conservation of orchids, such as researchers, schools, public gardens and others.

"Everybody has an idea of what an orchid looks like and it's from a corsage probably, or from the plants you can get at the gro-

cery store," said Sarah Christianson, a Smithsonian Gardens volunteer interpreter for the exhibit. "But those are just the hybrids that are easy to grow. Whereas here we have species of orchids which are wild, not hybridized. And some of them are just incredibly different from what your image is."

"The diversity is mind-boggling. The colors are fantastic. The difference is amazing," said Deborah Zavos, a museum visitor from DC.

Howng's art is in the form of tree wraps, brightly colored

planters, model mountains and other objects distributed throughout the exhibit.

Highlights of the exhibit are Howng's 3D-printed orchids, which allow viewers to see intricate details of the flowers that otherwise might not be as clear. Howng worked with 3D printing for the first time for this exhibit.

Howng said she drew inspiration from Robert Brendel's botanical models from the late 1800s while creating her 3D prints. Brendel's models could be taken apart, similar to Howng's work, and were designed to aid in the study of botany.

"I based them off the Brendel models because I liked the idea that we're teaching everyone about orchids, and the Brendel models are a nod to that old-school type of teaching," Howng said.

Howng received 3D scans of various orchid species from the Smithsonian, which inspired the designs of her printed flowers. She spent around three months working on pieces for the exhibit.

Compared to her other projects, which also often focus on nature, this exhibit is geared toward a much broader audience, Howng said. She wanted her work to have educational concepts and wanted people to learn from it.

"I love how they're naturally so inventive to serve their purpose," Howng said. "Different orchids have different engineering to them in order to be pollinated... They develop these certain patterns as a way to attract the specific pollinators. The me-

chanics of each orchid is so particular and specific that it's just so wild."

Smithsonian Gardens has a greenhouse facility in Suitland, Maryland, where the orchid collection, made up of almost 5000 plants, is stored. A portion of the plants in the exhibit also comes from the United States Botanic Garden's collection. The plants will be refreshed and swapped out as needed, ensuring that the exhibit always presents blooming flowers.

The Smithsonian Gardens collection started in the 1970s and has grown immensely over the years. It consists mainly of

orchids from Central America, the Caribbean and South America, according to Justin Kondrat, the lead horticulturist within the Smithsonian Gardens orchid collection.

The collection is managed with a focus on conservation, outreach, display, innovation and education. The facility ensures that the plants are safeguarded and that they can be propagated and shared with other institutions that can protect them.

"As a living collection nothing is stagnant. It's constantly

See ORCHIDS Page A6



PHOTO CREDIT YESENIA MONTENEGRO/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

WASHINGTON—Artist Phaen Howng used scans of live orchids to create her own 3D-printed models.

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260
Email: pgpost@gmail.com
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Publisher/Senior Editor Legusta Floyd	Editor Lisa Duan
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Administrative Assistant/ Billing Julie Volosin
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Love of the Game from A1

"When you do the research, you can find the answers you want," he said in an interview with the Povich and Howard centers. However, "It's up to us as coaches and football people to figure out how to play it as safely as we can."

Locksley went to Towson University on a football scholarship, becoming the first in his family to attend college. He met his wife, Kia, there and completed a marketing degree.

"The game has given me a lot," he said.

But Locksley's history with football is complicated. In 2017, his son Meiko, who began playing tackle football at 7, died in a shooting at age 25. His parents donated his brain for examination at the Boston University CTE Center. The doctors found that Meiko Locksley showed signs of CTE.

Mary Seau, the sister of Hall of Fame NFL linebacker Junior Seau, said she believes the research. Junior Seau started playing tackle football when he was 8. He went to the University of Southern California on a football scholarship, and his NFL career spanned 20 years.

In 2012, Seau shot himself dead in his home in Oceanside, California. After analysis of her brother's brain found signs of CTE, Mary Seau said her family thought about his Pop Warner youth tackle football years.

"We didn't realize that the brain is so fragile," Seau said.

Though members of her family are

still involved with the sport today, she doesn't watch football anymore. "I have my nieces and nephews who can't talk about how their son played because they know how I am," Seau said.

Benefits beyond the playing field

Some supporters of youth football believe injuries can be reduced if coaches continue to limit the number of hits allowed during practices, saving more contact for the game. The Ipsos poll found 71% of parents—67% of white parents and 77% of Black parents—agreed with "limiting full-contact practice for youth tackle football to no more than twice per week."

Some parents are opting to enroll their children in leagues that play flag football, which limits contact on the field. Others believe players should not be introduced to tackle football until high school.

But youth tackle leagues remain popular in many parts of the country. Todd Casey, commissioner of Vienna (Virginia) Youth, Inc. Football, said enrollment has steadily increased in the football program. "Right now, we have our largest enrollment in tackle football that we've had since 2014," he said.

In Fort Washington, Maryland, parents who were watching the Heat practice said they've considered the dangers and believe the risk of injury is no greater in football than other sports. They said coaches are careful to keep their children safe and the players are gaining a lot from the game, with benefits accruing far off the field.

"They make new friends, experience new things," Stephanie Rogers said on a fall evening as she watched her son, DeCarlo, 15, and his Maryland Heat teammates run through plays. "The sum of those types of benefits that aren't necessarily the winning-the-game part, but you know what they get out of it."

Beyond the social benefits, Rogers said, the Heat program provides opportunities for a better education. "We have private high schools trying to get these kids in their doors," she said.

DeMatha Catholic High School in Hyattsville, Maryland, is one of the private schools that recruits Maryland Heat players. Last year, 19 of DeMatha's football players signed with Division I and II college football programs. Tuition is \$21,900, said Bill McGregor, DeMatha's football coach. The school does not offer athletic scholarships, he said, but families can apply for financial aid.

At the Heat practice, two parents had driven from Delaware and another from Lancaster, Pennsylvania, a trip of more



PHOTO CREDIT FREDDY WOLFE/UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

Players as young as 8 line up for a full-contact drill at a Maryland Heat practice in Fort Washington, Maryland, on November 9, 2023.

than two hours, which the parent makes three times a week.

"You're now changing the education paradigm for young men," said Byrd, the coach, "and you're changing their exposure to colleges," by giving the players experience that can attract scholarships.

Though some Heat players' parents can afford to pay steep prices for equipment, some families can't afford to pay the program's \$250 flat fee—which includes equipment—to participate for the entire season. In some cases, the program raises money to cover those children's fees.

Jerome Montgomery, of Waldorf, Maryland, researches the safest equipment for his son Micah's practices—from pads to helmets. Montgomery said helmets can run up to \$700 each.

"I'd rather pay a lot of money for the helmets than for a hospital visit," he said.

The risk of injuries, Byrd said, exists in all sports. And many of the children in his league face dangers off the field—"whether it's at risk for taking a shot to the head at a football game, or whether it's at risk for taking, you know, a shot on the streets."

Considering the risks

Rogers, a nurse, said she knows the risks of football. "I used to work in the operating room. I know a lot about head trauma and mental health issues that can stem from trauma. ... I guess you always have that in the back of your mind." But the worry is "not enough to not let them play."

Rogers added she trusts the quality of the equipment and appreciates Byrd's dedication to including safety precautions in practice.

Shakia Johnson's son, Nasir, 15, has had injuries: a broken leg, hyperextended knees, other aches and pains. His parents take him to a chiropractor and he does cryotherapy and yoga. "We actually invest a lot in his body," Johnson said.

His teammate, Phyve Linder, 14, started playing tackle football at 5. He's recovered from an ankle injury that happened when he made a tackle. And he said last year he saw a player taken off the field with a concussion.

He said that didn't bother him. "I still wanted to play because I love the game. I love playing the game. It didn't really change my mind at all because I've seen it multiple times," Linder said.

Though flag football may be a safer alternative, Mac Stephens, former NFL player and coach at Cleveland Heights High School in Ohio, said he doesn't believe this substitution would work for the majority of parents in urban areas.

If Cleveland Heights didn't offer tackle football before high school, Stephens said, parents would find leagues in other towns for their kids to play in.

Parents, he said, believe, "Well, I have to get my son on track to get a college scholarship someday."

Stephens, co-president of the North Coast Youth Football Conference, said the Cleveland-based league is 90% to 95% Black and is thriving, with several of its teams seeing an increase in participation.

Another former NFL player takes a different view. Solomon Brannan, who played in the first Super Bowl (then called the AFL-NFL World Championship Game), in 1967, said flag football could teach young players about teamwork and strategy just as well as tackle, and with far fewer risks.

A former head coach at Morris Brown College and assistant coach at Morehouse College, Brannan has marched with several organizations to Capitol Hill as part of Brain Injury Awareness Month in March to highlight the dangers of the sport.

A financial factor

Money, Brannan said, motivates parents who are hoping for scholarships. But instead of focusing on athletics, he said, parents should be spending time with their kids and books.

"You can't depend on sports," Brannan said, "but if you've got it upstairs in your head, you're going to be successful no matter what."

Dr. Samantha Bureau, director of international programs at the Concussion Legacy Foundation, said that deciding to play tackle football does not mean players are indifferent about their health.

"I just think some people maybe are not as fortunate to be thinking about their long-term health in the current moment based on their current situation," she said.

At the University of Maryland, Michael Locksley said his wife, Kia, now believes children should not play tackle football before 14. But Michael Locksley disagrees.

Football, he said, "is the closest sport to mimicking life. In football, you get knocked down. You can get tackled, and you've got to get back up and you've got to face it the next play."

If his grandchildren want to play the game, Locksley said, he will support them. But it's their parents who will decide if the kids will suit up and play tackle.

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PHOTO CREDIT TORRENCE BANKS/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Maryland Heat running back Santana Campfield, 9, takes a breather after practice in Fort Washington, Maryland, on Nov. 9, 2023.

Poll: Black, Hispanic Parents Nearly Twice as Likely as White Parents to See Youth Football as a Path to College Scholarships, NFL

By TORRENCE BANKS
Capital News Service

Most parents understand the health risks of tackle football for children, but a new poll found significant differences in how Black, Hispanic and white parents of children under 18 view the benefits the game offers.

Black and Hispanic parents are nearly twice as likely as white parents to see youth football as a path to college scholarships and even to the NFL.

The poll, conducted by Ipsos, showed Black, white and Hispanic parents agree that youth tackle football helps children make friends, learn teamwork and become physically fit.

But then the results diverge by race.

The poll showed that 23% of white parents of children under 18 see the possibility of a scholarship as one of the game's biggest benefits. That's compared to 43% of Black parents and 42% of Hispanic parents who said the possibility of a college scholarship is one of youth football's biggest advantages.

Thirteen percent of white parents of children under 18 said they see the possibility of playing professionally as one of the biggest benefits to kids' playing tackle football. But that percentage is far higher among Black parents—35%—and Hispanic parents—37%.

Mallory Newall, vice president at Ipsos, said that while the poll shows Black and Hispanic parents are more likely to see the monetary benefits of the sport, the parents see learning teamwork, commitment and physical fitness as bigger benefits.

"We're in a period where sports are being monetized like never before, both from the perspective

of the NFL [allowing college and high school athletes to market their names, images and likenesses] and gambling," Newall said. "And so I think, Black and Hispanic parents have shown that perhaps they're a bit more attuned to that as a potential benefit."

The poll found that most parents of children under 18 would let their children play tackle football even though the parents said they understand the health risks. Sixty-one percent of white parents said they would allow their child to play, as compared to 66% of Black parents.

The poll found a large majority of parents, Black and white, believe that children should not begin playing tackle football until they are 10 or older.

However, 12% of Black parents of children under 18 said that 5 to 7 years old was an appropriate age to begin playing tackle, as compared with 5% of white parents and 6% of Hispanic parents.

A significant percentage of parents in the poll would not let children play tackle at all. Twenty-four percent of Hispanic parents said that children under 18 should not be allowed to play tackle football, with 21% of white parents agreeing. Among Black parents, 13% said children under 18 should not be allowed to play.

Medical researchers who study brain disorders related to concussion, including chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), said the number of years that children play tackle football is important. A recent study from the Boston University CTE Center found that playing for 11 years or more increases the chances of developing brain-related problems, including aggressive behaviors, depression and dementia.

As part of its "Don't Hit Kids" initiative, the

added City of Laurel Councilwoman Kyla Clark. "They have been a cornerstone in our Ward 2 neighborhood, providing exceptional grooming services and fostering a strong community spirit among local people and those around the DMV who travel to Laurel for their services. Businesses like Mr. Smith's help to build our community, and we welcome more of them."

As Mr. Smith's Barber Studio looks towards

Concussion Legacy Foundation recommends that children wait to play tackle football until they turn 14.

The poll, conducted by Ipsos for The Shirley Povich Center for Sports Journalism and the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism at the University of Maryland, was conducted in November and included interviews with 1,655 Americans. Of those, 876 are parents of children under 18.

The margin of error for participants overall is plus or minus 2.9 percentage points. The margin of error is plus or minus 3.8 percentage points for all parents of children under 18.

The poll found that parents of children under 18 believe the medical findings about football-related brain injuries are conclusive. Seventy-nine percent of Black parents, 81% of white parents and 77% of Hispanic parents answered that they believe playing football is dangerous for young people.

But millions of parents allow their children to play tackle football.

Among parents of children who have played sports, 11% of Black parents said their child has had a concussion diagnosed by a medical professional, as compared to 5% of white parents and 6% of Hispanic parents.

For all parents, the poll suggests there is room for education on the dangers of head injuries that occur during games or in practice. Seventy percent of parents of children under 18 said they did not know that youth athletes experience an average of eight head impacts a season playing flag or tackle football.

Sixty-four percent of parents of children under 18 said they did not know that tackle football play-

ers ages 6 to 14 sustained significantly more head impacts during practices or games than flag players in the same age group.

Johnny Sawyer, research manager at Ipsos, said he was surprised by how little parents knew about the extent of the dangers football poses.

"There's a lot of room for educating parents," Sawyer said. "The poll shows that parents know that playing football can lead to head injuries. Once you sort of stray away from that basic fact, there's not a lot of knowledge out there."

Across the board, parents of children under 18 said they are worried about the risks tackle football presents. Ninety-two percent of all parents said they were concerned that "repeated head impacts can lead to traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and result in long-term problems, including ongoing problems with concentration, memory, and headaches."

Ninety-one percent of parents of children under 18 are concerned that playing tackle football for more than 11 years can potentially cause "impulsive behavior and other thinking-related problems."

And 91% of parents of children under 18 also said they are concerned that helmets do not provide excellent protection against concussions and other brain injuries.

Overall, people interviewed for the poll said football is less dangerous than living with a smoker, riding in a car without a seatbelt or riding in a car with a distracted driver.

They said football is more dangerous for children than baseball, gymnastics, soccer or jumping on a trampoline.

And a majority of respondents said though they know the risks associated with football, they still enjoy watching it.

Celebrates from A3

in our city. So once again, on behalf of myself and the City Council, we wish him another 24 years of service," said Mayor Keith R. Sydnor.

"Congratulations to Mr. Smith's Barber Studio, a beloved small business in our Ward 2 Laurel community that I proudly represent, as they celebrate 24 years of dedicated service this year,"

the future, they remain steadfast in their commitment to upholding their legacy of exceptional service and unwavering dedication to customer satisfaction. With a team of skilled barbers and a passion for their craft, Mr. Smith's Barber Studio is poised to continue serving the grooming needs of Laurel residents for many more years to come.

For more information about Mr. Smith's Barber Studio, please visit <http://www.msbscuts.com>

or contact (301) 483-6670.

Laurel Shopping Center is located along Route 1 in the densely populated Baltimore-Washington, DC Corridor in Laurel, MD. Anchored by Giant, Marshalls, Home Goods and LA Fitness, this community shopping center offers a variety of shops and services including fashion, fast casual dining, health & beauty and banking.

