

# The Prince George's Post



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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JAMES LEVIN

The Green Street Academy will be moving to a new location at 125 N. Hilton St. in Baltimore for the fall. The school held a groundbreaking ceremony for the new building, which formerly housed the Gwynns Falls Junior High School before its closing in 1985, on Wednesday, January 28, 2015.

## Maryland Charter Schools Push for Independence; State Laws Keep Control With Local School Boards

By DEIDRE MCPHILLIPS  
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Maryland's public charter schools feel stifled under current state laws that keep them under the authorization and governance of local school boards, but the creation of separate charter school boards could cost taxpayers and students much more.

Charter schools were poised to be a hot topic during this legislative session from the beginning. A week before his inauguration, Gov. Larry Hogan appointed former Delegate Keiffer Mitchell, a noted Baltimore Democrat, as a special adviser to oversee some of his legislative initiatives, including the expansion of charter schools.

"It's like McDonald's seeking to get approval from Burger King to open a new restaurant," said Kara Kerwin, president of The Center for Education Reform, a national organization that supports freedom of choice in education, specifically with charter schools.

But Brad Young, president of the Board of Education of Frederick County, home to three

public charter schools, said he thinks all public schools, charter or otherwise, should be governed by one body.

"It's counterproductive to set up a second system that would be run totally separate from the current school system," Young said. "What char-

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## Lawmakers Persuade Obama to Drop Plan to Tax 529 College Savings Accounts

By ANIKA REED  
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Kensington, joined forces with lawmakers from both parties in persuading the Obama administration to abandon its plan to tax 529 college savings accounts.

Van Hollen, ranking member of the Budget Committee, called House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. to raise objections to the taxation proposal while she flew with President Barack Obama from India to Saudi Arabia aboard Air Force One earlier this week, according

to a Democratic aide familiar with the discussion who is not authorized to speak publicly.

The formal announcement of the plan's demise was made Tuesday by White House officials.

The 529 proposal lasted a week after meeting fierce opposition from critics on both sides of the aisle, who said it defeats the purpose of helping low- and middle-income families.

House Speaker John A. Boehner, R-Ohio, and Pelosi heavily lobbied for the president and his administration to drop the tax hike.

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## Rushern L. Baker, III "2014 Washingtonian of the Year"

By PRESS OFFICER  
PG County Government

Upper Marlboro, MD – On January 15, 2015, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, was recognized as one of nine "2014 Washingtonians of the Year" by Washingtonian Magazine at a luncheon honoring the awardees at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel in Washington, DC. County Executive Baker joined Mark Bergel, Founder, A Wider Circle, Ann H. Bissell, Volunteer and FONZ Board Member, National Zoo, Arch Campbell, Film Critic, for-

merly with WJLA, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, Duane Gautier, Founder, Honfleur Gallery, Tawanda Hanible, Founder, Operation Heroes Connect, Carol Pensky, Wendt Center for Loss and Healing and Gerald R. Sigal, Founder, Sigal Construction Corporation. To read the backgrounds of the nine 2014 "Washingtonians of the Year" go to <http://www.washingtonian.com/articles/people/2014-washingtonians-of-the-year/>

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## Warrants Backlog Under 40,000 Levels Not Seen Since 2007

By PRESS OFFICER  
Office of the Lt. Governor

Upper Marlboro, MD...The Sheriff's Office Warrant/Fugitive Division reported that the warrant backlog that was over 53,000 four years ago is below 40,000 - a level not seen since 2007.

The news from the Sheriff's Warrant/Fugitive Division comes on the heels of the Crime Reduction Press Conference held yesterday at the Community of Hope AME Church in Temple Hills, MD, where Sheriff Melvin C. High joined Governor O'Malley and various county leaders including Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, County Police Department Chief Mark A. Magaw, County State's Attorney Angela Alsobrooks, Council Chairman Mel Franklin, Council Member Karen Toles and members of the community to report 2014 Crime Reduction in Prince George's County.

Referring to remarks he made at the press conference, Sheriff High said, "Four years ago, we set priorities to be successful in our work and to reach goals like this one. That priority was to apprehend violent crime offenders. In addition, we com-

mitted to staying ahead of new warrants coming in and to stopping the growth trend of the backlog," said Sheriff High.

"Under the Warrant/Fugitive Division, we've developed a multi-pronged strategy to manage our warrant process for all types of warrants, even as we stay focused on violent offenders. We've serve warrants through arrests, extradition, the enormous success of the team we put on cold cases and warrant operations we undertake throughout the year with assistance from other law enforcement partners. We have a productive interface with the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), the warrant invalidation process we improved with assistance from the legislature has proven successful and we send a letter to individuals with outstanding misdemeanors because sometimes people forget. And, our warrant processing staff manages a huge volume of administrative warrant closures," said Sheriff High.

"It's energizing heading into a new year because our success is based on the commitment of our people to the work we do."

For more information contact the Communications and Public Affairs Division at 301-780-7354.

## Baltimore's Liquor Board, Stung by 2013 Audit, Regroups, Promises Changes

By MELANIE BALAKIT  
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE -- Nearly 20 months after a state audit found its operations to be dysfunctional, officials at Baltimore's liquor board say they're trying to turn the office from an example of the city's old-style patronage system into a modern, publicly accountable department.

The board now has computer spreadsheets to track fines and fees. It is requiring all applications to be notarized. And employees are required to formally disclose any conflicts of interest, according to a report the board delivered to the General Assembly on Dec. 9.

But a bigger challenge lies in uprooting a culture that's existed at the board for decades, a culture that allowed employees to work without oversight and Baltimoreans to skirt the law.

"The politics of old Baltimore City still run wild at the liquor board," Baltimore State Sen. Bill Ferguson said this fall, more than a year after the state's findings were released.

The state audit, which covered liquor board proceedings from

Sept. 1, 2010, to Aug. 31, 2011, found that the board's inspection of liquor establishments were wildly uneven. For example, 96 licensees, the audit found, were inspected eight or more times, but 202 licensees received no inspections at all.

The board had no written policies on how employees should do their work, did not review employee performance, failed to have paperwork showing it responded to many citizen complaints and inconsistently handed out punishment to violators of liquor laws.

"In each area of... operations we reviewed, comprehensive written policies were lacking," Thomas J. Barnickel III, who led the audit, told the Maryland General Assembly's Joint Audit Committee when he released his findings in March 2013.

By state law, the governor appoints liquor commissioners with the consent of the Senate. The Senate has traditionally deferred to local senators for nominations.

Samuel T. Daniels Jr., who worked for more than 25 years at the liquor board, said those senators often have ties to bar and restaurant owners in their district.



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Exterior of Doc's Liquors on N. Fulton Avenue in Baltimore.

The culture, he said, lacked oversight. "There's something about the agency that breeds casual," Daniels said. "Most employees came under patronage. Most had ties to city or state senators, and most felt entitled not to do anything."

Daniels says he received his job because his father, Samuel T. Daniels Sr., a well known civil rights activist, was friendly with Maryland Gov. William Donald Schaefer.

From the day he began doing liquor license inspections in the

late 1980s, he says, he was doing part-time work for full-time pay.

"Say I had to do five inspections," he said. "If I lined them up proficiently, they could be done in an hour and a half. We didn't have to go back to the office. Nobody was checking. So you'd say, maybe I want to go sailing. Maybe I had errands to run. I used to do that."

The audit found that, nearly 20 years later, the board was

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#### Maryland Youth Riding Teams Receive Touch of Class Awards

The Touch of Class Award was initiated by MHIB in 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition. To date, 67 people and 29 horses, ponies, mules and donkeys from 14 different Maryland counties.

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#### How to End Child Poverty for 60 Percent of Poor Children

It is a national disgrace that so many poor children live in the United States of America—the world's richest economy. It doesn't have to be this way. It's costly. And it's the greatest threat to our future national, economic, and military security.

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#### Permits Allow Hunting on Maryland Farmers' Fields to Control Crop-Eating Deer

Based on the acreage, crops, damage, and the status of surrounding farms, the department issues a certain number of permits to the farmer. Each permit allows for a certain number of deer to be killed based on the department's assessment.

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#### Movie Review: "American Sniper"

U.S. Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle is sent to Iraq with only one mission: to protect his brothers-in-arms. Despite the danger, as well as the toll on his family at home, Chris serves through four harrowing tours of duty in Iraq, becoming emblematic of the SEAL creed to "leave no man behind."

Out on the Town, Page A6

#### Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are some basic guidelines about seafood consumption, especially for women and in light of all the pollution threats to our oceans and waterways?

—Betsy Draper, Boston, MA

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# COMMUNITY

## Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

### Getting Serious? Five Important Money Questions to Ask

Valentine's Day is often a time to reflect on your relationship, and consider the next step. If your relationship is heading toward joint finances, it's essential to talk about it first — openly and honestly.

A 2014 survey (<http://www.nefe.org/press-room/news/financial-infidelity-poses-challenge-for-couples.aspx>) by the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE) found that 13 percent said they had failed to share information about their personal debt or income, which had "an effect on the relationship."

This year, consider thinking beyond the roses and candlelight dinners to a potential future of merged finances. Here are five key questions that should drive your conversation:

Where are you financially as individuals? Take time to talk about your household debt — including student loans, credit cards, mortgage and medical bills, and share your credit reports from the three major credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian and TransUnion). Each can be obtained once a year for free (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>). It's also important to discuss assets — not only the savings and investments you hold, but also how future job or education plans can improve the marriage or family's financial health.

What are your money personalities? This is a personal finance question that many financial planners still ask to get a sense of your money management habits. It's intended to identify which person in the relationship is the spender or the saver. It's particularly important to ask each other whether you save or spend to make sure you're on track to achieve your long-term goals.

How do you want to live? This question is about shared financial and personal goals and how you will achieve them together. Discuss how you've been living thus far, and what you might change. Be honest about where you want to live, what kind of home and family you want to have, what kind of career or retirement you want and start discussing concrete ways you both will get there.

How will you handle everyday spending? Determine how you will share accounts, pay bills, budget, save for the future and bank — jointly, separately or both. Figure out how will you jointly manage credit and the smartest ways to save for retirement. If you want a family, decide how you'll plan for kids financially. Finally, work together when problems come up. As with all issues in a relationship, ongoing communication is key.

What if you need help? There are options if you or your partner doesn't know where to start. Licensed financial and tax professionals can provide guidance on issues from basic budgeting (<http://www.practicalmoneyskills.com/personalfinance/savingspending/budgeting/>) to prenuptial agreements. Friends and family are a good resource for recommendations. Also keep in mind that some religious denominations actually offer solid financial planning advice as part of premarital counseling and the NEFE has a quiz (<http://www.smartaboutmoney.org/Tools-Resources/LifeValues-Quiz.aspx>) for potential spouses. For debt issues, the National Foundation for Credit Counseling is a good independent resource that can offer advice on improving credit issues as a couple. The earlier you can put together an advisory team that fits your needs, the better.

Bottom line: If you and your sweetheart are considering tying the knot or expanding your family, don't ignore money issues. It can be a difficult conversation to initiate, but it's an important one to start planning your financial future together.

### Liquor from A1

employing 14 full-time inspectors to do the work of six. While the liquor board required each full-time inspector to complete four routine inspections daily, none of the full-time inspectors met this requirement.

After the audit's release, alarmed state officials formed a committee made up of city and state officials that selected a new executive secretary, Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth to replace Daniels in April 2014. Former Baltimore Circuit Judge Thomas Ward was named board chairman. In October, Shelton Jones Jr., a 22-year veteran of the Baltimore Police Department, was hired as chief inspector.

The new members have taken a tougher stance on enforcing the



PHOTO BY KATHERINE O. RIZZO/THE EQUIERY

## Maryland Youth Riding Teams Receive Touch of Class Awards

By PRESS OFFICER  
MDA

ANNAPOLIS, MD — Two youth regional riding teams that won national championships at the 2014 U.S. Pony Club Championships in Lexington, KY received the January Touch of Class Award from the Maryland Horse Industry Board (MHIB) last week at the Horse World Expo in Timonium. The two teams represent two different equestrian disciplines—Mounted Games and Show Jumping. The MHIB is a program within the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

MHIB Chairman Jim Steele, MHIB member Dr. Mike Odian, MHIB Advisory Board member Keith Wills, and current Maryland High School Rodeo Queen Madison Iager (a former Touch of Class Award winner) made the presentation at a reception hosted by The Equiery horse magazine.

The Mounted Games Team, called the "Zig Zaggers," is composed of Ashley Button, 11, from Brinklow (Montgomery County); Katelynn Kling, 11,

Brinklow (Montgomery County); Ethan Riccio, 13, Woodbine (Carroll County); Grace Strosnider, 12, Brinklow (Montgomery County); and Laura VanHasselt, 15, Columbia (Howard County). The "Zig Zaggers" defeated 13 other teams from across the nation in the Junior Division and will compete April 26 for another national championship at the Rolex Kentucky Three-Day Event in Lexington.

The Show Jumping Team — comprised of Kelsey Abrecht, 15, Towson (Baltimore County); Daisy Fenwick, 15, Cockeysville (Baltimore County); and Brianna Price, 19, (Harford County) — "scrambled" with two other riders from California to defeat seven other teams in the Modified Show Jumping Division.

"Last month we honored another group of five young riders who won the 3-Day Event competition, so this means a total of 13 young Maryland riders were on winning national Pony Club teams," Steele said. "This bodes so well for the future of the Maryland horse industry. We couldn't be happier



PHOTO BY KATHERINE O. RIZZO/THE EQUIERY  
From left: Madison Iager (Maryland High School Rodeo Queen), Dr. Mike Odian (MHIB), Kelsey Abrecht (GSHPC), Chris Donovan (coach), Daisy Fenwick (GSHPC) and Jim Steele (MHIB).

that we have this reservoir of young equestrian talent. It also shows that we have excellent riding instructors and facilities in our state."

The Touch of Class Award was initiated by MHIB in 2011 to honor Maryland horses and people who achieve national and international recognition. To date, 67 people and 29 horses, ponies, mules and donkeys from

14 different Maryland counties and 24 different equestrian disciplines have been honored. The award is named in honor of Touch of Class, the Maryland-bred mare that won two show jumping gold medals at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

For more information, contact MHIB Executive Director Ross Peddicord at 410-841-5798 or [ross.peddicord@maryland.gov](mailto:ross.peddicord@maryland.gov).

### Baker from A1

"I am honored to be recognized as a "2014 Washingtonian of the Year" and thank the editors of Washingtonian Magazine for this esteemed honor," stated County Executive Baker. "I also want to congratulate my fellow honorees. I am humbled to be equally recognized with these amazing Washingtonians and their notable accomplishments. Although I am being recognized, this designation is not as much about me and my administration as it is about the success and progress that all Prince Georgians — our County employees, our municipal and State governments, our business community, our nonprofit and faith communities, and our residents — are achieving. Earning this recognition

— the same award that my friend and mentor, former County Executive Wayne K. Curry, won previously, in the same year of his passing means so much to me. Wayne taught me to lead this County boldly and I am so proud of the work that we have accomplished and I am incredibly optimistic about our future. I often say that "Prince George's County is the place to be," and I am thankful to Washingtonian Magazine for sharing this sentiment with their readers."

### Acceptance Speech From County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III

"Thank you Washingtonian Magazine for this great honor.

Today is Dr. Martin Luther King's actual birthday. A man who gave this country and

this world some much. He once said, 'Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?' - a question that drives me as I proudly serve Prince George's County every day. And a question that clearly motivates my fellow honorees.

Each day I work to make life better for more than 900,000 residents of Prince George's County and we have made great progress. Nearly \$6 billion in development projects in the pipeline. We are making great progress improving our schools, reducing crime, and improving healthcare. We have taken an innovative approach to supporting and improving neighborhoods through our Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative and we have changed our image in the region.

I got involved in politics because my dad challenged me to get involved and make a difference. I am so proud that Washingtonian Magazine is recognizing the great things going on in Prince George's County, but I know I did not do this alone. I had a lot help from some very smart and committed people. But for me, the real gauge of success is when a business person or resident says to me, "Thanks for all you do. You are making our county proud."

On this day, Martin Luther King's birthday, I challenge us all to continue to ask that persistent and urgent question, "What are you doing for others?" It is this question that I drives me every day as I work to move Prince George's County closer to fulfilling its destiny!"

### Schools from A1

ter schools prove is that students learn in different ways, and it's important to provide different options to students. But the duplication of services would force admin costs up and have implications that would cost taxpayers more or take money out of the classroom."

At a ground-breaking event on Wednesday, the co-founders of Green Street Academy, a public charter school in Baltimore, touted a "21st century approach to learning."

With gardens, chicken coops and fish farms as learning spaces in an urban environment, the Academy equips students with the skills to be successful in modern ways, said David Warnock, co-founder of the Green Street Academy and co-chair of the board of trustees. They also have a new partnership with the U.S. Forest Service's Baltimore Field Station.

"This generation does not respond to institution-led education," Warnock said, noting the heavy dependence of today's stu-

dents on technology and social media. "We need to hook 'em, capture their imagination and develop their love of learning."

Green Street Academy received a \$14 million loan from Bank of America, part of the \$23 million in total funds raised so far to move into a larger, "green" building to open in September, Warnock said. The renovated building will allow 425 more students to attend the academy next school year, nearly a 100 percent increase. The 2.5-mile move will also allow 60 percent of students to walk to school, instead of the 5 percent that are able to work in the current location.

A study released on Tuesday by the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools ranked Maryland's charter school laws the lowest in the nation for the second year in a row. Eight states do not have charter school laws and were not ranked.

"We find that more often than not local school boards aren't supportive of charters, and sometimes they're downright hostile," said Todd Ziebarth, National Alliance for

Public Charter Schools senior vice president for state advocacy and support. "They think they're losing the money that's attached to those students. But at the end of the day, if public schools and charter schools are cooperating, it's better for a community. The intent is long term. It's an economic boost to the community, not a drain."

Kerwin agreed. "There's so much emphasis and energy put on the inputs that overshadow the ways charter schools create great outcomes," she said.

But a panel presentation by the Maryland State Department of Education to the Senate's Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee on Jan. 22 raised some questions on the success of charter schools in Maryland.

Numbers in the department of education's report reflecting success rates for charter schools excluded statistics from 11 Maryland charter schools that had been shut down.

The first and only bill the legislature has seen thus far on the topic this year calls for the es-

tablishment of a public charter school program in Frederick County governed by an independent charter school board, with members elected by the county council. Charter school teachers in Frederick County would also be exempt from performance evaluation criteria determined by the state.

It was proposed and presented by Secretary of the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation Kelly Schulz, before she resigned her seat as a Republican delegate from Frederick and Carroll.

The bill has had little traction since it was first presented to the House Ways and Means Committee, said Vice Chairman Frank S. Turner, D-Howard, but with so many new members, it's hard to know which way the committee will lean.

Turner, however, has his mind made up.

"Any time we use money for charter schools — whether direct or indirect — that's less money that goes to public schools," he said. "My feeling is that what we need to do is strengthen the public school system."

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# COMMENTARY

## Barbara A. Mikulski

United States Senator for Maryland



### Mikulski Announces Social Security Administration to reverse Cuts to Field Offices Helping 900,000 Marylanders

Announcement follows increased funding Senator Mikulski fought to include for agency in FY14 and FY15 government funding bills, keeping 63,000 Social Security employees on the job

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, today announced that the Social Security Administration (SSA) is reversing cuts to field office hours. This reverse will keep employees on the job at approximately 1,250 field offices nationwide, including at 23 field offices in Maryland. This change will help the 60 million Americans, including 900,000 in Maryland, that rely on Social Security to better access the benefits they've earned.

"I'm proud to announce that beginning in March, the Social Security Administration is reversing cuts to field office hours, helping millions of seniors and families to better access the benefits they've earned," Senator Mikulski said. "I've fought tooth and nail to preserve Social Security as a critical benefit that's reliable, guaranteed and inflation-proof. Longer hours means more Social Security employees will be on the job to help people sign up for retirement or disability benefits and sort out confusion and concerns. For the 900,000 Marylanders who rely on the promise of Social Security, our promises made are promises kept."

In a letter (available here) to Senator Mikulski praising her commitment to the Social Security Administration, the agency announced

that beginning on March 16, Social Security field offices across the country will remain open for business from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. This increase in field office hours reverses a cut that began in 2011 where offices remained open only through 3:00 p.m. In 2013, over 40 million people came to an SSA field office. Forty-seven million people called its 1-800 number. Five million came for their retirement benefits and 2.8 million came for their disability benefits.

As then-Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Mikulski has continued to fight to increase funding for the SSA. In the fiscal year (FY) 2014 Omnibus spending bill, Senator Mikulski fought to increase funding for the agency by \$651 million. In the recently-passed Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015, Senator Mikulski fought to provide an additional \$109 million increase for the agency. The FY 2015 law also includes report language Senator Mikulski added directing SSA to get public input before eliminating field offices, and to keep paper documents available at field offices, which many beneficiaries rely on.

The Social Security Administration employs 63,000 individuals, including 11,000 at the headquarters in Woodlawn, Maryland.



PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIMEDIA: COURTESY TOMF688

#### UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND COLLEGE PARK

The University of Maryland, College Park (often referred to as The University of Maryland, Maryland, UMD, or UMCP) is a public research university located in the city of College Park in Prince George's County, Maryland, approximately 8 miles from Washington, D.C. Founded in 1856, the University of Maryland is the flagship institution of the University System of Maryland. It is considered a Public Ivy institution, meaning it is a public university with a quality of education comparable to those of the private Ivy League.

## Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



### How to End Child Poverty for 60 Percent of Poor Children and 72 Percent of All Poor Black Children Today

Poverty hurts children and our nation's future. This stark statement is backed by years of scientific research and the more we learn about the brain and its development the more devastatingly true we know this to be. Childhood poverty can and does scar children for life. Yet in the largest economy on earth we stand by as 14.7 million languish in poverty. Here's a snapshot of who our poor children are today:

- Every other baby is a child of color. And 1 in 2 Black babies is poor — the poorest child in America.
- 1 in 3 Hispanic children under 5 is poor during their years of rapid brain development.
- More than 1 in 4 urban children and nearly 1 in 4 rural children is poor.
- 1 in 5 of all children in America is poor—14.7 million children.
- 1 in 6 Black children is extremely poor living on less than \$8 a day.
- 1 in 7 Hispanic children under five is extremely poor.
- 1 in 8 Hispanic children is poor.
- Less than 1 in 9 White children is poor; 4.1 million children.

A child of color is more than twice as likely to be poor as a White child. Of the 14.7 million children living beneath the poverty line in 2013, defined as a family of four living on less than \$23,834 a year, or \$16.25 a person a day, over 40 percent lived in extreme poverty on less than \$11,917 a year, half the poverty line — barely \$8 a person a day.

The 14.7 million poor children in America exceeds the populations of 12 U.S. states combined: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Maine, Montana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, West Virginia and Wyoming and is greater than the populations of Sweden and Costa Rica combined.

Our nearly 6.5 million extremely poor children exceeds the combined populations of Delaware, Montana, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont and Wyoming

and is greater than the populations of Denmark or Finland.

It is a national disgrace that so many poor children live in the United States of America — the world's richest economy. It doesn't have to be this way. It's costly. And it's the greatest threat to our future national, economic, and military security.

The Children's Defense Fund has just released a groundbreaking report called Ending Child Poverty Now showing for the first time how America could end child poverty, as defined by the Supplemental Poverty measure, for 60 percent of all poor children and 72 percent of all poor Black children. We can make this happen by investing another 2 percent of the federal budget to improve existing programs and policies that increase parental employment, make work pay, and ensure children's basic needs are met. Poverty for children under 3 and children in single parent households would drop 64 percent and 97 percent of all poor children would experience improvements in their economic circumstances.

CDF contracted with the non-partisan, independent Urban In-

stitute to generate real numbers on the costs to implement improvements to existing policies and programs and the number of children who would benefit. CDF's report shows how relatively modest changes in policies we know work can be combined to significantly reduce child poverty, and implemented right now if our political leaders put common good, common sense and economic sense for children first to improve the lives and futures of millions of children, and save taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars each year.

CDF's report estimates a cost of \$77.2 billion a year for the combined proposed policy improvements and suggests multiple tradeoffs our country can make to pay for this huge, long overdue and urgently needed reduction in child poverty without raising the federal deficit including:

- Closing tax loopholes that let U.S. corporations avoid \$90 billion annually in federal income taxes by shifting profits to

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## Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



### Super Bowl Rematch Needed — Tackling the Noise Before (and After) the Big Game

"Every setback has a major comeback. #GreaterIsComing."

— Russell Wilson, Seattle Seahawks Quarterback, via Twitter (@DangeRussWilson)

Far be it from me to join the legions of Monday morning quarterbacks for a game that has been, and will be, dissected for days, weeks and years to come. But whatever one may think of the outcome of the Seattle Seahawks' decision to have QB Russell Wilson throw from the 1-yard line in Super Bowl XLIX's nail-biting, final seconds, it accomplished something more than sealing the fates of two championship teams. It shifted our attention from "DeflateGate" and pre-game sniffles to Wilson — where arguably much of the focus before the big game should have been considering that this 26-year-old from Richmond, Virginia stood on the precipice of both NFL and American history.

Initially tapped by the Seahawks as a 2012 third round draft pick, Wilson, with the presumed limitation of his 5-foot-11 inch frame, was an underrated prospect and an undervalued entity. However, he emerged from his first season as the 2012 NFL Rookie of the Year — with his 26 touchdown passes tying the NFL's single season record by a rookie set in 1998 by Peyton Manning and the Seahawks 8-0 record at home making Wilson the first rookie quarterback in the Super Bowl era to lead his team to an undefeated home record. By the 2013-14 season — only his second in the NFL, Wilson had led the Seahawks to the team's first-ever Super Bowl victory, making him only the second African American quarterback to win a Super Bowl (Doug Williams was the first in 1988) and cementing his standing as a new force in the NFL.

So, with a media landscape as vast and varied as ours, why was this story drowned out by so much less-worthy noise in the days leading to the Super Bowl?

Whether you prefer to call it "DeflateGate" or "Ballghazi," the allegation of underinflated balls is a serious one for the NFL to investigate. The act itself strikes at the very heart of the game and its ob-

ligation to fairness. But for a nation known for its love of feel-good, inspirational stories, putting a spotlight on Wilson's history-making rise could have been a reminder that cheating allegations do not define the pastime — and that "nice guys" are champions too. However, as many media chose to not focus on this angle, in the few words that I have here, I will.

Of course, there is more to Wilson than his prowess on the field. Last year, he launched "Pass the Peace," an initiative to raise awareness and money for victims of domestic violence through his "Why Not You Foundation." In an environment where the NFL remains under a cloud of scandal after a number of high-profile abuse cases, the story of Wilson's effort to help combat this insidious problem should be able to generate as much press interest as Marshawn Lynch's media stand-off or Patriots' QB Tom Brady's pre-Super Bowl cold.

If history had been on the side of the Seahawks, the national conversation the morning after the NFL's biggest game would have been about Wilson being the youngest starting quarterback ever to win two Super Bowls, the only one to win two Super Bowls in his first three seasons and the only Black quarterback to have more than one Super Bowl ring. Instead, many people are discussing an ill-fated pass that Wilson refuses to become his lasting legacy. Making his feelings clear on his Twitter account, he responded that "At 26 years old I won't allow 1 play or 1 moment define my career. I will keep evolving. #Motivation."

When Wilson was a teenager, his father, who died in 2010 from diabetes complications, would conduct mock interviews with him, asking him how he prepared for an imaginary Super Bowl in the future. This wasn't his first Super Bowl run — and I have a strong feeling it will not be his last. I believe Wilson will rise above the noise of the NFL and the media's silence both on-and-off-the-field and continue to make history.

The final-minute interception snatched a hard-fought victory from the Seahawks, but if Wilson's story speaks to us in volumes about anything, it tells us that defeat will never have the last word in his game called life.

## The Prince George's Post

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# OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S  
IN THE DARK

## Movie Review

### “American Sniper?”

*American Sniper*  
Grade: C+  
Rated R, pervasive harsh  
profanity, some disturbing  
war violence  
2 hrs., 12 min

There are a few moments in *American Sniper* when it looks like the movie is going to start examining the psychological impact of being the deadliest military sniper in U.S. history. So much killing, even justified killing, the kind that saves your fellow soldiers — that must weigh on a person, right?

We've followed Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper), a swaggeringly patriotic Texas meathead, as he's distinguished himself among Navy SEALs as the best marksman in Iraq, both in quantity and quality, saving untold American lives one headshot at a time. His cohorts call him “The Legend,” which must produce conflicting emotions. We know he leaves behind a wife, Taya (Sienna Miller), and a growing family every time he re-ups for another tour. We can't help but wonder what effect all of this has on him.

And then, curiously, every time it seems like we're moving into that portion of Kyle's story, the movie flees introspection and gets back to the important work of showing how good Kyle is at his job. Back in the States, he reacts with alarm to a sound that reminds him of gunfire — but nope, no, he's fine. Never mind. A fellow veteran mentions how messed up some guys are when they come back; Kyle hems and haws for a second, then ends the conversation. Nothing to worry about. He misreads a harmless situation as dangerous, overreacts, chats with a doctor at the V.A. hospital for a minute, and then he's good to go. Taya delivers a predictable line — “Even when you're here, you're not here!” — and then, later on, says something about how proud she is of how



From director Clint Eastwood comes “American Sniper,” starring Bradley Cooper as Chris Kyle, the most lethal sniper in U.S. military history. But there was much more to this true American hero than his skill with a rifle. U.S. Navy SEAL sniper Chris Kyle is sent to Iraq with only one mission: to protect his brothers-in-arms. His pinpoint accuracy saves countless lives on the battlefield and, as stories of his courageous exploits spread, he earns the nickname “Legend.” However, his reputation is also growing behind enemy lines, putting a price on his head and making him a prime target of insurgents. Despite the danger, as well as the toll on his family at home, Chris serves through four harrowing tours of duty in Iraq, becoming emblematic of the SEAL creed to “leave no man behind.” But upon returning home, Chris finds that it is the war he can't leave behind. (C) Warner Bros

far he's come. Wait, when did THAT happen?

*American Sniper*, based on Kyle's book and directed with dogged perfunctoriness by Clint Eastwood, is basically *The Hurt Locker* with all the nuance and self-examination removed. What's left — a series of high-tension war anecdotes — is often riveting, and well edited (by Eastwood regulars Joel Cox and Gary Roach) for maximum sweaty-palms effect. Cooper's performance, more intense than we've seen him do before, is solid and as thoughtful as the surface-level screenplay allows.

For a while, that's good enough. Perhaps to hide the fact that there's no real through line, the script (by Jason Hall) hopscotches through time, showing Kyle's upbringing (his dad:

“You're blessed with the gift of aggression”), his love of hunting, his eagerness to serve his country after 9/11. He pals around with a series of soldiers, engaging in camaraderie, talking about their fiancées moments before being shot, that sort of thing.

But in the back of our minds, we know there's got to be more to Chris Kyle — more to the movie — than this. I said before that we can't help but wonder how his experiences are affecting him. Part of the reason we wonder is that we can't imagine where else the movie is going to go if not there. No other threads have been introduced, no subplots that could potentially lead the story in an unexpected direction.

And so when the movie ends without Kyle really struggling, or even examining himself be-

yond a few cursory glances ... well, why did we watch it, then? What message are we supposed to get out of it? That being a sniper is dangerous, intense, and exciting, but doesn't really have any significant downsides as long as you're great at it? Never mind whether this superficiality makes the movie reckless, it makes the movie pointless.

This blithe disinterest in going beneath the surface extends throughout the film. The soldiers constantly refer to Iraqis as “savages” while their own actions are unquestioned — and the film never presents a counterpoint to either point of view, to suggest that maybe some Iraqis are OK, or that there might be shades of gray in the war. Eastwood's view is adamantly black-and-white. And that makes for dull drama.

## USDA Provides Greater Protection for Fruit, Vegetable and Other Specialty Crop Growers

By PRESS OFFICER  
USDA

WASHINGTON, — Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that greater protection is now available from the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program for crops that traditionally have been ineligible for federal crop insurance. The new options, created by the 2014 Farm Bill, provide greater coverage for losses when natural disasters affect specialty crops such as vegetables, fruits, mushrooms, floriculture, ornamental nursery, aquaculture, turf grass, ginseng, honey, syrup, and energy crops.

“These new protections will help ensure that farm families growing crops for food, fiber or livestock consumption will be better able to withstand losses due to natural disasters,” said Vilsack. “For years, commodity crop farmers have had the ability to purchase insurance to keep their crops protected, and it only makes sense that fruit and vegetable, and other specialty crop growers, should be able to purchase similar levels of protection. Ensuring these farmers can adequately protect themselves

from factors beyond their control is also critical for consumers who enjoy these products and for communities whose economies depend on them.”

Previously, the program offered coverage at 55 percent of the average market price for crop losses that exceed 50 percent of expected production. Producers can now choose higher levels of coverage, up to 65 percent of their expected production at 100 percent of the average market price.

The expanded protection will be especially helpful to beginning and traditionally underserved producers, as well as farmers with limited resources, who will receive fee waivers and premium reductions for expanded coverage. More crops are now eligible for the program, including expanded aquaculture production practices, and sweet and biomass sorghum. For the first time, a range of crops used to produce bioenergy will be eligible as well.

“If America is to remain food secure and continue exporting food to the world, we need to do everything we can to help new farmers get started and succeed in agriculture,” Vilsack said.

“This program will help new and socially disadvantaged farmers affordably manage risk, making farming a much more attractive business proposition.”

To help producers learn more about the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program and how it can help them, USDA, in partnership with Michigan State University and the University of Illinois, created an online resource. The Web tool, available at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap), allows producers to determine whether their crops are eligible for coverage. It also gives them an opportunity to explore a variety of options and levels to determine the best protection level for their operation.

If the application deadline for an eligible crop has already passed, producers will have until Jan. 14, 2015, to choose expanded coverage through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. To learn more, visit the Farm Service Agency (FSA) website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/nap](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/nap) or contact your local FSA office at [offices.usda.gov](mailto:offices.usda.gov). The Farm Service Agency (FSA), which administers the program, also

wants to hear from producers and other interested stakeholders who may have suggestions or recommendations on the program. Written comments will be accepted until Feb. 13, 2015 and can be submitted through [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov).

These new provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program were made possible through the 2014 Farm Bill, which builds on historic economic gains in rural America over the past five years, while achieving meaningful reform and billions of dollars in savings for the taxpayer. Since enactment, USDA has made significant progress to implement each provision of this critical legislation, including providing disaster relief to farmers and ranchers; strengthening risk management tools; expanding access to rural credit; funding critical research; establishing innovative public-private conservation partnerships; developing new markets for rural-made products; and investing in infrastructure, housing and community facilities to help improve quality of life in rural America. For more information, visit [www.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.usda.gov/farmbill).

## The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

### Why All Opponents of Gentrification and Police Militarization Should Oppose the DC 2024 Olympic Bid

When Muriel Bowser was sworn in last Friday as the new mayor of Washington, DC, she made clear in her inaugural address outlining her vision for the future of the city that a major goal of hers was “winning the Olympics for Washington, DC, in 2024.” This reveals a set of priorities that are deeply disturbing.

The Olympics, time and again according to a slew of academic research, have revealed themselves to be defined by debt, displacement, and the militarization of public space alongside attendant spikes in police brutality.

In the Washington, DC area, debt, displacement, the militarization of public space and police brutality are otherwise known as “a Wednesday.” But with the Olympics these processes are always accelerated and intensified, making this a proposal from Mayor Bowser that'll careen the city toward a precarious future for its most vulnerable residents. The Olympic Games inevitably induce a state of exception where the normal rules of politics do not apply.

For a city already experiencing gentrification at gunpoint, with a conspicuously parked police van for every new bistro in town, the prospect of hosting the Olympics should be terrifying. As Daniel del Pielago who is an organizer with a leading, deeply rooted community organization called Empower DC said to us, “We know that hosting the Olympics is yet another tool to push out Black and low-income residents from DC. We continue to see our so called leaders prioritizing events and stadiums over the lives of the city's most vulnerable residents.”

Washington, DC sits on the United States Olympic Committee's shortlist of candidates to host the 2024 Summer Games, along with Boston, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Last month the cities' bid committees convened in Redwood City, California where they pitched their shiniest presentations to the USOC. DC's five-person contingent included high-powered banker Russ Ramsey and billionaire Wizards and Capitals owner Ted Leonsis—as well as Mayor-Elect Bowser, Olympic gold-medal-winning swimmer Katie Ledecky, and former NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue.

The USOC, which is only allowed to put one city forward to the International Olympic Committee, will make its decision perhaps as early as this week. The IOC, in turn, will pick the host city for the 2024 Summer Games in 2017, giving the “winner” seven years to prepare. Along with Los Angeles, Washington, DC has emerged as a leading contender. Meanwhile in Boston and San Francisco, activists have spoken loudly and clearly that the USOC can take their Games and shove them. Activist action absolutely matters as the IOC always factors in local support when selecting the Olympic host city.

DC's neoliberal privatization project, with lower-income black and brown residents pushed to impoverished suburban enclaves, has met with community resistance by organizations like Empower DC, One DC, and others. The Olympics would provide a pretext to roll over both community organizers and a new generation of activists speaking out against connected issues of displacement and police brutality, like a tank. Based upon what we've seen during the Brazilian World Cup and Olympic preparation in Rio, not to mention Ferguson, it might even be with an actual tank.

While Olympic boosters are claiming the Games will cost between \$4 and \$5 billion, this is about as realistic as someone running a two-minute mile. Every single Olympics since 1960 has gone over-budget, and at a whopping average rate of 179%—and that number doesn't even factor in the greatest heist of them all, the \$51 billion Sochi Winter Olympics in 2014.

So who is the DC2024 Games committee? The group's chair is multi-millionaire investment banker Russ Ramsey with Wizards and Capitals billionaire owner Ted Leonsis acting as Vice Chair. They've already raised \$5 million to push their bid. Ramsey and Leonsis are joined by a quirky hodgepodge of venture capitalists and local powerbrokers, including celebrity chef José Andrés, Washington Mystics President Sheila Johnson, and former DC Mayor, the person who ushered in the city's age of gentrification, the famously bowtied Anthony Williams.

Williams recently wrote in the Washington Post that hosting the Games would give DC an “economic lift.” Contradicting a strong and growing body of economic research that finds the exact opposite, he argued, “Bringing the Olympic and Paralympic Games to Washington—literally hosting the world would boost the whole region but particularly some of the places in our city that need it the most.” Meanwhile, as Holy Cross economics professor Robert Baumann has asserted about mega-events like the Olympics, “There is no economic rationale to host one of these things.”

Yet this hasn't stopped politicians from across the ideological spectrum from supporting DC's five-ring escapade. The bipartisan bedfellows pushing for this project are on the face, bizarre. Linking arms, we have new DC Mayor Bowser, Tea Party darling Jason Chaffetz, the incoming

## Calendar of Events

February 12 — February 18, 2015

### Exhibit: Black Artists of DC

Date and Time: Exhibit is ongoing until March 13, 2015  
Description: Established in 1999, Black Artists of DC is comprised of artists at all stages of development. The work spans all media, subject matter, and style. Membership is inclusive of age, gender and ethnicity. The links between the artists is their African descent, love of art, a commitment to people, and an intuitive understanding that there can be a profoundly nurturing bond between artists of African descent through the Diaspora.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Publick Playhouse  
5445 Landover Rd, Cheverly 20784  
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

### Barnstorming Bess

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 3 pm & 7 pm  
Description: Bessie Coleman broke down barriers in 1921 as the first African-American woman to earn a pilot's license. Dressed in an authentic bomber's jacket, boots and scarf, Dr. Daisy Century as Bessie Coleman will provide an exciting portrayal of a beautiful, determined woman, who knew what she wanted and made it happen.  
Cost: \$7/person  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: College Park Aviation Museum  
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park  
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

### Xtreme Teens: Friday the 13th

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 7-10 pm  
Description: Teens will have a frightful night of fun with scary movies at the Center and popcorn, of course.  
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID  
Ages: 10-17  
Location: Bladensburg Community Center  
4500 57th Avenue, Bladensburg 20710  
Contact: 301-277-2124; TTY 301-445-4512

### Black History Program: Lessons from Liberia

Date and Time: Friday, February 13, 2015 10 am-12 noon  
Description: Kids come to learn "Lessons from Liberia"! The morning will feature presentations from other community centers, and fascinating facts about the culture and food of Liberia.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: 3-12  
Location: Harmony Hall Regional Center  
10701 Livingston Road, Fort Washington 20744  
Contact: 301-203-6040; TTY 301-203-6030

### Chocolate Lovers Tea

Date and Time: Saturday, February 14, 2014 1:30 pm  
Description: At this tea, you'll enjoy a prix fixe menu of fine finger sandwiches, scrumptious cakes and pastries, buttery scones, and your choice of two quality loose leaf teas. The assorted pastries will all be served on china and tiered stands. We'll have plenty of chocolate — taste it in all forms and learn the history. Price includes gratuity and self-guided tour of the mansion. Reservations and advance payment required.  
Cost: \$29/person; \$25/members of Friends of Montpelier  
Ages: 18 & up  
Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site  
9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD  
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2455  
montpeliermansion@pgparks.com

### Xtreme Teens: Valentine's Day Sock Hop

Date and Time: Saturday February 14, 2015 7-10 pm  
Description: Celebrate Valentine's Day with your Xtreme Teens family. Bring a friend, dance to the music and participate in special games and arts and crafts.  
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

### Girl Scout Day

Date and Time: Sunday, February 15, 2015 11 am-2 pm  
Description: Girl Scouts are invited to explore women's roles in the history of aviation and to learn about the science of flight through a variety of activities. Each activity that they complete will count towards badge and journey requirements. Please call the museum in advance to register.  
Cost: \$4 per person  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: College Park Aviation Museum  
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park 20740  
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

### Carnival Zumba Party

Date & Time: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 7-8:30 pm  
Description: Are you ready for a carnival zumba party? Come dressed in bright carnival attire and get ready to dance with Stacey to the Caribbean rhythms. Dress your best, because we'll award a prize for best costume.  
Cost: Resident: \$7; Non-Resident: \$9  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Southern Technical/Recreation Complex  
7007 Bock Road, Fort Washington 20744  
Contact: 301-749-4160; TTY 301-203-6030

### The Great Performers of the Chitlin' Circuit

Date & Time: Thursday, February 19, 2015 6:30-8:30 pm  
Description: When Jim Crow laws were prevalent in the United States, the negro race did not have equal access to public, "White Only" places. The Chitlin' Circuit emerged as a connected string of music venues, diner, juke joints and theaters that catered primarily to African American audiences. Tonight, we'll revel in the era with "An Evening with Pam Ward." Light refreshments will be served.  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All ages welcome  
Location: Prince George's Ballroom  
2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover 20785  
Contact: 301-341-7439; TTY 301-446-6802

## EARTH TALK ... What Fish Can We Eat

Dear EarthTalk:

What are some basic guidelines about seafood consumption, especially for women and in light of all the pollution threats to our oceans and waterways?

— Betsy Draper,  
Boston, MA

Between mercury poisoning, overfishing and the environmental impacts of fish farms or "aquaculture," some might expect to see a "Proceed with Caution" sign above seafood counters soon. Others contend that fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet, providing high-quality protein and omega-3 fatty acids. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends eating up to 12 ounces of fish and shellfish per week, but only if they are "lower in mercury."

Mercury can be released into the air through industrial pollution and can accumulate in streams and oceans. The FDA warns that if you regularly eat types of fish that are high in mercury, it can accumulate in your blood stream. They add that mercury is removed from the body naturally, but it may take over a year for levels to drop significantly. For this reason, women trying to become pregnant should avoid eating high-in-mercury fish like shark,

swordfish, king mackerel and tilefish, and gravitate toward low-in-mercury shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, pollock and catfish. According to the Monterey Bay Aquarium's "Super Green List," fish that are low in mercury and also good sources of especially healthy "long-chain" omega-3 fatty acids include Atlantic mackerel from Canada and the U.S., freshwater Coho salmon from the U.S., wild-caught Pacific sardines and Alaskan wild-caught salmon (fresh or canned).

Of course, it's possible to obtain long-chain omega-3s without eating fish. Omega-3s supplement is derived from a strain of algae that naturally produces high amounts of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), the healthiest omega-3s. Although most people think fish are the original source of DHA and EPA, these omega-3s actually come from the algae lower in the food chain.

"When salmon farming began in North America, farmers discovered that without fish oil in their diet, farmed salmon did not contain salmon oil in their tissues," says Udo Erasmus, Ph.D., author of *Fats that Heal, Fats that Kill*. "Fish get their 'fish oil' from the foods they eat. When we trace these supplement oils back to their origin, we find that the oils we call 'fish oils' are actually made by plants at



CREDIT: RODDY SHEER

**Wild salmon, high in "long chain" omega-3s, is one of the healthiest foods we can eat.**

the bottom of the food chain. One-celled red-brown algae makes fish oils. Fish oils are actually plant-based products."

Algae and other plant-based omega fatty acids also will not deplete the ocean's supply of fish. Industrial overfishing practices have wiped out certain types of fish before they've had a chance to repopulate, and unintentionally killed other marine species besides fish—known as "bycatch"—in their large nets. Upwards of one million sea turtles, for example, were estimated to have been killed as bycatch from 1990-2008, according to a report published in *Conservation Letters* in 2010. The transition to aquaculture, where fish are raised in confined quarters (like the "factory farming" of pigs,

cows and chickens) has its own environmental burdens. According to the Mangrove Action Project, an estimated three million hectares of important coastal wetlands, including mangroves, have already been lost in order to make room for artificial shrimp ponds.

CONTACTS: FDA, [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov); Seafood Watch, [www.seafoodwatch.org](http://www.seafoodwatch.org); Omega, [www.omega.com](http://www.omega.com).

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### Sports from A6

chair of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which oversees DC affairs, as well as Newt Gingrich, Howard Dean, and Bob Dole. They appear in a short, slickly produced video along with liberal demigods John Lewis and Eleanor Holmes-Norton. The DC2024 committee not only puts the faces of two civil rights icons at the center of their PR push, but it also slakes people's thirst to see Republicans and Democrats working together on anything. This messaging is a product of the combined efforts of President Obama's re-election guru Jim Messina and Mitt Romney's campaign manager Matt Rhoades who have combined forces—and funds—to push the bid.

It's certainly understandable why people would want to see politicians working together on anything in this town. No doubt some of these folks see the Olympics as a way to show off the city to a global audience. But we should not be led astray by this idiosyncratic band of believers. The price to everyday people living, breathing, and being pushed out of the city would be horrific. Bowser's remarks in making their pitch to the United States Olympic Committee should be particularly chilling. She said, "We're used to putting on national security events; we can move the people; we have a lot of existing facilities and infrastructure. We put on a good case for D.C. being the American city." In other words, we know how to carry out a crackdown.

We can thank Ted Leonsis for laying bare the logic that drives Games boosters. He said in 2011 that "Economic Success has somehow become the new boogie man...This is counter to the American Dream

and is really turning off so many people that love American and basically carry our country on their back by paying taxes and by employing people and creating GDP." This gets the Olympics argument perfectly. John Carlos, the 1968 Olympian once said to us that "They only hold the Olympics every four years because it takes four years to count the money." In other words, the Olympics will surely bring in money, but for whom? In Leonsis' mind, it's money for him and there is nothing wrong with that because he thinks it's his class of people that are "carrying the country, employing people and creating GDP." In other words, what's good for Ted Leonsis is what's good for Washington, DC...even though he lives in an eight-million dollar home on the Potomac River in Maryland.

Leonsis has blended trickle-down economics with dime-store bloviating. Instead of making the positive case for the Games he has instead chosen to bluster: "This is about bringing the world to Washington and bringing Washington to the world. The idea of fostering unity could leave, for the whole of mankind, the greatest Olympics legacy ever. Only Washington could do this."

As is always the case when the Olympics come to town, the foul stench of land grabbing pervades this project. A George Washington University professor recently stated about the area along the Anacostia River: "It's very similar to the London setup...It's a plot of land that's been kind of wasteland, and people said, 'We want to develop that because it's on the water.' Just like Sydney, where they developed that waterfront land, it's there for the taking."

This brazen land snatching is also symbolized by the proposed site of the Olympic Vil-

lage, the place where the athletes stay during the Games. DC2024 has reportedly suggested building the Village in Hill East, an area to the south of RFK Stadium that is the current location of the DC General homeless shelter. The Washington Post wrote, "Housing built there for athletes could then help alleviate the city's affordable housing shortage." Yet similar promises that the Olympic Village would magically turn into high quality, low-income housing has been made in seemingly every Olympics in history and it never happens. One can practically imagine the officials of ancient Greece swearing that the Temple of Zeus would become quality multi-family dwellings after the last race. For the London 2012 Olympics, the Olympic Village was sold at a taxpayer loss to Qatar's ruling Al Thani family's realty company. "Affordable" homes in Olympic Park rent for \$2,000 to \$2,700 per month. And let's not lose sight of the fact that DC2024 are saying nonchalantly that a homeless shelter will be destroyed for the Olympics.

Longtime DC movement leader Reverend Graylan Hagler got it exactly right when he told us, "The obsession that develops to accommodate the Games in local communities has always had a dramatic effect upon the poor. The poor are always displaced, and the homeless are removed from the city where the Olympics occur because the powers to be want to sanitize the venue so that those venues become artificial and deceptive places to enjoy the Games." He pointed to Atlanta, the last US city to host the Summer Games back in 1996, where homeless people we're scooped up and booted from the city in order "to create a superficial and untruthful story of Atlanta's pros-

perity." Reverend Hagler added, "We need jobs and affordable housing for poor and working class people in Washington DC, better schools and political leaders who advocate for and protect poor and working class people."

Dominic Moulden, resource organizer at ONE DC, a grassroots community-building group, told us he was approached to sign on in support of the DC2024 Games, but emphatically declined. Moulden, who has organized in DC for nearly three decades, asked, "Why would any organization promoting racial and economic equity in DC support the Olympics which clearly creates lasting inequity and maintains the structures of social dislocation?" He vowed, "ONE DC will organize, protest, and raise our resident-led voices against the displacement and policing of long time DC residents and all residents if there are plans for the Olympics in DC."

In November 2014, the Washington Post reported that DC2024 honchos "took members of the U.S. Olympic Committee on helicopter rides over the Mall and the Anacostia River to show off the city." Nothing could be more appropriate in symbolizing this bid. From a helicopter, it's a grand idea. From the street, it's a cash grab. It's using sports, civic pride, and people's thirst to see something — anything — bipartisan come out of this town, into a smash-and-grab operation that will remake the city for the benefit of the people Leonsis believes "carry the country on their back." This orgy of corporate welfare they propose reveals that it's actually Leonsis, Ramsey, and their ilk who are being carried. If the Olympics come to DC, it will be schools, social services for the poor, and anyone affected by police violence who will suffer under that weight.

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