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Council Approves Legislation Banning the Use of Coal Tar Products in PG County

Council Bill 6-2015, Legislation Aimed at Improving Public Health and Restoring Waterways.

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Council

The Prince George's County Council, during Council session on Tuesday, April 21, unanimously approved Council Bill 6-2015, legislation prohibiting the sale and use of coal tar pavement products in Prince George's County.

Coal tar pavement products are applied to asphalt and concrete to seal and protect parking lots, driveways, recreational trails, airport runways and playgrounds from sunlight, water, debris, chemical spills and leaks.

United States Geological Survey studies have identified coal tar based sealcoat as a major source of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) contamination. Several PAHs are suspected human carcinogens and toxic to aquatic life.

Council Members Mary Lehman (D) — District 1 and Deni Taveras (D) — District 2, proposed CB-6-2015 to directly address the dangerously high levels of PAHs in coal tar products, known to have harmful effects on humans and aquatic life.

See **COAL TAR** Page A7

PG County Executive Baker Conducting Conversations Regarding PGCPs Investment Plan

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Government

Upper Marlboro, MD - Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III is currently conducting a series of conversations and meetings throughout the County regarding his proposed Prince George's County FY 2016 Budget that includes an additional \$133 million dollar investment plan in the Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) through in-

creases in the residential property tax, personal property tax, and telecommunications tax.

All of these conversations will be streamed live at <https://livestream.com/accounts/5817366/events/3968618> and posted online on www.princegeorgescountymd.gov following the event. County Executive Baker conducted his first conversation with residents this past Tues-

See **INVESTMENT** Page A5



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JAMES LEVIN

Jason Lambertson, 42, stands in front of three anaerobic digesters designed to capture methane gas produced by burning poultry waste from his farm in Pocomoke City, Maryland.

Not Just Chicken Poop: Farmer Leads Effort to Convert Poultry Waste to Energy

By KATELYN NEWMAN
Capital News Service

POCOMOKE CITY, Maryland -- On an overcast Friday morning, Jason Lambertson goes through one door, then another, and peers across a long, warm, dusky room at the 80,000 teenagers whose poop the state expects him to clean up.

Granted, the teenagers are young chickens, owned and cared for on Millennium

Farms for the Tyson Food Co. And as the sulfuric aroma of their waste rises out of the chicken house, Lambertson said he is determined to make the birds' manure usable on his fields despite new state regulations that limit the practice.

"There's no cost in the manure itself to us, but it's a huge liability if we can't use it on the fields," Lambertson said. "There's some transportation programs, but the problem is they transport it

up to Pennsylvania, they use it up there -- where's it end up? Right back down here in the Bay."

In Pocomoke City, Lambertson's farm is expected to show how anaerobic digesters can provide a renewable alternative energy source on the Eastern Shore and solve the Chesapeake Bay's agricultural nutrient pollution problem from its very source -- chicken waste.

"For me, and my son (who) is going to farm — I already

know that's what he wants to do — and for the long term for our families, we want to make sure that the agricultural community stays viable, and that's why this even makes more sense for us," he said.

Located in Worcester County -- ranked second in the state and 13th in the country in 2012 for its poultry livestock production -- Millennium Farms' 2014 waste-to-

See **ENERGY** Page A3

Council Approves Legislation Prohibiting the Use of Styrofoam Food Service Products

By PRESS OFFICER
PG County Council

The Prince George's County Council, during Council session on Tuesday, April 28, approved Council Bill 5-2015, legislation prohibiting the sale and use of certain polystyrene products, commonly known as Styrofoam, in Prince George's County.

Under the legislation, Council Bill 5-2015 would prohibit the sale of certain expanded polystyrene food service products and loose fill packaging. The foam form of expanded polystyrene is commonly used to make disposable plates, hot and cold beverage cups, bowls and other items.

Council Members Mary Lehman (D) — District 1, Deni Taveras (D) — District 2 and Dannielle Glaros (D) — District 3, proposed CB-5-2015 in response to the adverse environmental impact of polystyrene in Prince George's County communities and on waterways.

"Trash pollution in our neighborhoods and rivers drives down property values,

burdens communities and deters economic development," said Council Member Lehman. "By passing this legislation, the Council sends a message that protecting our environment and natural resources is a legislative priority. The quality of our living environment directly impacts the quality of life for our residents."

"On Saturday, April 25, thousands of Prince Georgians demonstrated their commitment to our environment by volunteering for 'Clean Up Green Up,' Earth Day and Christmas in April," said Council Member Glaros. "This legislation will further those efforts by significantly decreasing the use of Styrofoam in our County and keeping it out of our streams where it causes great harm."

"The County Council is serious about promoting environmentally sustainable business practices," said Council Member Taveras. "From start to finish, we have listened to our small businesses and taken their concerns to heart. Eliminating Styrofoam packaging actually helps our small businesses re-



PHOTO COURTESY WIKIMEDIA COMMONS BY THOMAS YUAN

Siu mei with rice in a foam takeout container.

main competitive with larger chain operations."

The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that less than one percent of all polystyrene produced in the United States is recycled. Polystyrene is not commonly recycled because of food contamination concerns and its high volume to weight ratio, which complicates transportation of the material.

With the adoption of Council Bill 5-2015, Prince George's County joins Montgomery County and the District of Co-

lumbia in an expanded polystyrene ban, and greater protection of the Anacostia Watershed.

Council Bill 5-2015 is also supported by environmental groups:

"Requiring more healthy and environmentally-friendly alternatives to plastic foam products that cause tremendous problems for our com-

See **STYROFOAM** Page A3

M-NCPPC and Prince George's Suite Magazine Special Tribute Edition Honoring Wayne K. Curry

By PRESS OFFICER
MNCPPC

UPPER MARLBORO, MD. — Photos, images, interviews and other content from material produced by The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is featured prominently in Prince George's Suite magazines' special Spring 2015 tribute edition honoring the late Wayne K. Curry, Prince George's County's first African American County Executive.

This commemorative issue features more than 50 pages of images, interviews and commentary centered on the life, leadership and influence of the former County Executive. Past colleagues, family and friends also share their personal reflections on the daring leader.

"We are very happy to partner with Prince George's Suite magazine and provide them with many of the images and videos that honor such a phenomenal leader," said Elizabeth M. Hewlett, Chairman of The Maryland-National Capital Park

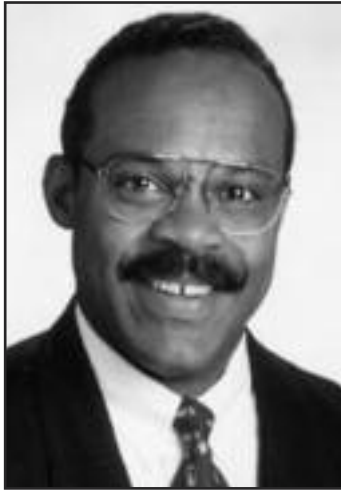


PHOTO COURTESY PG COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Wayne K. Curry

and Planning Commission and the Prince George's County Planning Board. "The Commission had the opportunity to honor Mr. Curry last year with two exhibits and a video presentation during our Black History Month Celebration. To now see that work displayed beauti-

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INSIDE

SINE DIE: Legislators Wrap up 2015 Maryland General Assembly

Motor vehicle-related incidents are consistently the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 36 percent of occupational fatalities are associated with motor vehicles.
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Thank God for Peanut Butter and Jelly—PB and J—Day

Motor vehicle-related incidents are consistently the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 36 percent of occupational fatalities are associated with motor vehicles.
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Mikulski Calls For Major Increase

in Federal Investments in Physical and Human Infrastructure of NIH

The bill modifies the budget to allow the Appropriations Committee to provide NIH with increasing resources over the six year period from FY 2016-2021, up to a total of \$45 billion in the final year of the Budget Control Act.
Business, Page A5
Movie Review: "Furious Seven"

The latest installment in the "Fast and the Furious" car-oriented soap opera franchise, starts with newly introduced British villain Deckard Shaw vowing to kill the entire Fast & Furious gang for almost killing his brother in the previous movie. Shaw then travels to L.A. to fight with government agent Hobbs.
Out on the Town, Page A6
Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

What are the prospects for reaching an international agreement to rein in carbon emissions significantly at the upcoming Paris climate talks at the end of the 2015?

— Jason Cervantes,
Los Angeles, CA

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Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

How the Suitland Civic Association came to be

At the turn of the last century, the village of Suitland had a general store, post office, churches and several houses. On August 10, 1909, a large number of Suitland residents met at the home of George J. Hess and organized the Suitland Improvement Association of Maryland, electing the following officers to serve one year: President Dr. C.M. Emmons, Vice President C.L. Jenkins, Secretary and Treasurer George J. Hess. Committees were appointed and some idea of what the association hoped to accomplish was outlined in a brief talk by Dr. Emmons. (This information comes from the association’s website.)

On Nov. 17, 1950, the Suitland Improvement Association was incorporated by the State Tax Commission. Later the name was changed to The Suitland Citizens Association and, since 2002, The Suitland Civic Association.

The association now meets at 7 p.m. the third Monday of the month (except July and August) at the Suitland Water Tower. Officers are President Karen Anderson, Vice President Samuel Cox, Recording Secretary Zunaira Khalid, Treasurer Carol Jones, Assistant Treasurer Shelby Austin, Corresponding Secretary Charlotte Williams and Financial Secretary Louise Thomas. Members of the Board of Trustees are Emory Givens, Kenneth Waddell and Willie Spikes.

Morningside VFD fire engine overturns

While responding to a building fire on April 25, at 11:57 p.m., a Morningside VFD fire engine rolled over at the intersection of Branch Avenue and Curtis Drive. Seven firefighters were taken to area hospitals with minor injuries and released a few hours later.

The Prince George’s County Fire and EMS Department owned the apparatus and replaced it with a reserve truck. So, Company 27 was back in operation. The accident is under investigation.

Neighbors

Katryna Fernandez and James Hicks, of Fort Washington, were married April 26 at National Harbor after winning a \$50,000 wedding in National Harbor’s Destination Wedding

Giveaway. They had met in college while playing Quidditch, the fictional, flying broomstick sport of the Harry Potter books. After a brief honeymoon, they are back in the classroom—both are special education teachers.

St. Philip’s Parish will celebrate Father Bernard Ihrle’s 60th anniversary as a priest on May 17 with Mass and a reception in the Parish Hall. Father Ihrle was pastor at St. Philip’s from 1983 to 1991 and stayed on as Senior Priest for several years.

150th Commemoration continues

I have been involved in events commemorating the 150th anniversary of the assassination of President Lincoln. On April 14 I was in the crowd at Ford’s Theatre and chatted with reenactors in town with grievances to take to President Lincoln and a reporter from New York here to cover the celebration of the end of the Civil War. Events were due to continue, covering the assassination and the death of Lincoln.

The weekend of April 18/19 saw me at the Dr. Mudd House in Charles County where thousands came to see The Assassin’s Doctor, a play written for the occasion; chat with Gen. Robert E. Lee and Civil War soldiers; tour Zekiah Swamp; and go through the House. On May 1, I took a Surratt House bus tour of more sites, including the restored office of Clara Barton on 7th Street NW and the courthouse at Fort McNair where the trial was held.

Changing landscape

All sorts of roadwork is going on in this greater area.

Most puzzling is what’s happening with the two Beltway overpasses on Suitland Road. Work crews have been treating the undersides so that cement won’t be falling onto cars, as happened several months ago. And now they’ve added rows of what look like wooden boxes all along the edges of the bridges.

Also new is work on Allentown Road. Looks to me like a new lane is being added for entrance to Andrews.

Due to begin April 27 is the State Highway Administration’s \$37 million Phase 2 Metro Access Project on Branch Avenue from Auth Way to south of the Beltway. Storm drains will be in-

stalled along Auth Way from Branch Avenue to Auth Place, followed by curbs, gutters and sidewalks. There will be lane closures. All is due for completion by late summer. For information, call SHA project engineer Andrew Young, 443-324-4909.

Richard Beall, 7th-generation Beall, dies at 69

Richard Traband Beall, of Berlin, Md., formerly of Suitland and Brandywine, and a 1964 graduate of Suitland High School, died April 23. He was 69 and had long suffered with multiple sclerosis.

He was born in Cheverly, son of Jean (Traband) and Granville Beall Sr., and was married to his fellow schoolmate Linda Diederick. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary last February 20.

Richard was the seventh generation Beall to grow up in Prince George’s County and was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. He was proprietor of East Pines Liquors in Riverdale for more than 30 years and worked the family farm for most of that time.

He enjoyed special moments of his life including the Beall Cousin Club events and NASCAR, and playing with his toys—his Harley motorcycle, jet-ski, boats and tractors.

He is survived by his wife Linda; children, Sharon Bouchard, Noelle Thomas and Richard Beall; and eight grandchildren. Mass of Christian Burial was at St. John’s in Clinton with burial at Resurrection Cemetery.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Florine Clark, May 8; Brandi Jeter and Buddy Ramsey, May 9; Gladys Locks, Shirley Eppard and Elijah Thomas, May 10; Virginia Stine and Carolyn Flaherty Fogle, May 11; Kyle Dameron, May 12; Henrietta Bookhart, Ted Harris and Micheal White, May 13; and my next-door neighbor John Smith, May 14.

Happy anniversary to Donna and Wayne Anderson on May 14.

*Happy Mother's Day
to all you wonderful mothers!*

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

SUMMER CAMP

Give your child skills for life wrapped around the excitement of performing Arts at a Summer Camp. This camp is for children ages 5 to 12. Summer hours are 7:00 AM – 7: 00 PM. The Camp is located at 9506 Silver Fox Turn Clinton, Maryland, 20735. Call 301-537-0205 for more information or visitwww.stagerightyouth.com.

UTP TUTORING UTP

Call and ask about summer tutoring at 240-603-5648, ejak8n@att.net or http://www.up-topared.com. Tutoring is private, in home, one-on-one, cost effective, trained educator, on-line tutoring (also available) and flexible hours. Tutoring is in Reading, Math, Writing, Study Skills, Special Needs, College and Adult. Give your child the support he/she needs for the school year.

LOCAL BSA CUB SCOUT

Join us for Pack 1014 meetings on Wednesdays 7:00 PM at Brandywine Elementary School. Local BSA Cub Scout Pack 1014 is sponsored by American Legion Post 227. The mission of the Boy Scouts of America is to prepare

young people to make ethical and moral choices over their lifetimes by instilling in them the values of the Scout Oath and Law.

To obtain more information about Pack 1014 contact: Committee Chair Deborah Parham at cc.pack1014@gmail.com or Cub Master Rickie Knight at pack1014ncac@gmail.com

ENDOWMENT BREAKFAST

University of Maryland Eastern Shore (Washington Metropolitan Area Alumni Chapter) held their Endowment Breakfast Saturday, April 18, 2015 10:00 AM-2:00 PM. The Endowment Breakfast was held at the Courses located on Andrews 4442 West Perimeter Road Joint Base Andrews, MD 20762. The Guest Speaker was Stephen L. McDaniel, UMES Vice President for Institutional Advancement.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Save the dates July 13 -July 17 for VBS 2015 which will be held at the Family Life Center located at 15601 Brooks Church Road Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. There will be

teachers for Preschool (2-4 years old), Early Elementary (K-3rd Grade), Upper Elementary (4th-6th Grade) Youth (7th-12th Grade), Adults, Arts and Crafts. Church office number is 301-888-2171.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to Craig Contee, Jina Jackson, Andrienne Johnson, John Johnson, Linda Johnson, Dorothy Magruder, Kimberly Montgomery, Alvin Pinkney, Hattie Shivers, Maxine Wallace, Patricia Washington and Chantel Wright who are celebrating their birthdays in May.

ANNUAL BENEFIT DINNER DANCE

Bowie State University National Alumni, Inc. Prince George’s County Chapter Annual Benefit Dinner Dance celebrating 75+ years will be Sunday, June 28, 2015 from 4:00 PM-8:00 PM. Please come out and join us. There will be food, music, door prizes and fun. Tickets cost \$45.00. The event will be held at LA Fontaine Bleu 7906 Annapolis Road Lanham, Maryland 20706. For more information call Audrey Johnson 301-888-2153.

Neighborhood Events

Edwards Earns Key Endorsement as Central Theme Emerges in Maryland Senate Race

Fort Washington, MD – As local and national pundits have noted, the race to fill Barbara Mikulski’s shoes in the U.S. Senate will come down to values and which candidate has consistently stood up for Maryland’s progressive ideals.

With an early endorsement from EMILY’s List, which 30 years ago helped Mikulski herself overcome the Washington D.C. old boys’ network, Donna is on her way to making history as only the second African American woman to serve in the U.S. Senate.

Donna’s history of standing up for Maryland’s values have earned her Senate bid the early support of progressive groups like Democracy for America and the PCCC because she is the candidate Marylanders trust to continue Senator Mikulski’s fight for working families.

Maryland’s seniors inherently know that Donna will always work to preserve, protect and expand Social Security – a key issue in the race - and is not new to the fight.

Marylanders want someone who shares their values to carry on Senator Mikulski’s legacy. Donna is the only candidate who has consistently stood up for progressive ideals and has the ability to do what Senator Mikulski did over 30 years ago, and continue the progressive fight for Maryland’s working families.

Hoyer Congratulates J.C. Parks Elementary School on Receiving Green Ribbon Honor

WASHINGTON, DC – As we observe the 45th anniversary of Earth Day, Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-5) announced that J. C. Parks Elementary School in Indian Head, Maryland has been recognized as one of the 2015 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon award honorees. J.C. Parks Elementary is one of 81 honorees chosen for their efforts to save energy, reduce environmental impact and costs, promote healthier schools, and provide environmental education, including green career pathways.

“I am proud that J.C. Parks Elementary School has been recognized as a leading example in their dedication and commitment to environmental education, and I commend their efforts to make our state a cleaner and healthier place for all Marylanders,” said Congressman Steny Hoyer. “I have been a strong supporter of efforts to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay – our nation’s largest estuary – and its tributaries, which has played an important role in shaping the cultural and economic history of Maryland and our region. On this Earth Day, I believe we must take steps to preserve our natural resources such as the Chesapeake Bay, address renewable energy technologies, and improve energy efficiency, which will help save costs for families and businesses. I hope that the students at J.C. Parks Elementary will continue their efforts to protect our environment and our natural resources in their communities to ensure that we have clean air, water, and a cleaner state and planet.”



Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards

The Green Ribbon School honorees are invited to attend a national ceremony in July in Washington, DC where they receive a sustainable plaque and flag.

Cybrary Redefining IT and Cyber Security Education with Free Online Training

Greenbelt, MD – Cybrary, the world’s first and only free IT and cyber security MOOC, today announced the launch of its Kickstarter campaign to help raise funds to support its mission of providing tuition-free, high-quality technical training to anyone, anywhere, and at any skill level.

“It has become impossible for many people to pursue their passion of learning about technology and cyber security because of the outrageous costs associated with and lack of availability of quality training,” said Ryan Corey, co-founder of Cybrary. “We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to learn, so we built the framework for anyone to pursue their dream by provide an environment to receive IT and cyber security training without the cost.”

With the funds raised through this new Kickstarter program, Cybrary plans to expand their already robust list of classes and resources available to the public. Additionally, they want to develop new features such as transcriptions/captioning for all of the videos for the hearing impaired, a mobile app, so that people do not necessarily have to stream the learning content, and more interactive learning tools and exercises like quizzes and other ways of testing comprehension.

While Cybrary is hoping to raise \$200,000, an investment of just \$25,000 would enable them to develop the mobile app and attain additional resources that would further facilitate their desire to train people in developing nations. Cybrary’s goal is to reach approximately 250,000 users globally. In just two months of operation, the MOOC has already enrolled 40,000 users.

To learn more about or to back this project, visit Cybrary’s Kickstarter page.

About Cybrary.IT

Founded in 2015, Cybrary.IT gives aspiring and practicing IT professionals what they have long deserved and been denied: access to free, high-quality, open-source and results-focused IT and cyber security training that will help start and advance their careers. A MOOC provider whose top managers have nearly 15 years of experience in IT training, Cybrary.IT offers free online training to anyone, anywhere and at every skill level in sys-

tems administration, network administration and cyber security. For more information on how Cybrary.IT is liberating IT knowledge by liberating training, visit <http://www.cybrary.it/>.

Five Recognized as Certified Park and Recreation Professionals

GREENBELT, MD – The Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation seeks excellence from its employees and strives to maintain its reputation as a leader in the industry, and five of its leaders strengthened the department’s already renowned standing by receiving accreditation as a Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) by the National Certification Board (NCB) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

Tara Eggleston (County-wide Aquatics Coordinator), Steve Ellis (Program Specialist for Sports, Health and Wellness Division), Joe O’Neill (Maintenance and Development Division Chief), Wanda Ramos (Central Area Operations Division Chief) and Katrina Williams (Health and Wellness Officer for Sports, Health and Wellness Division) received the certification.

The Prince George’s County Department of Park and Recreation, as part of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, is an unprecedented five-time national gold medal award winner for excellence in park and recreation management, as awarded by NRPA.

The CPRP certification is granted to individuals employed in the recreation, park resources and leisure services professions who meet the eligibility requirements—including a combination of higher education and/or work experience—and who successfully complete the national CPRP examination. The examination tests knowledge in all aspects of general administration, programming and operations management for parks and recreation. CPRP certifications are valid for a period of two years, and professionals who wish to re-apply are required to complete professional continuing education unit requirements or equivalent academic course work.

Individuals certified as CPRPs meet high standards of education, expertise and experience established in the field for park and recreation professionals, and many agencies recommend or require CPRP certification when hiring for professional positions.

The CPRP program is offered by the National Certification Board in coordination with NRPA and the CPRP Certification Committee.

For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pg-parks.com and stay connected on Facebook and Twitter. The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Your Credit Score: Updates You Should Know

Credit scoring has evolved over the last three decades and this fall, FICO made one more important change. Borrowers who have struggled with medical debt and those with a limited credit history might see better FICO numbers in the future. Even if these situations don't apply to you, understanding how credit scoring is changing can help you better manage your credit over time.



FICO Score 9, rolled out last fall, is described as a more “nuanced” version of the original FICO Score that the leading credit scoring company introduced in 1989. It is offered by three major credit bureaus – Equifax (www.equifax.com), Experian (<http://www.experian.com>) and TransUnion. (<http://www.transunion.com>). It now bypasses collection agency accounts and weighs medical debt differently than non-medical debt on a person's credit record. Borrowers with a median score of 711 whose only negative credit data comes from medical collections will see their credit score go up 25 points under the new system.

As for consumers with limited credit histories – what the industry calls “thin files” – FICO says the new system will better determine the ability of someone in that situation to repay a debt.

What doesn't FICO 9 address? At this point, the latest credit-scoring model really doesn't loosen or change requirements for mortgage and refinancing opportunities. Even so, there are many things ordinary borrowers can do to improve their credit scores and overall financial health over time.

The first step is for borrowers to review each of their credit reports once a year. Credit reports and credit scores are two different things. Consider credit scores are a three-digit summary of creditworthiness; credit reports are the detailed record of a borrower's credit history. Consumers can view each of their credit reports from Equifax, Experian and TransUnion once a year for free (www.annualcreditreport.com). Stagger receipt of each agency's credit reports throughout the year to weed out any inconsistencies, inaccuracies, or worse, indications of fraudulent credit applications or identity theft.

Borrowers are seeing something else that's new – some lenders are making the credit scores they apply to existing borrowers available for free. A few major lenders have taken part in the industry-only FICO Score Open Access Program, which lets current customers see the exact credit scoring data applied to them at no charge. FICO's site doesn't offer the names of participating lenders, but a customer should ask their lender if they are offering free scores through that program.

Consumers should know how credit scores are compiled. FICO uses five key ingredients:

- Payment history (35 percent)
- Amounts owed (30 percent)
- Length of credit history (15 percent)
- New credit (10 percent)
- Types of credit used (10 percent).

Visit www.myfico.com for a list of tips for borrowers to improve their scores. Base FICO scores have a 300 to 850 score range, and though FICO doesn't release what it considers good or bad scores, borrowers with excellent credit typically have scores in the mid-700s and up.

There are ways to preserve and raise existing credit scores. It might be wise for borrowers to ask if they can increase the credit limit on individual accounts while paying down existing balances on those accounts. Smart borrowers generally keep their outstanding balances at 30 percent or less of their available credit limit.

Bottom line: Smart credit management starts with an understanding of one's credit reports and credit scores.

Council Chairman Franklin Issues Statement in Support of the People of Baltimore

The thoughts and prayers of the Prince George's County Council are with the people, law enforcement community, and leadership of the great City of Baltimore. We extend our condolences to the family of Freddie Gray and all victims of violence during this crisis. We urge a cessation of all violence, respect for peaceful protests, and independent and fair investigation of all wrongdoing. We pray for the well-being of all of the men and women in law enforcement, including those from Prince George's County who have traveled to Baltimore to provide assistance. Let us endeavor to confront the issues of poverty, unemployment, incarceration, and family that fuel this crisis even after it leaves the newspaper headlines and front pages. We stand in solidarity with the people of Baltimore.

Sine Die: Legislators Wrap up 2015 Maryland General Assembly

Lackluster Legislative Session for Traffic Safety Bills Of Which Many Died In Committee

By PRESS OFFICER
AAA Mid-Atlantic

WASHINGTON, D. C. (Friday, April 10, 2015) — Sine Die arrived for the 2015 Legislative Session of the Maryland General Assembly at the stroke of midnight, Monday, April 13. It not only marked the end of the 90 day session in Annapolis, it also represents a lackluster legislative year from the standpoint of motorists and traffic safety advocates, declares AAA Mid-Atlantic. Here is why. At midday Friday, many traffic safety bills have either already died in committee or are still languishing with committees.

However, with three days remaining in the session, there is still a chance, yet the odds are extremely slim, that these bills, including measure impacting DUI offenders, could be voted out of committee and proceed to their respective chamber for a vote. Left in limbo at this juncture are measures toughening Maryland's ignition interlock law, expanding the state's move-over law, and proposed legislation restoring “hundreds of millions of dollars a year in local transportation projects.”

Impaired Driving Legislation

The 2015 Legislative Session once again saw the introduction of stronger DUI bills to address impaired driving in Maryland including Senate Bill 395/ House Bill 872 – Drunk Driving Reduction Act of 2015, which mandated the use of ignition interlock systems for all convicted DUI offenders, including first time offenders.

As of Friday morning, these bills are still awaiting a vote in the Senate Judicial Proceedings and House Judiciary Committees, respectively. A favorable vote would then move the bills to their respective legislative chamber for consideration. This bill would have required the Mo-

tor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to suspend indefinitely the license of any convicted drunk driver that fails to participate in the ignition interlock system or fails to complete the program. Offenders convicted for the first time would be required to participate in the program for at least six months. Those convicted a second and third time would be required to participate in the program for one and three years, respectively.

“In the war against drunk driving we need every possible tool afforded to us and the mandatory use of ignition interlocks for all drivers is one such essential tool,” noted Mahlon G. (Lon) Anderson, Managing Director of Public and Government Affairs, AAA Mid-Atlantic. “Interlocks are no panacea, but when used as part of a solution for drivers with persistent alcohol problems, can prevent them from driving after they have been drinking and, thus, save lives on Maryland roads.”

The legislation had received widespread support from many traffic safety advocates, including AAA Mid-Atlantic, because of its inclusion of all drivers, including the first time offender. “The reality is that first-time offenders aren’t really first-time offenders at all. It is simply the first time these drivers have been caught for something they have most likely done countless times,” commented Anderson.

Move-Over Legislation

This year, traffic safety advocates hoped to expand Maryland's current move-over law to include service vehicles with Senate Bill 98/ House Bill 808 - Vehicle Laws - Operation of Vehicle When Approaching a Service Vehicle, but the bills received unfavorable reports by both chamber committees. This legislation would have required motorists traveling on multi-lane roadways, when practical and

safe, to merge away from a service vehicle working on the side of the highway in order to provide an empty travel lane of safety for the worker. Maryland's current law applies to emergency vehicles and was expanded last year to include tow trucks, but did not include service vehicles.

“AAA Mid-Atlantic recognizes the importance of having service truck drivers included in move-over laws, as they face the same dangers as first responders and tow truck operators when conducting business on the side of our roadways,” said Anderson “We will work with stakeholders during the summer to clarify language in the legislation and address stakeholder concerns, with the goal of introducing a bill in 2016.”

Motor vehicle-related incidents are consistently the leading cause of work-related fatalities in the United States. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 36 percent of occupational fatalities are associated with motor vehicles.

Transportation Legislation

After years of Maryland elected officials borrowing local transportation funds to help balance the state's budget and not repaying the money, Senate Bill 181 - Transportation - Highway User Revenues - Phased Restoration and a similar bill, Senate Bill 591/ House Bill 484, were introduced this session to help restore these local transportation funds that are essential in helping county and municipal leaders maintain the preservation and safety of their roads. If passed, the legislation would increase a portion of highway user revenues (HUR) that is distributed to counties, local governments and municipalities. However, as of Friday morning, these bills continue to await committee votes.

Two motorist-related bills did pass this session. The first was House Bill 1241 - Maryland Transportation Authority – Pay-

ment of Tolls and Related Fees. This bill, which AAA Mid-Atlantic supported, authorizes the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) to waive any portion of a video toll or civil penalty assessed for a toll violation prior to it being referred to the Central Collection Unit. The bill also extends the amount of time that the MDTA may accept payment before assessing a civil penalty to a motorist who has not paid a “Notice of Toll Due.”

“Essentially, this legislation will provide the MDTA with greater flexibility to work with motorists who receive a toll notice and will enable better customer service for motorists,” said Anderson.

The other bill to pass the General Assembly was Senate Bill 44/ House Bill 194 – Vehicle Laws – Maximum Speeds on Highways, which allows the maximum speed limit to be increased from 65 to 70 miles per hour on specified state highways. While AAA Mid-Atlantic did not take a position on this bill, officials at the auto club trust state engineers will be able to best determine if a major highway can safely accommodate a 70 M.P.H. speed limit. “While AAA consistently advocates for ways to decrease traffic congestion and motorist mobility, obviously we will be concerned if there is an increase in crashes on any roadway because of an increase in the speed limit,” commented Anderson.

“In conclusion, with many new faces in the 2015 General Assembly, along with the overwhelming need to balance the State's budget, it seems traffic safety bills may have taken a back seat this year,” commented Anderson. “Whatever the outcome on Sine Die with these pending bills, AAA will be back again in Annapolis next year advocating on behalf of motorists and all road users as it has for over 100 years.”

public health, and for the beauty of our County.” – **Prince George's County Sierra Club, Martha Ainsworth**

“This legislation is critical not only for our environmental and human health, but also to ensure that Prince George's County proves itself to be just as forward-thinking as Montgomery County and the District of Columbia. Needless consumption and resource waste is one of the driving factors behind the impending threat of climate change, and the sooner we eliminate polystyrene, the better.” - University of Maryland SGA, Student Sustainability Committee Director of City Affairs, Annie Rice

for better crop growth, said Stephanie Lansing, a University of Maryland professor and anaerobic digestion expert. Plus, burning the waste has the added benefit of eliminating the acrid poultry poop smell, she said.

“We’re creating an alternative to help manage the phosphorus saturation that affects the Eastern Shore,” Lansing said. “You’re producing energy plus creating a phosphorus product that can be exported.”

This poultry waste anaerobic digester is one of five in the United States. If successful, it could lead to community di-

Styrofoam from A1

munities and our waterways is a great step forward for the county and for a fishable and swimmable river. We expect to see less trash and a cleaner river as businesses and residents convert to more sustainable products even before this law goes into effect. The 2,600 volunteers who participated in our Earth Day River Cleanup last Saturday thank the Council for reducing their future cleanup burden!” – **Anacostia Watershed Society Director of Policy and Advocacy Dan Smith**

“We commend the Council for adopting this visionary and

important legislation. As we work with partners to conduct the annual ‘spring cleaning’ of the Potomac River, Styrofoam is, sadly, always in great abundance. We look forward to seeing a significant reduction in Styrofoam in future years, just as we’ve seen a reduction in plastic bags as a result of those jurisdictions that have enacted legislation to address that problem. These policies DO work!” – **Alice Ferguson Foundation Executive Director, Lori Arguelles**

“We applaud the Prince George's County Council for joining a regional solution to blight on communities by banning polystyrene food packag-

ing. Out in our neighborhoods we hear time and again how frustrated people are by pervasive litter.” – **Clean Water Action, Chesapeake Regional Director, Brent Bolin**

“We are delighted that Prince George's County is joining DC and Montgomery County in a regional approach to reducing trash pollution. Banning foam food packaging is a major step forward in cleaning up our neighborhoods and waterways, and creates a level playing field for businesses across the area.” – **Trash Free Maryland Director, Julie Lawson**

“This bill is a win for the quality of our waterways, for

Energy from A1

energy pilot program will begin breaking down nutrient-rich poultry manure this fall through three anaerobic digesters.

As the tall, thick-concrete towers heat up to 95 degrees, bacteria inside the chicken poop will decompose the waste, in the process releasing methane gas. The collected biogas will provide enough energy to power the digesters and generate electricity for the 50-acre farm, Lambertson explained.

Meanwhile, the digesters’ liquid byproduct makes it easier to remove dissolved nutrients from the manure before it is then applied on fields as a natural fertilizer for his soybeans, corn and wheat,

said Lambertson, a third-generation chicken and grain farmer.

“This plant would be able to extract the phosphorus out in a large quantity and then continue to let people use the manure as a good, healthy fertilizer for the Bay,” Lambertson said. “We want -- farmers and grain farmers alike -- to still use this resource in some fashion. We do not want to see us have the burden to do something else with that manure.”

Agriculture remains the largest industry and largest single land-use in Maryland, but it is also the largest contributor of nutrient and sediment pollution entering the Bay, according to the Chesapeake Bay Program.

On April 3, Republican Gov. Larry Hogan published updated Phosphorus Management Tool regulations in the Maryland Register that would require farmers to declare strict phosphorus application controls on the fertilizer they apply to their fields by 2017.

The previous administration would have required farmers to establish permanent controls by 2021, but Hogan's new regulations would allow them an extra year to meet the standards.

Rather than transporting the phosphorus-rich soils away from the Eastern Shore, though, the pilot program offers a way to extract just the nutrients from the shore's chicken manure and send them to farms that need the extra nutrients

COMMENTARY

Cong. Chris Van Hollen
House Democratic Minority Whip



Van Hollen Joins Congressional Progressive Caucus and Sens. Schatz, Schumer, & Warren in Introducing Resolutions to Support Student Access to Debt-Free College

Washington, DC – Today Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen joined Congressional Progressive Caucus Co-Chairs Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.) and Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), Rep. Katherine Clark (D-Mass.), and U.S. Senators Brian Schatz (D-Hawai’i), Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) in introducing resolutions in the House of Representatives and Senate supporting efforts to ensure that students have access to debt-free higher education. Over the last 30 years, the cost of college has increased by 300 percent, forcing some students to take on overwhelming student loan debt or putting a college degree entirely out of reach for others. Student loan debt is now the highest form of personal debt in the nation, reaching over \$1.3 trillion for 38 million student loan borrowers across the country.

“Affordable higher education is critical to creating opportunities for all Americans and developing a stronger economy,” said Congressman Van Hollen. “With student debt topping \$1 trillion, we need comprehensive solutions to bring down costs, increase financial assistance, and open the doors of college to every student with the drive to succeed. Today’s resolution sets the goal, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to make it a reality.”

“A higher education is the best way for people to move up the economic ladder, but the rising cost of college in Hawai’i and across the country has made it harder for students to earn a degree and get ahead,” said Senator Schatz. “Our message is clear: we need to do more to make college more affordable for all students so that they can graduate without debt holding them back. The federal government, states, and schools all have a role to play in cutting the cost of college. This is a problem we can solve, and we can

start by working to make sure institutions receiving federal funding are doing their part to make a degree more affordable and accessible for all students.”

“Going to college is absolutely essential to getting into the middle class and getting ahead once you’re there, but far too often it ends up breaking students’ banks,” said Senator Schumer. “When students graduate with loads of debt, the ripple effects are endless; they’re less likely to start a business, to buy a house, and to realize their full potential. When it comes to making college affordable, I’m hopeful that debt-free college is the next big idea.”

“A student at a public university today faces tuition prices that are more than 300 percent of what his or her parents faced just 30 years ago, and total outstanding student loan debt now stands at a staggering \$1.3 trillion,” said Senator Warren. “Our country should be investing in higher education and working with colleges and universities to bring down tuition costs so that students don’t have to take on crushing debt to get an education.”

“Education remains the single greatest avenue of upward mobility our society has ever known,” said Representative Grijalva. “But the mounting costs of higher education place it out of reach for too many Americans, holding them back from their full potential or burdening them with unimaginable debt for years to come. In the richest nation on earth, there is no excuse for erecting and maintaining these barriers to professional growth.”

“Americans—young and old—know continuing their education is the best path to a financially

See COLLEGE Page A5



The Carousel at Watkins Park

Open to the Public

PHOTO BY LEGUSTA FLOYD, JR.

ANTIQUE CHESAPEAKE CAROUSEL & MINIATURE TRAIN

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

Child Watch
by Marion Wright Edelman



Thank God for Peanut Butter and Jelly—PB and J—Day

Kaylyn Sigman is a high school senior with big plans. A star soccer player from a poor rural Appalachian Ohio community who loves calculus and creative writing, she’s college bound this fall and dreams of becoming a middle school special education teacher. Kaylyn’s overcome a lot to arrive where she is today. Her parents’ relationship was rocky throughout her childhood and they finally divorced when she was 10, leaving Kaylyn’s mother alone to raise her, her younger sister, and two younger brothers who were adopted. Her mother, who suffers from seizures, worked as a labor and delivery nurse but is now on disability. Both brothers have special mental health needs and Kaylyn, a bright student who skipped second grade and was reading at the ninth grade level in third grade, has ADHD, all leading to an ongoing pile of medical appointments and bills. After her father left, Kaylyn’s family struggled in poverty, moving seven times in four years trying to find an affordable place to stay. Kaylyn’s mother says when they lost their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or food stamps) benefits last year, their family never would have survived the toughest times without PB and J Day, held once a week during the summer months at the children’s school through the local County Children’s Services Agency. They’d come home with enough bread, peanut butter and jelly so each family member could have one sandwich for three meals a day until the next pickup.

Kaylyn is one of five inspiring high school seniors the Children’s Defense Fund-Ohio is honoring this month with a Beat the Odds® award and college scholarship. But millions of other children continue to go hungry every day in our wealthy nation. Some aren’t even lucky enough to be able to count on peanut butter sandwiches to get them through. What do those hungry families do?

SNAP helps feed 21 million children—more than one in 4 children in our nation. SNAP prevents children and families from going hungry, improves overall health, and reduces

poverty among families that benefit from it. The extra resources it provides lifted 2.1 million children out of poverty in 2013. It’s the second most effective program for rescuing families from poverty and the most effective program for rescuing families from deep poverty. SNAP doesn’t just keep a child from going to school or bed hungry, but has long-lasting effects. Research shows children with access to food stamps are less likely to experience stunted growth, heart disease, and obesity by age 19, and are nearly 20 percent more likely to complete high school. And SNAP’s positive effects extend beyond individual children and families to entire communities. During a recession, the impact of SNAP’s economic growth is estimated to be from \$1.73 to \$1.79 for every dollar of benefits provided. In short, SNAP works. It’s critical that SNAP be improved and expanded, not cut as proposed under the House and Senate Republican proposed budgets.

Although we know cuts to SNAP would mean millions of children might lose benefits and be more likely to go hungry and suffer the long-term negative impacts of hunger, and despite the fact that every major bipartisan

budget commission has said that SNAP should not be cut, that’s just what current Republican budget blueprints in the House and Senate are proposing. Worse, the House budget plan would block grant SNAP and cut its funding by \$125 billion—more than a third—from 2021-2025. The Senate budget doesn’t provide enough detail to tell exactly how SNAP would fare, but it cuts non-health entitlement programs serving low- and moderate-income people—which includes SNAP—24 percent.

SNAP benefits now average less than \$1.40 a person a meal, and as critical as they are, they’re not enough for many low-income families like Kaylyn’s. In 2013, 54 percent of families receiving SNAP were still food insecure, and overall 1 in 9 children in our nation didn’t have enough to eat. During the recession Congress recognized that SNAP benefits were too low for many and increased the value of the maximum benefit 13.6 percent. The impact was powerful: 831,000 children were kept out of poverty in 2010 as a result of the change. But Congress ended that increase in November 2013. Further slashing SNAP benefits now

See WATCH, Page A18

Marc Morial, President and CEO
National Urban League



Eradicating Childhood Poverty One Nose at a Time

“The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”

– Franklin D. Roosevelt,
Inaugural Address, January 20, 1937

Broadcasting from a refugee camp in Sudan on Christmas day in 1985, Comic Relief U.K., the British charity behind Red Nose Day, spearheaded a fundraising phenomena that, decades later, continues to chip away at the global childhood poverty rate and has made its symbol, a clown-style red nose, a popular, poverty-fighting fashion accessory.

The telethon was started by comedians who believed they could raise awareness and money, with the help of mass media and celebrities, to change and save the lives of children living in poverty in the United Kingdom and abroad. Since its first televised broadcast, Red Nose Day has raised more than \$1 billion in donations for organizations dedicated to eradicating poverty—and for the first time in the event’s long and successful history—Americans have been invited to put on red noses and assist in the widespread effort to transform the lives of children living in poverty globally, and across our nation.

One in five children in the United States live in households with incomes below the assigned federal poverty level—\$23,550 a year for a family of four. Not surprisingly, our nation’s tremendous child poverty rates are highest among its most vulnerable citizens: Black, Hispanic and American Indian children. Analyzing the plague of childhood poverty through a global lens, the numbers are far more devastating. Of the estimated 2.2 billion children living in the world, one billion—one out of every two children in the world—lives in poverty.

No matter what continent, country or community you call home, growing up in a poor family does not happen by chance, which means defeating childhood poverty will not happen without employing targeted, effective strategies.

For our longstanding work with at-risk youth through our signature Urban Youth Empowerment

Program, the National Urban League has been recognized and selected as one of twelve U.S. based poverty-fighting charities to benefit from Red Nose Day’s television fundraising event. The money raised will be used to fund programs—like ours—that address the immediate needs of children and young people living in poverty in the U.S. and internationally in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Our Urban Youth Empowerment Program is a powerful example of work already being done to change the lives of young people by providing them with opportunities through life skills training, education, mentorship, internships and on-the-job training—all strategies research and experience tells us can help lift the most vulnerable from a life mired in poverty. Through our work, we have impacted and improved the lives of more than two million young people and adults annually through direct service programs implemented by 94 Urban League affiliates—serving 300 communities in 36 states and the District of Columbia. With the continued help of our donors, and our new partnership with Red Nose Day, we will continue to empower youth and impact and improve thousands more lives in hard-hit communities.

Red Nose Day will cross the proverbial pond and land on our shores in a live, star-studded special, airing Thursday, May 21 (8-11 p.m. ET) live on NBC. The three-hour benefit promises A-list artists from the worlds of film, television, comedy and music for a night of entertainment for an important cause—a cause you can join today.

Anyone and everyone can—and must—play a part in the struggle to eradicate childhood poverty around the world. Mark the telethon on your calendar as appointment television; organize your own fundraising event for Red Nose Day; or walk into your local Walgreens or Duane Reade and do your part by buying a red nose.

The red noses are the official symbol of the movement and would become a symbol of your commitment to make a difference. Wear your nose to support the cause. Wear your nose to inspire others—“because the more you nose, the more you help.”

The Prince George’s Post

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BUSINESS

The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

Teens, Messy Rooms and Parental Frustration

Somewhere, there might actually be a teenager who doesn't have a "messy room." Most parents would doubt that. A teen's messy room continues to be the source for ongoing parent-teen disagreements in many families.

While we can't make that messy room disappear, we can help you understand why it happens and perhaps reduce your stress and frustration level a little.

A first step is understanding why the condition of your child's room bothers you. After all, your child lives in the mess, not you. What frustrates us is what the mess says about us, our authority over our child and our effectiveness as a parent. Are we parental failures if our children can't see the mess and won't hear our requests to clean it up?

For your teen, however, privacy and autonomy, not a messy room, are the issues. That room is his or her domain, and keeping it as desired is one way of being independent.

Becoming more independent is a normal part of the developmental process and a messy room is an easy, safe way to declare that independence.

Arguing won't change that, but setting a few sensible family rules can make things easier.

The main rule is that you can live with messy, but not with health threatening. Old food wrappers and dirty dishes attract bugs and that's not acceptable. A closed door can hide the teen mess, but that won't stop bugs and mold.

Teens can accept sensible, fair rules for family use areas. While a clean bedroom might seem unreasonable, your teen can understand the need to clean up after oneself in the kitchen or not to leave shoes or that backpack in the middle of the hallway.

And no, cleaning up for your teen doesn't help. You'll just create an angry teen who has also learned that when it gets messy enough, you'll do the job.

Better is an offer to help. Many teens literally don't know where to start once the mess gets too big. Suggest ways to break that big task into smaller ones. Offer storage and sorting tips.

There certainly are things worth pushing hard for with your teen. A messy room is seldom one. Someday that room will get cleaned. New friends, missing treasures or the lack of clean clothes might be the motivation. Or not. Then that clean room will just have to wait until he or she moves out.

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

Mikulski Calls For Major Increase in Federal Investments in Physical and Human Infrastructure of NIH Health Science

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of Barbara Mikulski

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), Vice Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, this week continued her Maryland Jobs Tour at the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences (NCATS). Senator Mikulski announced that she has introduced new legislation, the Accelerating Biomedical Research Act, to ensure NIH receives stable funding year after year to support community health, innovation and jobs across Maryland and the nation.

Senator Mikulski was joined by NIH Director Dr. Francis S. Collins and NCATS Director Dr. Christopher P. Austin in touring the NCATS translational research facility to see first-hand state-of-the-art screening for potential new treatments and cures for diseases that can be delivered to patients faster.

"The NIH is a world-class institution, serving as the foundation for U.S. medical innovation. I'm fighting to ensure NIH remains a priority in the federal checkbook with the respect, resources and reform needed to support leading bioscience research jobs," Senator Mikulski said. "This legislation will redouble our commitment to NIH science and research, investing in the health of American families and the future of our next generation of scientists and inno-

vators. With a robust federal research funding, patients suffering from diseases like Alzheimer's to the dreaded diagnosis of cancer will know they have a doctor at their bedside and a researcher in the lab working to help them. I'm putting my shoulder to the wheel, my nose to the grindstone and my feet on the ground in my fight for NIH."

Senator Mikulski detailed her new legislation, the Accelerating Biomedical Research Act, a bill to increase America's investment in NIH and support critical health research to discover new cures and treatments, save lives and protect America's innovation advantage. The Accelerate Biomedical Research Act would adjust the federal budget to prioritize funding for NIH over the remaining six years of the Budget Control Act. That would allow for increased funding for NIH, restoring NIH's purchasing power as if it had kept pace with inflation. It would also negate the devastating impact of sequester without subjecting investments in NIH to partisan battles on offsetting funding.

The bill modifies the budget to allow the Appropriations Committee to provide NIH with increasing resources over the six year period from FY 2016-2021, up to a total of \$45 billion in the final year of the Budget Control Act. This amount is sufficient to replace what has been lost to inflation over the last decade. The bill plans for an initial bump of 10 percent in each of the first two



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF SENATOR BARBARA MIKULSKI
On Tuesday, March 31, 2015, Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) was joined by NIH Director Dr. Francis S. Collins and vvvvNCATS Director Dr. Christopher P. Austin to announce that she has introduced new legislation to provide stable funding for NIH year and year, supporting community health, innovation and jobs across Maryland and the nation.

years to quickly mitigate the lingering effects of sequester, followed by six percent increases each year thereafter.

The NIH is the foundation for U.S. medical innovation that saves lives and leads to new products and new jobs. Federal investments in NIH have helped cut the cancer death rate by 19 percent in men and 11 percent in women. With the support of NIH research, HIV/AIDS is no longer a death sentence and polio and small pox have been essentially eradicated in the United States.

In addition to the human impact, NIH has a measurable impact on our economy. NIH supports more than 300,000 scientists at 3,100 institutions across the nation, including 18,000 direct jobs in Mary-

land. Every dollar invested in NIH generates \$2-3 in economic activity, and every patent NIH generates provides the foundation for eight private sector patents. In 2013, products built on licensed NIH and FDA inventions reported a total of \$7 billion in sales.

Senator Mikulski has been a staunch advocate for NIH and has continued to work each year to sustain federal funding that helps its researchers make discoveries that save lives and improve the quality of health care in America. Between fiscal years (FY) 1998 to 2003, Senator Mikulski was a force behind a bipartisan effort to double NIH's budget from \$13.6 billion in FY 1998 to \$27 billion in FY 2003.

College from A4

secure future. But students who go to college face mountains of debt, and too many face difficult choices about their careers and their families because of it," said Representative Ellison. "The Debt Free College Resolution is critical because students shouldn't be punished for investing in their own future—they should walk across the stage on graduation day and take their diploma into a brighter future."

"Too many young people I've talked to are saddled with insurmountable debt just as they're beginning their adult lives," said Representative Clark. "Congress can and should ensure that students who are working hard to begin their careers, start a family, and contribute to our economy are able to graduate from public colleges

debt-free so they can focus on pursuing their dreams rather than being held back by a lifetime of debt."

"We all know a college education is important towards achieving long-term success. However, an entire generation is being weighed down by more than \$1 trillion in student loan debt," said Representative Pocan. "It's time to end the reliance on debt as a way to finance a college education for many low- and middle-income students. I'm proud to stand with my progressive colleagues to fight for the goal of providing debt-free college at public institutions across the country. Debt free college is a big, bold way to ensure every student has a chance at success."

"Crushing student loan debt is making it harder for graduates to save to buy a house, start their

own business, or put money aside for a secure retirement," said Representative Israel. "A college education is the most important investment that young people can make and should be viewed as a tool of opportunity rather than a financial burden. That is why I am proud to add my name to this initiative calling for a goal of debt-free college that will hopefully generate more conversation about how to alleviate that financial strain and empower graduates to achieve the American dream."

"A highly educated workforce is key to the success of our nation. However, higher education has become increasingly inaccessible as costs have skyrocketed," said Representative Rangel. "We must ensure that everyone can afford to attend college and become more competitive. Students should be

spending more time focused on thriving at school and less time worrying about how they'll pay for it. I look forward to working with my colleagues to reduce the burden of student loan debt and to help expand opportunities for our future generations."

"We tell students that education opens the doors of opportunity. But when these students pursue higher education, even at public institutions, they too often graduate saddled with debt that takes decades to payback, keeps them from investing in their families, and suffocates our nation's economic growth," said Representative Watson Coleman. "Like a high school diploma in the past, a college degree has become a virtual prerequisite for a middle class job. We need to make affordable higher education a right for all, not just a

privilege for the fortunate. Congress has the ability to make debt-free higher education a reality, supporting our students and continued American competitiveness."

"A college education provides opportunities and breaks down inequalities," said Representative McGovern. "As a nation, we should encourage and incentivize those who wish to pursue a higher education - not penalize them by saddling them with debt for years to come."

The resolutions were introduced by the following: U.S. Senators Brian Schatz (D-Hawai'i), Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Cory Booker (D-N.J.), Chris Murphy (D-Conn.) and U.S. Representatives Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.), Keith Ellison (D-Minn.) Katherine

Clark (D-Mass.), Mark Pocan (D-Wisc.), Steve Israel (D-N.Y.), Hank Johnson (D-Ga.), Barbara Lee (D-Calif.), Ruben Gallego (D-Ariz.), Mark Takano (D-Calif.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Donna Edwards (D-Md.), John Conyers (D-Mich.), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), Jim McDermott (D-Wash.), Judy Chu (D-Calif.), Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), Janice Hahn (D-Calif.), Alan Grayson (D-Fla.), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-N.J.), Jared Polis (D-Colo.), Mike Honda (D-Calif.), Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), Jim McGovern (D-Mass.), Ted Lieu (D-Calif.), Mark DeSaulnier (D-Calif.), Luis Gutierrez (D-Ill.), Alma Adams (D-N.C.), Peter Welch (D-Mass.), Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.), Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.), and Yvette Clarke (D-N.Y.).

Investment from A1

day evening at Capitol Heights Elementary School. To watch that meeting please click here. Residents are encouraged to visit the Investing in Education Homepage on the Prince George's County website to learn more about this proposal.

"Excellent schools educate and enrich the lives of children and their families, and they prepare our children for successful lives in today's global economy," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "Investing in our schools also boosts property values for the whole community. Throughout my two decades of public service on behalf of our County, the top priority of every resident, business and stakeholder I have met has been education. The reason is

that, as County residents and as neighbors, we know that our community will rise and fall with our schools. We know that a first class education system will benefit everyone, and that we owe a first class education to all of our children."

This additional investment in PGCPs will provide the funding for the evidence-based programs contained in the PGCPs 2016-2020 Strategic Plan and PGCPs will be poised to make exponential progress with the goal of being ranked in the top 10 school systems in the State of Maryland by 2020. There have been considerable improvements in PGCPs under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Dr. Kevin Maxwell, a 2013 National Superintendent of the Year finalist, such as historic higher

graduation rates and lower dropout rates, as well as increased efficiency and accountability, yet PGCPs continues to be ranked next to last in school districts throughout the State.

PGCPs Investment Discussion Schedule:

Wednesday, May 13,
7:00 p.m.
Tayac Elementary School
8600 Allentown Road
Fort Washington, MD
The FY 2016 Proposed Budget was submitted on March 13, 2015 to the Prince George's County Council. The Council must adopt the FY 2016 Proposed Budget on or before June 1, 2015. For any questions or concerns, residents can call 3-1-1, Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. or email CountyExecutive@co.pg.md.us.

Tribute from A1

fully throughout the pages of this special tribute edition is heartwarming. We plan to make complimentary copies available at our facilities throughout the county for readers to enjoy," she added.

This issue, which is designed to serve as a lasting memory of Curry, not only provides a look into his accomplishments, but it sheds a personal light on one of Maryland's most transformative leaders. Nearly a dozen Maryland institutions and several high profile leaders are presented in the edi-

tion paying homage to the former executive who died of lung cancer on July 2, 2014.

"We are grateful to have teamed up with our partners at The Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission to obtain many of the images and insight," said Raoul Dennis, publisher of Prince George's Suite magazine. "The idea was to give readers and those who knew him an opportunity to honor a man highly regarded as a family-centered leader in Prince George's County. We hope that readers will gain a personal perspective of Curry through the pages of this issue."

Complimentary copies of the magazine are now available at three M-NCPPC locations within the County:

- Southern Regional Technology and Recreation Complex, (7007 Bock Rd, Fort Washington, MD 20744)

- Parks and Recreation Administration Building (6600 Kenilworth Ave., Riverdale • Wayne K. Curry Sports & Learning Complex, (8100 Sheriff Road, Landover MD 20785)

For more information about Prince George's Suite magazine, please call Amber Ebanks at (410) 842-3384 or visit pg-suite.com.

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

“Furious Seven”

Furious Seven
Grade: C+
Rated PG-13, some profanity, a lot of action violence, nothing too graphic
2 hrs., 17 min

“Furious Seven,” the latest installment in the “Fast and the Furious” car-oriented soap opera franchise, starts with newly introduced British villain Deckard Shaw (Jason Statham) vowing to kill the entire Fast & Furious gang for almost killing his brother in the previous movie. Shaw then travels to L.A. to fight with government agent Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson) and get the list of whom, exactly, he has vowed to kill. For the rest of the movie, no matter which corner of the globe our heroes have trotted to, Deckard Shaw shows up like Wile E. Coyote to try to kill them.

And what is the mission that has them traveling the world? Terrorists have kidnapped a computer hacker who possesses a spying device that could be deadly in the wrong hands (or the right hands, really, but let’s not think about that), and so the U.S. government – represented by Kurt Russell as a shadowy figure called Mr. Nobody – needs the gang to execute a clandestine rescue operation. And why are they willing to do this for Mr. Nobody? Because if they do, he will let them use the spying device to find Deckard Shaw. Deckard Shaw. The one person they don’t need help finding, because if they sit still for a minute, he’ll find them.

Anyway, the rescue mission must be done at the highest level of secrecy, so of course it involves dropping cars out of an airplane.

This installment was directed by horror wunderkind James



ROTTENTOMATOES

Continuing the global exploits in the unstoppable franchise built on speed, Vin Diesel, Paul Walker and Dwayne Johnson lead the returning cast of Fast & Furious 7. James Wan directs this chapter of the hugely successful series that also welcomes back favorites Michelle Rodriguez, Jordana Brewster, Tyrese Gibson, Chris “Ludacris” Bridges, Elsa Pataky and Lucas Black. They are joined by international action stars new to the franchise including Jason Statham, Djimon Hounsou, Tony Jaa, Ronda Rousey and Kurt Russell.

Wan (“Saw,” “Insidious,” “The Conjuring”), his first foray outside the genre, and once again written by Chris Morgan. Wan has a sharp eye for good visuals, and he shoots the action sequences in the manner of someone who actually wants us to be able to see what’s going on. Morgan, though, has a tin ear for dialogue, of which there is too much, always too much.

That’s the thing with these movies, and with this chapter in particular. The action scenes are ridiculous and implausible, the laws of gravity defied with extreme prejudice, but they are undeniably entertaining. Everything else, though, is drudgery, a halfwit soap opera about characters in whom, after seven movies, I still have no emotional investment. Dom (Vin

Diesel) is trying to help Letty (Michelle Rodriguez) get over her amnesia. Brian (Paul Walker, in his last film role) is adjusting to life as a family man with Mia (Jordana Brewster), who is now pregnant with their second child but is afraid to tell him because she’s worried he’ll resent being tied down. You know what? Don’t care. Get back to the vroom-vroom.

A prime example of this self-destructive tendency comes at the end of “Furious Seven.” There’s a terrific climax involving all of the major characters and the villains, everyone facing off in satisfying battles set in various places around Los Angeles (where it all began, six movies ago). It’s a powerhouse of a finale. But then comes a maudlin chunk of fan-service

intended to give Paul Walker a proper send-off ... which is awkward, because Walker’s character in the movie isn’t going anywhere. If you didn’t know that the actor died in real life, you’d have no idea why the film suddenly takes this unusually sentimental turn, with everyone acting like it’s the end of an era. It may be an emotional button-pusher for fans, but it’s not good moviemaking.

Of course, you could make the argument that pushing fans’ emotional buttons IS good moviemaking. Depends on your definition of “good,” “fans,” and “moviemaking.” At any rate, there will be more of these, and I would not be surprised if the next one is actually set in space, where gravity isn’t welcome anyway.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

The Wisconsin Badgers Deserve Better Than Scott Walker



It was agonizingly close. The Wisconsin Badgers in all their public university glory almost beat big, bad Duke for the NCAA basketball championship. As an East Coaster, I’ll say that there has been a shimmer around Wisconsin sports teams that pulls me into their corner time and again. Whether it’s the “Greek-Freak” Bucks, Pack or Badgers, the last several years of pro sports (and yes, the NCAA should be seen as a pro sport with godawful salaries) has made me say time and again that there is just something about Wisconsin. There is also just something about their sports teams that for some reason compels the state’s Governor Scott Walker to truly reveal just how ignorant he believes the electorate of the United States to be. In December, it was Walker during the NFL playoffs proclaiming his undying loyalty to the Green Bay Packers, even though that is a team whose fan-owned ownership model is anathema to everything that the governor, not to mention the billionaire Koch brothers , who currently hold the receipt on Walker’s soul, stand for. For Scott Walker, the fact that members of the Packers team have actually lobbied against his efforts to crush the public unions of his state, is just a detail, as he affixes a foam cheese to his skull.

Monday night, it was the Wisconsin Badgers—who play their games a brisk walk from Walker’s Madison offices—almost being crowned as NCAA basketball champions over the evil empire that is Duke. Before the night’s contest, there was Governor Scott Walker preening about his wager with North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory, as Politico.com reported, of “an assortment of Wisconsin cheese, sausage and root beer” (The idea that the NC governor was claiming Duke as his team, a private institution where an overwhelming majority of students come from out of state, might be a story for another time).

Walker said, “Duke is a formidable opponent, but this is Wisconsin’s year to bring home the victory. Make ’em believe!” Yes, these kinds of wagers by politicians hoping for a little bit of refracted glow have been made for eons. Yet there is something almost flagrantly irresponsible about the news media—even if we agree for the sake of argument that Politico counts as news media—reporting on these wagers like it is all fun and games, while ignoring that Scott Walker has made it his mission to cut hundreds of millions of dollars from the very public university system bringing glory to the state.

This is who Governor Scott Walker is: a soulless vessel for Koch-brothers cash who in the name of a career advancement to the White House is willing to both mercilessly attack any and all expressions of public life, while at the same time using sports to shamelessly bank on what he imagines to be the ignorance of the US electorate. He does not care that Wisconsin point guard Bronson Koenig happens to be not only one of forty-two Native American athletes playing Division I basketball but also someone who opposes the use of mascots. As Brian Ward wrote here at TheNation.com, “In 2013, Walker signed a bill that makes it harder for public schools to change racist mascots and names. The law, which he claimed to support to defend the First Amendment, requires 10 percent of a district’s students to sign a petition within a 120-day period to earn a hearing regarding changing a mascot name. A spokesperson for the Wisconsin Indian Education Association called the law, ‘an example of institutionalized racism.’”

That might be one of the only “institutions” Scott Walker defends. The Final Four itself took place in a state whose hastily amended codified discrimination laws were defended by Walker even as they were condemned by the NCAA. Even as such left-wing organizations like NASCAR pilloried the bill, Walker described those who opposed it as “people who are chronically looking for ways to be upset about things.” That would actually be a good definition of Scott Walker who has never found a teacher, a firefighter or—I don’t know—a public university that wasn’t worth demonizing for his own political gain.

Wisconsin is called the Badger State not because of the abundance of the bucktooth mammal, but because it was an early nickname for the state’s miners. Walker has recalled this history when he has made efforts to increase the power of the private mining companies with their eyes on the state, no matter the cost to the environment. It speaks volumes that Walker hears “Badgers” and hears a tribute to mining and not miners. Similarly, when he hears the cheers for the Badgers in their run to a title, he does not hear a celebration of a brilliant public university but a clarion call for his own White House run. Don’t let him brand his campaign with the Badgers pride. The Koch brothers have made sure he’s already had their full agenda burned into his flesh, another governor for their collection, wearing their mark like a prize steer. Maybe someday Scott Walker will recognize the difference between branding and being branded.

Energy from A3

gesters built along the Eastern Shore that would generate energy from animal manure, reduce on-farm waste streams and repurpose manure as marketable fertilizer, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Lansing and her group of graduate and undergraduate students work with Lambertson’s farm through the university’s Maryland Industrial Partnerships program, which links professors with industries and provides research funds to help a business move forward, she said.

Anna Kulow, an environmental science and technology graduate student at the University of Maryland and member of Lansing’s research team, said if successful, the pilot program will significantly reduce nutrient pollution from Eastern Shore farms.

Poultry farming’s longstanding history on Maryland’s Eastern Shore means that its soil is highly saturated in nutrients from years of farmers using their manure to fertilize their fields, Kulow said, and applying more phosphorus and nitrogen to the nutrient-rich fields now inevitably causes excess nutrients to flow into the Bay.

“You have a lot of chemical compounds that are pollutants, but the main cause of decline in ecosystem health is nutrient pollution, particularly from agriculture,” Kulow said. “The pilot system is projected to remove more than 18 tons of phosphorus a year from poultry litter, so that would prevent that much phos-



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JAMES LEVIN

Jason Lambertson, 42, owner of Millennium Farms in Pocomoke City, Maryland, stands next to controls in one of his farm’s four chicken houses.

phorus from being applied to land each year.”

While he doesn’t know the total costs yet, Lambertson said the anaerobic digesters are funded privately by Planet Found Energy Development LLC investors.

The nutrient-capture portion of the project received a \$676,144.47 service contract from the Maryland Department of Agriculture’s Animal Waste Technology Fund in August 2014. Lambertson said that the contract is based on performance, so he will not receive the money for the nutrient-capture program until the project reaches determined milestones.

The fund awarded about \$2 million to projects like Lambert-

son’s in the 2014 fiscal year, and \$3 million is available in the 2015 fiscal year -- which ends June 30 -- for innovative manure management technologies, said Julianne A. Oberg, communications director for the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Hogan’s administration also established the Agriculture Phosphorus Initiative, a program aimed to evaluate the economic impact of the phosphorus regulations on farmers. The initiative includes funding for the Animal Waste Technology Fund to offset costs of environmental improvement plans.

The Animal Waste Technology Fund will have \$2.5 million available for new projects

in the 2016 fiscal year, according to the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

For Lambertson, the pilot project will significantly reduce the excess nutrient problem, decrease his electricity bill and keep his family farming on the Eastern Shore.

“The more that we do to be progressive, to make sure that we do what’s right, that we provide solutions to the environmental problems — the agricultural side -- I think that is a really big plus, that we’re not always looked at as the one that’s causing it,” Lambertson said. “The main goal here is to show a solution, and that it can be done agriculturally.”

Calendar of Events

May 7 — May 13, 2015

Xtreme Teens: Skate Night

Date and Time: Friday, May 8, 2015 7-9 pm
Description: Teens will enjoy an indoor skating party at the community center with their friends. There will be a DJ, so get ready to have fun.
Cost: Free
Ages: 10-17
Location: Glenarden Community Center
8615 McLain Ave, Glenarden 20706
Contact: 301-772-3151; TTY 301-218-6768

Mother's Day Tea

Date and Time: Saturday, May 9, 2015 1:30 pm
Description: Treat your mom, grandma, or other important woman in your life to afternoon tea in Montpelier's elegant east wing. You'll dine on fine finger sandwiches, scrumptious cakes and pastries, buttery scones, and your choice of two quality loose leaf teas. Reservations and advance payment required. Price includes self-guided tour of the house and gratuity.
Cost: \$29/person; \$25/Friends of Montpelier.
Ages: 18 & up
Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site
9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD 20708
Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544
montpeliermansion@pgparks.com

Mornings at the Museum

Date and Time: Saturday, May 9, 2015 11 am
Description: Explore exciting aspects of the College Park Aviation Museum's collection on the second Saturday of each month with a museum educator. May's tour will focus on military history.
Cost: Free with museum admission
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: College Park Aviation Museum
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

Maestro Khan with Sistah Mafalda & Kuumba Performers

Date & Time: Saturday, May 9, 2015 8-10 pm
Description: Master of sitar, surbahar and tabla Maestro Khan performs classical Indian fusion in a program that includes Sistah Mafalda and the Kuumba Performers presenting African, Caribbean and American dance and drum pieces.
Cost: \$20/person (general admission); \$15/person (with purchase of ticket to World Dance Showcase)
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

Kayak Kaper

Date and Time: Sunday, May 10, 2015 9 am-12 noon
Description: Explore the natural beauty and cultural history of the Patuxent River on a guided kayak trip.
Cost: Resident: \$16; Non-Resident: \$20
Ages: 18 & up
Location: Patuxent River Park
16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, 20772
Contact: 301-627-6074; TTY 301-203-6030

Mother's Day Tours

Date and Time: Sunday, May 10, 2015 12 noon- 4 pm
Description: Mothers and grandmothers will receive complimentary tours of the museum when accompanied by a paying child or grandchild. No reservations necessary.
Cost: Free
Ages: All ages welcome
Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum
14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro
Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

Bicycle Nature Tour

Date and Time: Sunday, May 10, 2015 1-3 pm
Description: Take an ecologist guided nature tour by bike and enjoy the sights and sounds of the Patuxent River wetlands, birds, and more. Bring sunscreen, water, and a snack. Use one of our bikes and helmets or bring your own. Bikes are limited, call the park to reserve one for your trip.
Cost: Resident: \$2; Non-Resident: \$3
Ages: 13 & up
Location: Patuxent River Park
16000 Croom Airport Road, Upper Marlboro, 20772
Contact: 301-627-6074; TTY: 301-203-6030

Nature's Wings

Date and Time: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 7:30 pm
Description: These lectures are presented by Prince George's Audubon Society and Patuxent Bird Club in conjunction with the Biological Flyers exhibition. Learn something new every month about the natural world flying around us.
Wonderful World of Whoopers, Presented by Ken Lavish, Volunteer and Environmental Education Specialist, Patuxent Research Refuge. Join Ken Lavish as he discusses characteristics of Whooping Cranes, how they became so endangered, recovery efforts, and the current protocols in place to save these magnificent birds.
Cost: Free
Ages: 14 & up
Location: College Park Aviation Museum
1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive, College Park
Contact: 301-864-6029; TTY 301-699-2544

Dog Loves Books: The Musical

Date & Time: Tuesday, May 12, 2015 10:15 am & 12 noon
Description: Based on the bestselling children's book, this new musical tells the story of the irresistible dog who loves books so much he opens his own bookstore. This performance is supported by the GEICO Philanthropic Foundation and is free to Title 1 schools in Prince George's County.
Cost: \$8/person (general admission); \$6/person (groups 20 or more)
Ages: Recommended for grades K-2
Location: Publick Playhouse
5445 Landover Road, Landover, 20784
Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-277-0312

EARTH TALK ... Global Climate Agreement in the Works

Dear EarthTalk:

What are the prospects for reaching an international agreement to rein in carbon emissions significantly at the upcoming Paris climate talks at the end of the 2015?

— Jason Cervantes,
Los Angeles, CA

All eyes will be on Paris this coming December when climate delegates from around the world gather there for the 21st annual session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Achieving their objective—a legally binding and universal agreement limiting carbon emissions to keep global warming below two degrees Celsius—has been elusive to date, but environmentalists remain optimistic that 21 could be their lucky number.

“I have every expectation that negotiators will agree on an international climate pact in Paris,” says Jennifer Morgan, Climate Program Global Director for the World Resources Institute, a sustainability-oriented non-profit think tank. “This first truly global climate agreement will embody a new form of international cooperation that can put the world on a path to a low-carbon economy.”

Morgan remains optimistic not only because clean tech investments are surging worldwide while manufacturing costs for renewables like solar plummet, but also because the world’s largest emitters, the U.S., China and India, are already making unprecedented climate commitments. “All of this sends positive momentum heading into the climate talks in Paris,” she adds.

Meanwhile, Jamie Henn, strategy and communications director for the non-profit 350.org, agrees that the prospects for some kind of deal look good, but wonders “if it will actually significantly cut emissions.” He explains that some countries, led by the U.S., are trying to transform the climate agreement from a legally binding document that mandates emissions reductions to a looser “pledge and review” approach, whereby countries voluntarily offer up their own emissions reductions and financial commitments.

“That makes it easier to get a deal, but it’s unclear whether the commitments will really add up,” says Henn. “So far, it isn’t promising.” He adds that few countries have put forward the types of bold commitments necessary, while others, like Canada with its tar sands extraction, are flaunting the international consensus and aggressively expanding fossil fuel development.

Given these political realities, Henn thinks any deal struck at



CREDIT: SATHISH J, FLICKRCC

Delegates from hundreds of nations will meet in Paris in December 2015 to try to hash out an international climate pact.

Paris is unlikely to “save the climate” but could nevertheless send a powerful signal to politicians, investors and the public that the age of fossil fuels is coming to an end. “That would be a useful development, something that could lead to major shifts in investment flows and decision making at the national level,” he reports.

Henn believes that while the fossil fuel industry may still be “calling the shots” here in the U.S., the climate movement is making inroads. He cites the fossil fuel divestment campaign and mobilizations like the September 2014 People’s Climate March, where upwards of 400,000 people took to the streets of New York City call-

ing for emissions reductions, as indicators that change may finally be afoot.

“The fight for a fossil free future will continue whether or not Paris is a success,” concludes Henn. “The talks are just another stop along the way to a 100 percent renewable future.”

CONTACTS: World Resources Institute, www.wri.org; 350.org, www.350.org.

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Send questions to:
earthtalk@emagazine.com.

Coal Tar from A1

“Prince George’s County residents and children should not be exposed to PAH concentrations anywhere near the levels found in coal tar pavement products,” said Council Member Lehman. “Council Bill 6-2015 is a major step forward for our

public health--and for our impaired rivers.”

“The environment must be a critical priority for Prince George’s County to ensure a safe and sustainable future for generations to come,” said Council Member Taveras. “I am pleased to partner with Council Member Lehman on this important legislation.”

Council Bill 6-2015 will also prevent further contamination of the Anacostia River and its tributaries.

“This is a significant accomplishment in our regional partnership to restore the Anacostia River,” said Anacostia Watershed Society President, Jim Foster. “It’s a win for public health, it’s

a win for the environment, and moves us one step closer to a swimmable and fishable Anacostia River.”

With the Adoption of Council Bill 6-2015, the Anacostia watershed becomes the first multi-jurisdictional watershed in the nation free of coal tar pavement products.



MDA Encourages Communication between Herbicide Applicators, Specialty Crop Producers

By PRESS OFFICER
MDA

ANNAPOLIS, MD (April 30, 2015) – As trees and plants green up and soil temperatures rise across the state, farm operations of all sizes and types are getting into full swing of planting season. Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Secretary Joe Bartenfelder is encouraging anyone who will be applying herbicide products during this busy season to be mindful of best management practices and use good communication with their neighbors.

“It’s important for our commodity crop farmers and our growing sector of specialty crop farmers to work together so everyone can be successful,”

said Secretary Bartenfelder. “Herbicide applications are critical for corn and soybean production, but there are a number of specialty crops, such as grape vines, that are sensitive to these products.”

One way that farmers can open the door of communication is through MDA’s Sensitive Crop Locator database. This website is a free, voluntary service that allows those with pesticide sensitive crops, organic crops and beehives to report their locations. Herbicide applicators can review the site to gain an understanding of the locations of specialty crops in their area in order to take extra precautions for preventing the potential exposure of these crops to spray

drift from neighboring fields. Applicators will also have access to maps and aerial photographs.

“For example, Maryland’s vineyards are currently beginning ‘bud burst,’ or the official start of the vines’ annual growth cycle, so these plants are extremely vulnerable right now,” said Secretary Bartenfelder. “It’s also time for our commodity crop growers to ready their fields for planting, including herbicide applications. Communication between all parties right now is important to ensure successful crop production for everyone.”

The off target movement of herbicides from the site of application, referred to as drift, may cause injury to desirable plants located in adjacent fields,

or property. Spray drift is typically the result of small spray droplets being carried off-site by air movement. The main weather factors that cause drift are wind, humidity and temperature changes. Drift can injure foliage, shoots, flowers and fruits resulting in reduced yields, economic loss and illegal residues on exposed crops.

Farmers submit an application to MDA to have their crop data added to the mapping system. The Sensitive Crop Locator map, application and user guide can be found online at http://mda.maryland.gov/plants-pests/Pages/pesticide_regulation.aspx. For more information, contact Pesticide Regulation at 410-841-5710.

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BOOKS & MAGAZINES

Book Your Mom An Armchair Trip To Two New Ways Of Looking At Life

(NAPSI)—You can show your appreciation for all your mother has done for you, whether on Mother’s Day or at any time of the year, by giving her intriguing insights into how she can make her life better, happier and more filled with awe. Two new books can help you do just that.

• One, “Feeling Great: Creating a Life of Optimism, Enthusiasm and Contentment” by Peter Vegso and Kelly Johnson, is built on the timeless spiritual teachings of visionary Dadi Janki. With it, your mother can learn the precepts for feeling great and the three keys that unlock the ability to attain it. Parables and examples further illuminate this wisdom.

Known for her unswerving optimism and a heart rich with compassion, Dadi Janki redefined the concept of freedom in the West by placing it within the context of the ancient wisdom of the East.

The book raises such questions as what does “feeling great” really mean and is it really possible to feel great in today’s world with its violence and disorder? And then gives some surprising an-

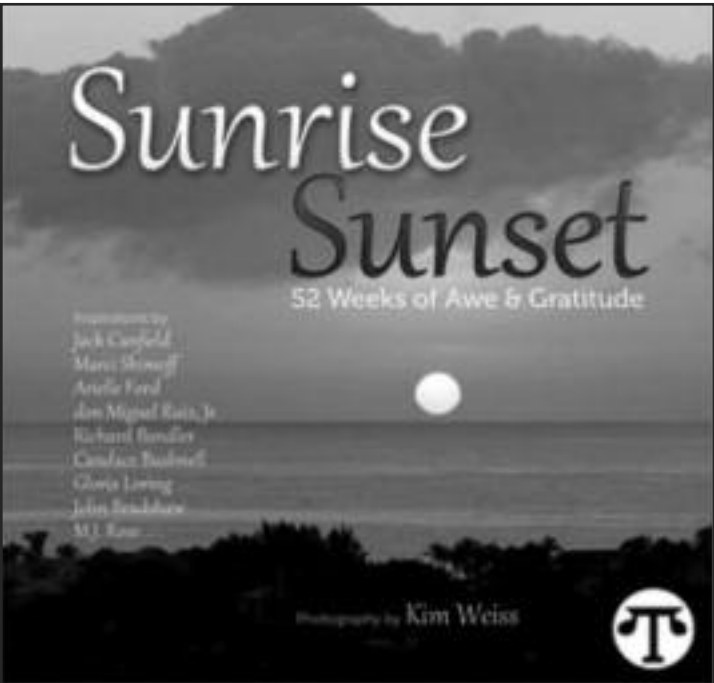


PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

swers: Feeling great is not about having a good time for a few hours or having money to spend. It’s about acquiring, applying and practicing four things as revealed in the book—enthusiasm, optimism, contentment and respect.

The book also reveals practical ways to navigate and overcome the sticking points every-

one encounters in a hectic, over-scheduled life and includes tips for feeling great physically. It can help your mother put her life in order and remember who she really is—an authentic way of living from the inside that can sustain her through life’s challenges.

Now is the time to start feeling great, and this uplifting book

shows you how easy it can be—not as a temporary indulgence, but as a lasting state of being.

• The other, “Sunrise, Sunset: 52 Weeks of Awe & Gratitude” by Kim Weiss, can make for a marvelous pick-me-up for special moments when your mom wants to pause and appreciate the magnificence of nature and help her begin each day with awe and wonder and end it with reflection and gratitude.

This colorful little book features beautiful photos complemented by inspirational passages from best-loved teachers and writers including “Sex and the City”’s Candace Bushnell and Jack Canfield, famed for his “Chicken Soup...” book series. “Sunrise, Sunset” can bring sunshine and the striking beauty of the sky into every day of the year. Your mom may care to keep it at her bedside, for a new cheering thought and view every day.

Where To Find Them

Each of these books is available on Amazon, from the publisher at www.hcibooks.com and elsewhere books are sold.

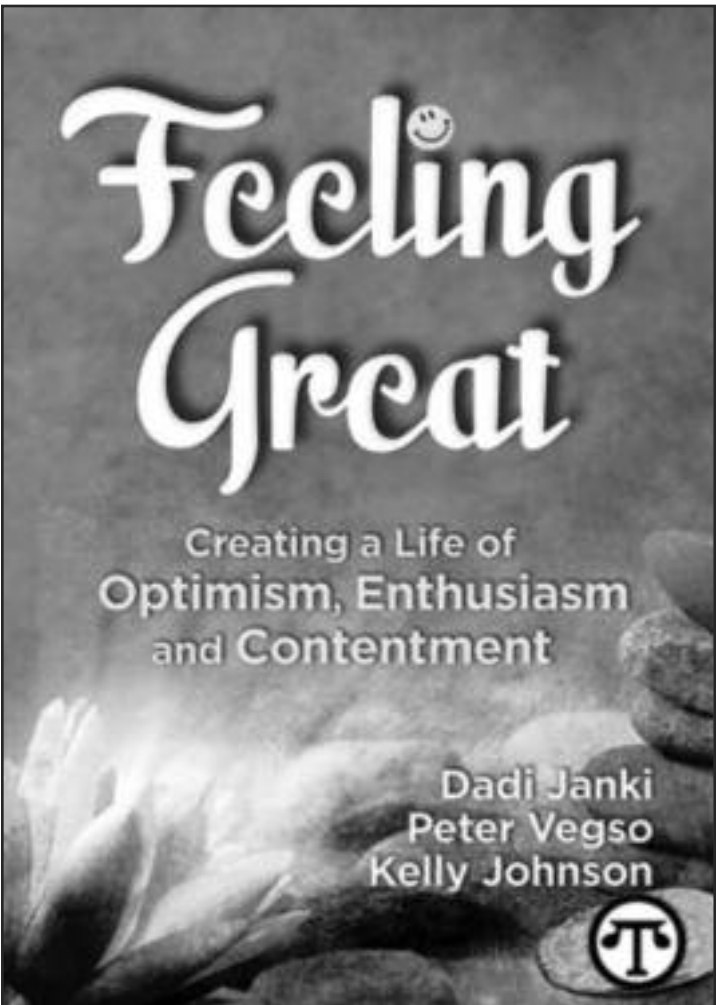


PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

Two Great Gifts For That Great Giver: Mom

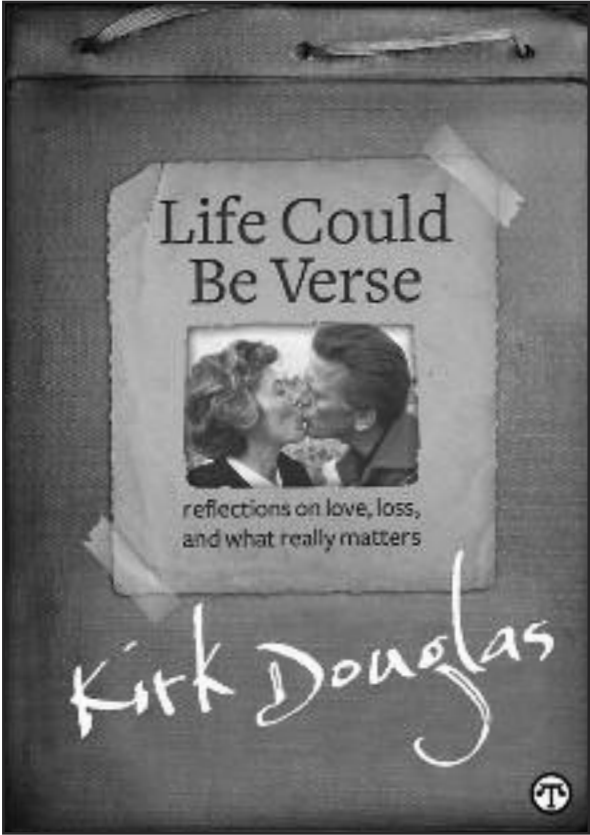


PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

(NAPSI)—Here are two excellent ideas about what to give the next time you want to get your mother a present—whether for Mother’s Day, her birthday or just to show how much you care.

Considering she probably helped you learn to read, a book or two is likely to be greatly appreciated, especially these:

• **For love of Mom.** From teaching children to tie their shoes, to parallel parking, to outfitting them for their first dance or first day in the dorm room, mothers have been their kids’ chief counselors, cheerleaders, critics, chauffeurs and chefs.

Now, this new book, “For the Love of Mom: Amazing True Stories of Moms and the People Who Love Them” by Maria Bailey, can be a way to pay homage to the special woman who rocked you, raised you, championed you, challenged you and even—at times—exasperated you.

While the experience of motherhood is different for every woman, one thing is universal: It’s almost impossible to fathom the myriad of joys and triumphs encountered on the journey.

Whether the mom in your life became so by giving birth or through the blessings of adoption or stepparenting, she’s likely to be moved, inspired and entertained by these true stories that share both the monumental milestones and everyday moments of motherhood. Some stories are humorous, some heartfelt; others will help

moms through the trying times, yet all underscore the devotion and dedication we admire most about mothers.

This book celebrates moms and the uniquely important roles they play in everyone’s life.

• **Fun for fans.** Another terrific tome, “Life Could Be Verse,” features the poetry of legendary actor Kirk Douglas.

Beautifully bound, it’s something most moms—Spartacus fans or not—would be happy to have out on the coffee table.

The book was created by the renowned actor, crowned as one of the greatest male screen legends in American film history by the American Film Institute, leading up to his 99th birthday. It offers an intimate look into his life through poetry, prose and photos. He pulls the curtain all the way back, exposing the bombs and blockbusters of both his personal and professional life.

He also celebrates the leading ladies in his life, from Marlene Dietrich to Lauren Bacall to Brigitte Bardot, as well as his wife of more than 60 years, the actress and film producer Anne Buydens.

Douglas’ words and his poems, written for his wife, his sons and others, are comical, sentimental, romantic, sometimes even painful but always intriguing.

Where to find them: Both books are available on Amazon, from the publisher at www.hcibooks.com and elsewhere books are sold.

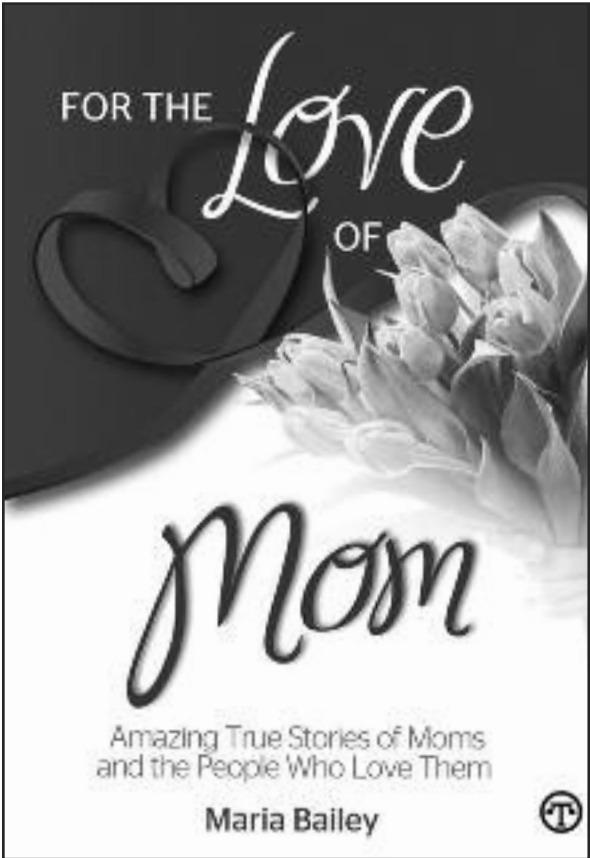


PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

Drawing On The Future

(NAPSI)—Twenty-five writers and artists from around the globe offer their vision for the future in a contest with a fascinating past.

The Writers of the Future Writing Contest was initiated by best-selling author L. Ron Hubbard in 1983 to help aspiring writers to get that much-needed break. It seems to have worked. The 368 past winners of the Writing Contest have published 838 novels and nearly 4,000 short stories. They have produced 27 New York Times best sellers and their works have sold over 50 million copies.

Due to the success of the Writing Contest, the companion Illustrators of the Future Contest was created in 1983. The 298 past winners of the Illustrating Contest have produced over 4,500 illustrations and 356 comic books, graded 594 books and albums with their art, and visually contributed to 36 TV shows and 46 major movies.

Recently, the latest winners were honored at the 31st Annual L. Ron Hubbard Achievement Awards. The winners, from among several thousand hopefuls, saw their work published in the best-selling science fiction anthology series.

The two grand-prize honors were captured by Sharon Roest (pen name Sharon Joss) of Aloha, Ore., who took the Golden Pen Award and a \$5,000 cash prize, and Michelle Lochamy of



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

“Queen of Angels,” painted by Bob Eggleton was the winner in an annual science fiction art contest.

Browns Mills, N.J., who was awarded the Golden Brush Award and a \$5,000 cash prize. The winners also attended a weeklong workshop taught by the contest judges, experienced professionals providing sound advice based on hard-won experience.

The book, “L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future, Volume 31,” is now available online at Amazon.com, KOBO.com and BN.com and in print where books are sold.

For more information and to see the awards ceremony online, go to www.writersofthefuture.com.

Teacher Workshops



PHOTO CREDIT: ALON DAVID PHOTOGRAPHY

Teachers can get useful insights in one-day workshops.

(NAPSI)—Teachers today need to keep up with changing expectations and environments in education—and they need to do so quickly. Fortunately, there are one-day programs that let educators learn something today and use it tomorrow.

An education association has a faculty that will come to the school to share research-based practices it can use right away to boost student achievement. Books and materials are included.

- Among the workshops:**
- **Grading Smarter, Not Harder**—assessment strategies that motivate students so grades show what students know.
 - **Productive Group Work**—so students end up learning more than they would alone.
 - **Checking for Understanding**—in any subject and grade.
 - **A Close Look at Close Reading**—how this provides a foundation for students to develop thinking, speaking and writing skills required by the Common Core State Standards.

Learn More

For further information or to sign up, call the experts at ASCD Professional Learning Services at (800) 933-2723 or (703) 578-9600, ext. 5773 or e-mail programteam@ascd.org.

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HEALTH & FITNESS

What Can Women Learn From Angelina Jolie’s Surgeries?



(NAPSI)—In 2013, actress Angelina Jolie made headlines by announcing that she had decided to have a double mastectomy as a preventative measure against a hereditary form of cancer. Sadly, Jolie had previously lost her mother, grandmother and aunt to this same type of cancer—linked to a mutation in the BRCA1 gene—and knew that her risks were extremely high. So, in a bold and somewhat controversial move, Jolie took preventative steps before the cancer ever fully developed.

On March 24, 2015, Angelina made another startling announcement through a New York Times Op-Ed piece: She had opted to have her ovaries and fallopian tubes surgically removed. Along with increasing the risk of breast cancer to 87 percent, the BRCA1 mutation also carries a 50 percent chance of developing ovarian cancer.

Again, Jolie reacted pre-emptively to stop the cancer before it started.

In her article, Jolie was very clear and logical—stating that she had put plenty of thought into the decision. But recent blood tests had shown an increase in certain inflammatory markers that could be a sign of early cancer. After receiving the news, Jolie saw several doctors—both from Eastern and Western disciplines—and decided that surgery was her best option.

Potential Problems

Interestingly, Jolie also plainly stated that women in situations similar to her own should not jump directly to surgery; it was simply the recommended solution based on her unique circumstances. The procedure does carry significant risks, some of which Jolie is currently dealing with. Specifically, Jolie is currently receiving bio-identical estrogen through a patch and progesterone via IUD. Despite these steps, though, Jolie was honest in stating that she is now undergoing early menopause. Jolie also noted in her article that a surgery similar to her own carries a fairly large list of risks, including:

- Hormonal imbalances, caused by sudden and severe surgical menopause
- Complications associated with any major abdominal surgery
- A 170 percent increase of premature death in women under 45
- The risk of developing heart disease increases by seven times

- An increased risk of Parkinson’s disease, dementia and osteoporosis
- Decline in sexual function and overall psychological well-being.

Based on these added risks, Jolie recommended in her article that women seek out other options. Commonly used approaches include birth control pills or alternative medical treatments. In addition, Angelina herself wrote that she is currently looking for natural ways to strengthen her immune system. With this in mind, what are some of these other options? Are there natural ways to strengthen your immune system and reduce your risk of certain cancers? Yes.

Other Options

Here are some quick tips to strengthen your immune system and reduce your risk of cancers by up to 200 percent (even if you have the BRCA1 gene mutation):

- 1. Adequate sleep.** One of the most powerful steps you can take is doing all you can to improve the function of your immune system. The sleep hormone, melatonin, has many anticancer actions including suppressing the BRCA1 gene. Adequate sleep (at least seven hours each night, ideally between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.) coupled with appropriate exercise has been shown in numerous studies to strengthen your overall immune health.
- 2. Proper diet.** Along with that, a proper diet—one rich in a variety of nutrient-dense foods—can also help to improve your immune system while fighting the oxidative damage

that is associated with certain cancers. Specifically, caffeinated coffee and cruciferous vegetables such as kale, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and cabbage have all been shown to be effective in reducing the risks of BRCA1-associated cancer. These foods are rich in antioxidants that help to repair damage done by free radicals, as well as micronutrients that help to support a healthy immune system.

3. AHCC®. A unique mushroom extract. A natural substance derived from Japanese medicinal mushrooms, AHCC is the leading alternative cancer treatment used in hundreds of clinics throughout Asia to support the immune system in lowering the risk of cancer while improving survival. Research has shown that AHCC increases the numbers and activity of several components of the immune system, such as cytokines (immune messengers), as well as natural killer cells, macrophages, T cells and dendritic cells (all types of white blood cells that destroy pathogens and abnormal cells). This allows the body to better identify and react to foreign invaders—including cancer cells, which very closely resemble normal, healthy cells and which your immune system may not be able to recognize if it is not strong enough. Supplementation with AHCC, though, can help to strengthen your body’s natural defenses as proven in 25 human clinical studies.

Again, as Jolie said in her article, there is no one way to treat cancer because each case is different. In her situation, a team



Angelina Jolie

of professionals advised Jolie that preventative surgery was the best course of action—although she is still at risk of developing cancer. However, natural strategies do exist that can help to both prevent cancer from forming and complement the treatment of pre-existing conditions.

Christine Horner, M.D., FACS, is a nationally known surgeon, author and professional

speaker and holds two board certifications: the National Board of Surgery and the National Board of Plastic Surgery. Horner is the award-winning author of “Waking The Warrior Goddess: Dr. Christine Horner’s Program to Protect Against and Fight Breast Cancer” (3rd Edition/2013/Basic Health), and is one of the country’s leading authorities on cancer prevention.

Six Back-To-Basics Health Tips

(NAPSI)—Staying in shape and being healthy can be a challenge for anyone, especially with different fad diets and health trends constantly emerging. But knowing just a few facts and tips can really help you to stay on top of your health goals.

When looking to stay fit, it’s always important to remember some basic guidelines including exercising regularly and hydrating with enough water. But how much exercise is the right amount, and is all water considered equal? Although water in the U.S. is fine to drink, in some cases it may not be as clean as you’d expect and could contain harmful contaminants.

The following six “back-to-basics” tips offer additional guidance on how to establish a healthier lifestyle:

- 1. Get enough exercise.**

According to the experts at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most adults need a minimum of 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (such as brisk walking) every week. Adults also need muscle-strengthening activities that work all major muscle groups (e.g., legs, abdomen, chest, arms) at least twice per week in order to improve their health.
- 2. See your doctor.**

Ask about the types and amounts of physical activity that are right for you, especially if you have a chronic health condition.
- 3. Don’t get discouraged.**

While 150 minutes each week may sound like a lot, it’s

really not. You don’t have to do it all at once. Try breaking it up into smaller chunks of time; say, 10 minutes or so.

4. Go for variety.

There are a lot of different ways to get the physical activity you need: dancing, gardening, light jogging and sports such as softball and tennis are just a few options. Pick activities you enjoy and that match your abilities.

5. Take the talk test.

There’s a way to tell if your activity is intense enough: During moderate-intensity activity, you should be able to talk but not sing. During vigorous-intensity activity, you should not be able to say more than a few words without pausing for a breath.

6. Drink (water) to stay hydrated.

Water can help keep your energy levels up, cushion joints and prevent dehydration during exercise, ensuring peak performance no matter the activity. Staying sufficiently hydrated means you should take a drink before you feel thirsty, especially in warm weather when you may be perspiring more from the heat. To ensure you’re consuming enough clean, fresh-tasting H₂O, consider at-home water filtration. One filter system to consider is PUR, which features MAXION Technology, a unique formulation that blends carbon and ion exchange materials for maximum contaminant reduction. The PUR Pitchers reduce twice as many contaminants as Brita pitchers, while PUR Faucet Mounts reduce 10 times more contaminants than Brita pitchers.

In fact, these faucet mount filters are certified to reduce up to 71 contaminants including heavy metals, agricultural pesticides, industrial pollutants, pharmaceuticals, and chlorine taste and odor, while leaving behind beneficial fluoride that helps contribute to strong, healthy teeth. The faucet mount also features a brand-new metal adapter to ensure a tight, secure fit around your faucet and has a PUR Satisfaction Guarantee. Choosing to make the simple decision to use an at-home water filtration system, and keeping in mind some of these other basic tips, can put you on the path to a healthier life.

To learn more about MAXION Technology and staying hydrated with PUR’s products, visit www.pur.com.



Physical activity is good for your health but you need to stay properly hydrated to make the most of it.

Understanding Depression

(NAPSI)—Pondering six important points can help you answer the question “Are you depressed?” about yourself or someone you care about.

According to Healthline.com, one in 10 Americans experience depression at some point in their lives yet only about 20 percent seek professional medical help—even though the malady is completely treatable.

“May is National Mental Health Month,” says Dr. Paul Corona, author of the book series “Healing the Mind & Body: The Trilogy.” “Why not take this month to reflect on your own mental health by answering a few simple questions? Your answers may surprise you.”

- Have you lost interest in doing things you used to enjoy?
- Are you more sad or crying more than usual?
- Do you have low energy, motivation and drive?
- Are you sleeping more or less than usual?
- Do you feel hopeless, helpless and worthless?
- Do you have suicidal thoughts or recurring thoughts of death?

“If you answered ‘yes’ to any of the above questions, you may be suffering from depression,” says Dr. Corona. While, he



Dr. Corona

points out, depression is not your fault, you can still do something about it. There is hope, he says, adding, “My advice is that you schedule an appointment with your preferred M.D., who can best diagnose you and offer a variety of solutions ranging from anti-depressants to therapy.”

Based in Laguna Niguel, Calif., Dr. Paul Corona has helped tens of thousands of patients achieve the happiness they desire, and now he has written a series of three books called “Healing the Mind & Body: The Trilogy” to serve as a comprehensive reference guide for those seeking help.

For more information, visit <http://drpaulcoronamd.com>.

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HEALTH & FITNESS

Together, We Are Stronger Than MS

Make Your Connection Count To End Multiple Sclerosis Forever

(NAPSI)--Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, unpredictable disease of the central nervous system. MS destroys connections, divides minds from bodies, pulls people from their lives and away from one another. Therefore, it’s only fitting that connections would be its greatest enemy. Connections help individuals address the challenges of MS and move their lives forward. Connections break down barriers around the world and help researchers pursue the best science to stop MS, restore function lost and end MS forever.

Such connections have helped move MS in just two decades from being an untreatable disease to one for which there are at least 12 disease-modifying treatment options for relapsing MS, the most common form of MS. Such connections also unite nearly 100 nations around the globe each May for World MS Day to raise awareness about how MS affects the lives of more than 2.3 million people.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society is a driving force in this effort to connect everyone committed to creating a world free of MS, devoting more than \$52 million to support 380 research projects internationally while providing services to more than 1 million people annually.

Science is moving at an incredible pace. The approach to research needs to be open, flexible and holistic, tapping into the expertise of scientific advisers who identify gaps and opportunities, and the MS community who provide topics that matter most to them. Key research priorities are progressive MS, nervous system repair, wellness, and genetics



Actor Shemar Moore participates in Bike MS in honor of his mom, Marilyn Wilson-Moore, who has MS.

PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

and environmental risk factors for MS.

Progressive MS: The Society is focusing on the next frontier in MS research, finding solutions for people experiencing worsening disability that characterizes progressive MS,

for whom there are few treatment options. The Society led an international effort culminating in the creation of the International Progressive MS Alliance, a growing global initiative to end progressive MS, which is already funding

22 research grants across nine countries as part of an ambitious program to allocate at least \$30 million over the next six years to find solutions for progressive MS. The Society is also investing in strategies to protect the nervous system

from injury, and in advanced imaging techniques and other biomarkers to track progression and the success of therapies.

Nervous system repair, recovery and wellness: Repairing myelin may represent the best strategy for protecting

nerve fibers from injury and improving function for people with MS. Thanks in part to the Society’s pioneer funding, potential cell therapies and myelin repair strategies are now approaching or already in clinical trials. Recovery can take other forms, and the Society is supporting more than 30 studies of new exercise, rehabilitation and other nonpharmaceutical programs to address symptoms and restore function. It also recently launched a Wellness Initiative and is formulating priorities to drive research and programs aimed at helping people with MS live their best lives.

Genes/Environmental Risk Factors: Researchers are starting to drill down into how genes and the environment interact to cause MS and possibly to influence the course of the disease. This area is ripe for additional efforts and could lead directly to new therapeutic targets for treating the disease and also eventually for preventing MS.

This remarkable progress being made in understanding and treating MS is propelled by people like you who combine their efforts, knowledge and hope to create connections that can become more powerful than the connections MS destroys.

You can make meaningful connections at www.nationalMSSociety.org, where you will find expert MS information, connect and share with others, download tools to spread MS awareness, or register for Society events. Whether you volunteer, bike, walk, advocate or support, every connection you create unites you with people around the world in the MS movement and moves us closer to a world free of MS.

Screening For Diabetes During Pregnancy

(NAPSI)—About 240,000 of the 4 million women who give birth every year in the United States develop diabetes during their pregnancy, a condition known as gestational diabetes—but it can be prevented. Gestational diabetes usually has no symptoms but can cause negative health effects for the mother and her child. Fortunately, proper screening and treatment can reduce the risk of these health effects for both mom and baby.

Health Concern for Women and Babies

If gestational diabetes is not identified and managed, it can lead to complications during pregnancy and labor. For example, gestational diabetes can cause babies to grow bigger than usual before they are born, making labor and delivery more complicated. A woman with gestational diabetes is also more likely to have the baby before her due date or need a C-section to deliver the baby. Gestational diabetes can also lead to an increased risk of developing pre-eclampsia, a serious condition of very high blood pressure during pregnancy.

Gestational diabetes can cause health problems for women and their babies after

delivery. Women with gestational diabetes have an increased risk of developing diabetes later in life. Babies can have health problems shortly after birth, such as low blood sugar, that require hospital care.

Reducing Your Risk Before Pregnancy

All the causes of gestational diabetes are not yet fully understood. However, taking steps to get healthy before getting pregnant can help reduce the risk of developing this condition. This includes maintaining a healthy weight through a balanced diet and regular physical activity, not smoking, and managing any chronic conditions such as high blood pressure with the help of your doctor or nurse.

A Simple but Important Screening Test

Recently, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force reviewed evidence about gestational diabetes to determine who should be screened and at what stage of pregnancy. Based on the evidence, the Task Force recommends that all pregnant women be screened for gestational diabetes after 24 weeks of pregnancy. Screening is important



Staying healthy before and during your pregnancy is important for both you and your baby.

PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

because women with gestational diabetes usually do not have any symptoms and early diagnosis of the condition can help a woman and her doctor

develop a plan to help manage any health problems.

The most common screening test for gestational diabetes is an oral glucose toler-

ance test. For this test, you will be asked to drink a sugar solution. Then, your blood is tested to see how well your body processes the sugar.

Having a Healthy Pregnancy and Baby

Women with gestational diabetes can have a healthy pregnancy and baby. If you are diagnosed with gestational diabetes, your doctor or midwife will work with you to make a treatment plan to keep you and your baby healthy. This includes diet and physical activity changes to keep blood sugar levels under control, education and counseling, and blood sugar monitoring. If these steps do not control your blood sugar levels, you may need to take insulin or other medicine. You will also need closer medical observation during your pregnancy. Fortunately, monitoring and treatment of gestational diabetes can significantly reduce the risk of health problems for you and your baby.

Protecting Your Health

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force is an independent, volunteer panel of national experts in prevention and evidence-based medicine. The Task Force makes evidence-based recommendations on primary care services.

Learn More

For more information on the Task Force and to read the full report on screening for gestational diabetes, visit www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org.

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SPRING TIME

Tips On Helping Your Yard Warm Up To Spring

(NAPSI)—With winter finally behind us, it’s time to focus on getting your yard prepped and ready to enjoy! Here are some tips that can help make your time and effort more productive and rewarding.

- Don’t try to get everything done in just one weekend. Make sure the lawn has a chance to wake up and come back to life during the early spring months. If you are patient, the sun and soil will often do much of the prep work for you.
- Give your yard a thorough raking before you treat the grass or mow for the first time. Raking pulls up any thatch that may have accumulated over the winter and highlights any dead spots or compacted areas that need special attention. If your lawn is compacted, loosen the soil so the grass can start growing again.
- It’s easier to rid your lawn of weeds before they have a chance to form. Early spring is a good time to apply herbicides to prevent the weeds from developing.
- Low spots in a lawn can cause poor drainage, lead to poor growing conditions for grass and make mowing a challenge. Use a shovel to cut away areas that are raised and fill in spaces that are depressed.

Using the right tools for various lawn care projects can pay dividends, particularly when it comes to getting the job done right the first time.



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

Remember, using the right tools for various yard care jobs can pay dividends, particularly when it comes to getting the job done right the first time.

Start your spring-cleaning tasks with a deep clean of your deck, siding and driveway for

an instant curb appeal boost. The Briggs & Stratton POWERflow+ pressure washer of-

fers a high-pressure option for deep cleaning or high-flow option for longer-reaching and

faster-rinsing cycles. It can also be used on delicate surfaces, such as your patio furniture.

Its 7-in-1 nozzle with one-handed operation saves time and eliminates the need for multiple trips. It even has a detergent tank that works to deliver power soaping on demand and a fold-down handle design for compact storage.

If your yard has an uneven terrain, the Troy-Bilt Mustang Zero-Turn Lawn Mower is made to handle such tasks. It has a Kohler engine, comes with mulching capabilities and has an integrated rear hitch that allows you to use dump carts, spreaders and other tow-behind attachments. You can also attach a garden hose to quickly and easily clean the underside of a deck.

The Troy-Bilt FLEX, available exclusively at Lowe’s, is a whole new approach to yard care. It features a single-base engine that powers four different attachments including a wide-area mower, leaf blower, pressure washer and snow thrower, freeing up a lot of space in your garage. It allows you to easily transition from one job to the next as each attachment clicks right into the base engine.

The attachments are sold separately so homeowners can customize their system. This allows customers to save money and up to 60 percent of garage storage space when compared to the purchase of individual, one-use products.

For more information, visit www.Lowes.com.

Spring Refresh: Add Some Color Into Your Home With 2015 Trend Colors

(NAPSI)—Spring is a time for renewal and rejuvenation. Why not bring this feeling into your home with a spring refresh? Paint is the most impactful way to revamp or add life to a room. Whether you’re looking for a barely-there whisper of color or a bold combination of vibrant hues, a fresh coat of paint can dramatically transform your space.

Not sure where to start? Here are the four color trend palettes from Pratt & Lambert’s 2015 Color Forecast, Origins. These are the colors that are making the biggest impact this year:

1. Elemental This trend includes delicate, brittle icicle hues, accented by strokes of slate and stone. The palette, which includes colors like Victoria Blue 23-15 and Snow Goose 23-1, is frozen and fractured, founded on the Earth’s darkest elements and the atmosphere’s coldest impartiality. One moment it can seem

aloof and the next, intimate, which makes these soothing tones top choices for bedrooms and bathrooms.

2. Chronicles This palette speaks in bold and modern tones, deepened with a patina of age and accented with opulence. Choose colors like Noir 24-16 or Inca Gold 13-14 for your living room, dining room and foyer to bring a sense of drama and paint a story on your walls.

3. Cadence This trend is represented in a palette that’s rhythmic and energetic. These hues know no convention, as unexpected pairings, like Serpentine 16-13 and Starless Night 27-14, happen in a global melting pot of imagination. This palette can liven up a child’s bedroom, warm up a kitchen and lift up a mudroom or laundry room.

4. Terra This palette features harmonious hues from the softer side of nature, designed to bring the outside into

the home with easy spaces, organic colors and natural materials. Colors like Osprey 26-29 or Moss Stone 18-19 are perfect for your bathroom, kitchen, enclosed porch or front hall—and you may find this palette just right for your bedroom as well.

You can find these colors and more represented within the Pratt & Lambert color palette.

Try these colors in Pratt & Lambert Accolade® Interior Paint + Primer. As Pratt & Lambert’s finest interior paint, this rich, luxurious coating is formulated to go on smoothly for a beautiful, stunning finish. With exceptional durability, Accolade is washable and scrubbable, and looks new for years.

Learn More

For more color and painting inspiration and to view the full trend palettes, visit www.prattandlambert.com/color-and-inspiration/color-trends.

Get Your Motors Running Quickly This Spring



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

To avoid trouble on the first start of Spring, many turn to an engine additive to revitalize fuel and stabilize a small engine’s fuel system.

(NAPSI)—Forget about spotting the proverbial robin. For many, the first real sign of Spring is getting their lawn mower and other small-engine equipment out of storage and ready for the season.

But before you rev up the motor, it’s important to remember that your equipment has been sitting for months and you need to take proper steps to get it in working order.

Proper preparation yields a variety of benefits, including better performance, saved maintenance costs and maximizing the life of your machine.

To help get your machines ready for the season ahead, here are some tips to get you started.

• **Clean ‘em up.** After sitting in a storage shed for a few months, your machines have likely acquired a nice layer of

dust, dirt and grime. Make sure to do a thorough cleaning of the entire machine and check for any damage or possible blockages.

• **Never a dull moment.** If you are working on your lawn mower, hedge trimmer or any other machine with a blade, the Spring tune-up is an excellent time to make sure it’s in prime cutting shape. The blade should be sharpened at least once a year. While the blade is off, it’s also a good time to finish cleaning the underside of the machine.

• **Don’t forget the filter.** It’s a good idea to start the season with a clean filter. If the machine has a foam filter, you can clean it with soap and water. However, if it’s a paper filter, it’s best to replace it with a new one.

• **A well-oiled machine.** Whether it’s a lawn mower,

motorcycle or ATV, small-engine equipment will work better if it’s well lubricated, particularly if it has been in storage. Make sure to oil the wheel bearings and other moving parts.

• **Prepare your engine.** To make sure your engine starts up on the first try this Spring, try a fuel additive such as Start Your Engines! It’s a fuel revitalizer designed for use with any small 2- and 4-cycle motors that have been sitting in storage and are ready to reactivate. Just pour it directly into the gas tank, and the engine should start up fast, hassle-free.

As an added bonus, it attacks and dissolves any gum or varnish buildup.

To learn more, visit www.GoldEagle.com.



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

Refresh your walls this spring with Pratt & Lambert’s 2015 color trends.

SAFETY

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO: Take Five And Check Your Tires

(NAPSI)—Keep your family and vehicle safe as you prepare for your summer travels.

Temperatures are rising and summer road trip season is here. It is imperative for motorists to stay on top of tire maintenance during summer months because as temperatures start to increase, so do the frequency of tire blowouts. Maintaining proper tire pressure not only improves road safety, it gives motorists the most from their tires. Improperly inflated tires lead to decreased steering and braking control as well as excessive tire wear and fuel consumption.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, only 19 percent of consumers keep their tires properly inflated. Improper tire care contributes to about 200 fatalities each year. The agency also estimates that about 11,000 tire-related crashes occur annually.

To get the most from your tires this summer, here are five important maintenance tips from the world’s largest independent tire and wheel retailer, Discount Tire:

1. Get Pressure Right—Low tire pressure can decrease fuel economy. Tires may lose up to one pound PSI (per square inch) of air pressure per month. The specific



Your family’s next road trip can be safer and more enjoyable if you first take five minutes to check your tires.

inflation pressure number may be found on the vehicle placard located inside the driver’s door. Don’t forget to check trailer tires. Checking the tire pressure for boat, travel and

utility trailers is as important as for your car or truck. Make it a point to check tire pressure every month, using the vehicle manufacturer’s recommended tire pressure.

2. Stay Sticky with Tread—Lack of tread affects the tire’s ability to stick to the road, especially in wet conditions. Make sure tires don’t have uneven wear, which indi-

cates something is wrong with the tire. High or low spots or unusually smooth areas may decrease traction and increase the risk of road accidents. Road trippers should also check tire

tread depth by using the “penny test.” Insert a penny upside down into the tread. If you see Abe Lincoln’s entire head, it’s time to replace the tire.

3. Rotate Often—Regular rotation helps achieve uniform tire wear and improves road performance. Tires rotated every 6,000 miles have longer life and will help maximize your tire investment.

4. Don’t Forget the Spare—Don’t get stuck with a flat tire in the middle of nowhere and discover that your spare is also flat. Check your spare tire on a regular basis as you would your other tires.

5. Don’t Overload—Overloading your vehicle’s or trailer’s carrying capacity is dangerous and can lead to tire failure. Handling, control and braking are also negatively impacted. Check your owner’s manual for load capacity specifications prior to packing your vehicle before vacation.

Remembering these tips and taking five minutes each month to inspect your tires will go a long way in keeping you and your passengers safe. Discount Tire offers free tire air pressure inspections, available at more than 900 locations nationwide. To learn more about tire safety, visit www.discounttire.com.

Protect Your Business From Termite Problems

(NAPSI)—While termites cause more than \$5 billion in damage a year, knowing a few facts can help your company and property best those pests.

First, you need to know what kind of termites you have.

Main Types

- Subterranean termites are the most common. They nest in the soil below the structure and travel upward to feed on and damage your building, inventory and equipment. They can be eradicated with bait or liquid treatment.
- Drywood termites can survive without contact with the soil and infest virtually any part of a building and its contents. They’re best eradicated with fumigation treatment.

Signs of Infestation

Next, you need to know how to tell when you’re under attack. Look for mud tubes

about the width of a drinking straw. That’s how most of the termites get to their food. Others use the tubes to travel, so they can swarm from the nest, shed their wings near windows, doors, vents and lighting fixtures and then find a place to start their own colony.

You’re Not Out Of The Woods With Steel

It’s also important to remember that even if your structure is made of masonry or steel, it’s still susceptible to termite infestation and swarming. That’s because they’ll eat carpet backing, furniture, office files—virtually anything made of cellulose, explains Doug Webb, manager, technical and termite services, Terminix Commercial.

A Solution

Fortunately, you can get comprehensive termite protection that’s fast, discreet

and effective. Terminix Commercial has proven treatment strategies to rid your property of termites and protect it from future infestations. There’s even a guarantee, so you can not only be termite-free, but worry-free, too.

The company’s professional entomologists and technicians know how to protect against more than termites. Specialized services can deal with just about anything from black widow spiders to bedbugs to yellow jackets, hornets, bees, ants, mosquitoes and more. They also remove rats, squirrels and other foul pests that can cause damage to your building and your reputation.

Learn More

For further information on how to stop termites from eating away at your bottom line, call (855) 466-2578 or go to www.terminix.com/commercial.



The hardest workers at your place may not be human. They may be termites—but you can get rid of them before they work their way in too far.

Protect Your Family Three Ways

(NAPSI)—A few simple steps can help reduce the risk that your loved ones will be injured in your house.

1. Be sure your home is adequately protected by smoke alarms. Smoke alarms should be installed in every bedroom, outside each sleeping area and on every level of the home. For the best protection, smoke alarms should be interconnected, so that they all sound if one sounds. You can now interconnect battery-operated alarms by wireless technology.

Combination devices that include both ionization and photoelectric alarms offer the most comprehensive protection. An ionization alarm is more responsive to flames, while a photoelectric alarm is more responsive to a smoldering fire.

Once the alarms are installed properly, be sure to test them monthly and replace the batteries once a year or anytime an alarm “chirps” or “beeps” to indicate low batteries. In any case, smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.

2. Childproof. If children live in or visit your house, you should know that every day, nearly seven youngsters are treated in hospital emergency rooms for electrical shock or burn injuries caused by tampering with a wall outlet. Fortunately, tamper-resistant receptacles (TRRs) can replace standard outlets to protect children from injury. They include a built-in shutter system that keeps foreign objects out.



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI
Consider replacing outlets with tamper-resistant receptacles (TRRs) to protect children from trying to stick some foreign object into the outlet.

When equal pressure is applied simultaneously to both sides, the receptacle cover plates open, so a standard plug can make contact with the receptacle contact points. Without this synchronized pressure, the cover plates remain closed.

3. Give your home a check-up. To reduce your risk, your outlets, extension cords, appliances and lightbulbs all need to be safely inspected, installed, utilized and maintained.

Learn How

To help you identify and remedy any electrical hazards in your home, the Electrical Safety Foundation International has a variety of resources that can show you how to protect your home and loved ones. Visit www.esfi.org to view and download these materials free of charge.



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VACATION & TRAVEL

Sailing Away To The Baltics

(NAPSI)—Ancient sights, romantic nights and days filled with delights can be found when you take your family on a cruise to the Baltics—made up of countries surrounding the Baltic Sea—a breathtaking region that is gaining popularity as a travel destination. More than 4 million travelers cruise around there every year.

Vikings and Norse explorers once sailed these waters and a cruise may still be the best way to meet the warm, welcoming people who live there now and explore its many other charms—because you can save time and money staying on the ship. Accommodations and food are taken care of on the cruise so travelers don’t have to worry about costs associated with visiting some of the world’s most expensive cities.

What’s more, while once many of the ships sailing the Baltic were older, midsize cruise ships, the growing popularity of the region means cruise lines now deploy bigger, more contemporary vessels. For example, Princess Cruises is sailing two of its newest ships, Royal Princess and Regal Princess.

Three More Reasons To Cruise

First, cruising offers something for everyone, from the very young to the young at heart. It’s great for groups, celebrations and meeting new people. That may be part of the appeal for the estimated 10 million people who go cruising from U.S. ports every year.

Consider this: On board Princess Cruises, you can



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

For a vacation that’s a wonderful combination of the comfortable and the adventurous, consider a cruise around the Baltic Sea.

watch “Movies Under the Stars,” with complimentary blankets and popcorn. Alternatively, meet friends for a small bite and wine by the glass, and enjoy street performer-style entertainment in the Piazza. Or spend a few hours of tranquility in The Sanctuary—a retreat just for adults where you can

enjoy a massage, signature drinks and snacks, or the spectacular sea views and sunsets from your plush lounge chair. Evenings are filled with live entertainment options.

Next, it’s educational. A new Discovery at Sea program at Princess, in partnership with Discovery, brings to life the na-

ture, wildlife and history of the region that guests are sailing to through onboard activities and shore excursions.

Finally, once you get off the ship, the next exciting phase begins. From the glorious spires of St. Petersburg and the idyllic waterfront of Stockholm to the fjords of the Norwegian coast,

there are great sites and sights to see, such as:

- **St. Petersburg**—Few places can match St. Petersburg for sheer opulence. Known as the “Venice of the North” for its canal system, this grand city is home to such treasures as the world-famous State Hermitage Museum, opulent Peterhof and

Catherine Palaces, as well as elaborate parks and magnificent cathedrals.

- **Norway**—Geiranger Fjord, lined by soaring snowcapped mountains and fabled waterfalls, is a World Heritage Site. The stark wonders of North Cape and remote towns like Spitsbergen and Tromsø await farther north in the Land of the Midnight Sun.

- **Copenhagen**—Adding to the romance of the picturesque seaside buildings that welcome travelers is Hans Christian Andersen’s The Little Mermaid, who sits on a rock gazing out to sea.

- **Tallinn**—The capital of Estonia is among the best-preserved medieval European towns with cathedral cupolas and golden crosses rising high above the rooftops. It dates back nearly a thousand years. Exploring the many narrow, winding, cobblestoned streets is like taking a trip to the 15th century.

- **Stockholm**—Old Town Stockholm is one of Sweden’s most spectacular spots. The top of City Hall offers breathtaking views of the surrounding area. The Royal Palace has over 600 rooms and several museums.

Voyages begin in May and run into September, either of which can be a great time to go to enjoy lighter crowds and lower cruise fares.

Learn More

For further information on cruising to the Baltic, visit your professional travel consultant or go to www.princess.com.

Believe In Soulmates? Survey Shows You’re Not Alone

(NAPSI)—If you believe everyone has a someone, somewhere—you’re not alone. According to a poll by Wakefield Research, 76 percent believe in soulmates—with millennials leading the way at 84 percent.

For more than one in three, however, true love has not yet come along and 71 percent of those don’t like their chances of finding it this year, either. Yet, nearly two in three feel soulmates are a reality rather than a fantasy.

So how do you avoid soulmate sadness and find the one for you? Outlook On Love: The Soulmate Survey, conducted for the experts on romance at Princess Cruises, revealed five insights from respondents who were asked to do some soul-searching and share their romantic journeys. Here are a few findings you may love to learn about:

Love at First Sight? Maybe. Sometimes it takes several tries to find that perfect

someone, and there’s no shame in that. On average, people report four relationships before finding their soulmate. When it happens, however, 65 percent feel that a person knows right away. Even more millennials—72 percent—think that way.

Looking for Love in All the Wrong Places? Americans having trouble finding a soulmate may be looking in the wrong direction. The most popular reported places were social media or dating sites (43 percent), at work (42 percent), and at bars and clubs (35 percent).

Only 30 percent look for their soulmate while traveling, suggesting that perhaps it’s time to consider looking for someone on the warm sand or the high seas; for example, on a cruise ship. One of the best-known names in cruising, Princess Cruises, has long been a leader in love on the high seas, thanks to its heritage as the backdrop of the

iconic “The Love Boat” television series.

The Bright Side. The good news is that true love is far from dead. Ninety-five percent of people in a relationship say their current partner is their soulmate.

Dive Heart First. Have you ever eyed someone from afar and wondered if that person was “the one”? More than one in three regret not introducing themselves to that possible soulmate and half of millennials definitely regret it. It all adds up to taking a chance when the feeling hits.

Famous Soulmates. So, to whom do Americans turn for soulmate inspiration? Nearly half of Americans (47 percent) agreed that Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are the “Best Soulmates.”

Learn More

For further facts on the survey or on cruising, visit www.princess.com.

Tips For Planning A Family Vacation



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

Many believe a vacation on water can give everyone in the family the chance to do something they enjoy.

(NAPSI)—When it comes to creating a memorable vacation, planning and scheduling are key. That’s the word from travel experts, such as those at Expedia, who say Americans collectively let half a billion paid days off go to waste last year.

The good news is that there is still time to avoid becoming a vacation statistic this summer. To help, here are some tips for making the most of those precious warm-weather days that are fast approaching.

Get the kids’ input. Even if you’ve already scheduled your family vacation, give them a voice by involving them in some of the planning. According to AAA, 21 percent of respondents listed “family arguments about where to go and what to do”

as one of their biggest summer vacation frustrations.

Declare digital freedom. E-mails and social media can wait. Use summer to reconnect with nature, your family and friends. Put your phone on silent. Store it in an out-of-reach bag. But keep it in case of emergencies.

Choose a wet destination. Many believe a vacation on water can give everyone in the family the chance to do something they enjoy.

Think long term. Spending now on a lake house, boat or RV may save you money and headaches on future vacations. Real freedom is taking vacation on your schedule.


Another way to secure long-term value for your vacation dollar is by investing in

quality equipment, both on the water and on land.

For instance, new to the water this year is the Evinrude® E-TEC® G2™ outboard engine. An innovative, boldly styled engine, it’s designed to deliver 15 percent better fuel efficiency, 20 percent more torque and 75 percent fewer regulated emissions than its competitors’.

Contributing to the engine’s lifetime value is the fact that it doesn’t require dealer maintenance for five years. It’s also available in 350 color combinations.

Consumers can test-ride boats rigged with the Evinrude E-TEC G2 line of outboard engines at select locations. To find one, visit www.Evinrude-TestRides.com.



65%

65% feel that a person knows right away they've found their soulmate




PHOTO SOURCE: NAPSI

A cruise could be your road to romance, especially if you’re the one in three who seeks a soulmate while traveling.

SENIORS

5 Important Tips for Choosing a Medicare Health Plan

(NewsUSA) - As baby boomers retire in record numbers -- 10,000 Americans a day -- more seniors than ever will be asking themselves, "How do I choose a Medicare health plan that's right for me?"

"Seniors should look for a high-quality health plan that has a team of doctors and specialists, who work together to coordinate your care and keep you healthy," said Patrick Courneya, M.D., medical director, Kaiser Permanente Medicare Health Plans.

Dr. Courneya offers these five important tips to help older adults make an informed decision for a healthy future:

1. Know when to enroll. Anyone who first becomes eligible for Medicare as they turn 65 can enroll during the three-month period before or after their 65th birthday. Those who choose to enroll after this window of time may pay a late-enrollment penalty. Medicare-eligible members may join or change plans during open enrollment from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 each year, or they can join a Medicare five-star quality-rated plan nearly all year long. See tip four for star ratings details.

2. Know the difference between Medicare and Medicare Advantage. Medicare is the national health insurance program that began in 1965 and covers millions of Americans who are 65 and older, and those with certain disabilities. Medicare Ad-



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Make sure you know what to do when choosing a Medicare health plan.

vantage plans are offered by private organizations and approved by Medicare. Some Medicare Advantage plans offer extra benefits such as vision. Enrollment trends show that nearly one in

three people who have Medicare are enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan.

3. Confirm health plan doctors accept new Medicare members. Choose a Medicare health

plan that offers a network of doctors and specialists who accept new Medicare members. Some physicians are opting out of caring for Medicare members. Also, keep in mind, as Medicare mem-

bers age, they may need access to more specialists who accept Medicare members.

4. Use the Medicare 5-star Quality Ratings Tool. The Medicare Star Quality Ratings

system was created by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to help beneficiaries choose high-quality Medicare health plans. Plans receive an overall rating from one to five stars, with five being the highest for quality and service. Medicare members have the benefit of joining a five-star plan nearly all year -- from Dec. 8 through Nov. 30 of the next year. They must be eligible and live where a five-star plan is offered.

5. Review your health care needs annually. A Kaiser Family Foundation survey found that many beneficiaries -- once enrolled in a Medicare health plan -- don't often feel confident they made the right choice, and don't review their plan if their health care needs change. Medicare enrollees can use the Medicare star ratings to help them feel confident about choosing a high-quality plan.

The Kaiser Permanente Medicare health plans in California, Colorado, Hawaii, Maryland, Oregon, Virginia, Washington and Washington, D.C. received 5 stars -- the highest possible Medicare rating for 2015. Kaiser Permanente's Georgia plan received 4.5 stars for 2015.

Star ratings information can be found on kp.org/medicarestars or by calling 1-877-425-7892. Plans are rated each year and may change from one year to the next.

A New Prescription for Finding the Right Doctor

(NewsUSA) - Finding the right doctor can mean living a healthier life, or it can be the difference between life and death.

Yet until now, consumers traditionally haven't accessed information that would enable them to find the right doctor for their individual needs. Americans have typically found their physician by word of mouth -- either from friends, family members, their doctor or their insurance list. And the problem is that these references are not subjective and only give a snapshot of a particular doctor -- one who may or may not be the best fit for your needs.

"The Internet has dramatically changed how people get important information and make connections. Just look at the popularity of sites like Zillow and TripAdvisor.com. But unlike shopping for a house or vacation, detailed information about physicians and hospitals hasn't been easy to use for decision-making," says Roger Holstein, CEO, Healthgrades.

But that's about to change. For the first time, consumers can search for doctors based on information that physicians themselves agree are most important: the doctor's experience, the clinical outcomes of the hospital where they practice and the satisfaction of their patients. The new search experience is available free at Healthgrades.com.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

There's a resource you can use to get the health care you need.

The in-depth search capability addresses an important gap -- 90 percent of consumers have said they could make a better choice when selecting a physician if they knew more about the physicians in their insurance plans, according to a Harris Interactive study conducted for Healthgrades.

"Knowing if a doctor diagnoses a particular condition or performs a procedure

is critical to understanding their experience in treating patients like you -- which can influence the quality of care you receive," says Archelle Georgiou, MD, a healthcare advisor. "If you are searching for a doctor, Healthgrades should be your first stop."

To find the right doctor for you, visit www.healthgrades.com.

AARP Offers Tools for Caregivers

(NewsUSA) - NewsusaInfographic - Caregivers can find practical tools and connect with experts and other caregivers for advice and support at aarp.org/caregiving.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Giving the Elderly a Helpful Lift – In the Home

(NewsUSA) - Although home may be where the heart is, for older people, it may not be where they are able to stay.

This need (and recognition) to downsize, yet not wanting to because of the memories associated with the home (after all, it's where they have lived for decades and may have raised their families), can be a problem. It may also be impractical due to today's still sluggish housing market.

So, what to do? Instead, you might want to consider a stairlift to make your current home more practical.

While there are a whole host of reasons to install a stairlift, the most common is that someone has become too infirm to walk up and down the stairs because of age, illness or injury.

For Cornelius Rice, 80, of Wilkins, Pennsylvania, it took a nasty fall to admit he needed help from a stair lift to deal with his balance problem.

"[A stairlift] makes it convenient for me to get around, and makes it easy on the wife," Rice told the Pittsburgh-Post Gazette in an interview. "She doesn't have to take me here or there now, or be lifting me."

Unlike chair lifts of old, new models like those sold by Orlando-based Acorn Stairlifts are powered by two small 12-volt batteries under the seat or by regular house current. The chair and built-in footrest typically fold up when not in use, allowing for easy passage on the stairs. All lifts have sensors around the perimeter of the foot platform that will stop the lift when a sensor is triggered -- be it by a child's toy, a pet or a foot that has slipped off the platform.

For Tim McCool, VP of Sales and Marketing for Acorn, having a built in stairlift makes sense for the elderly.

"When I first started with Acorn Stairlifts over 10 years ago as a sales rep, one of my first customer interactions was with a woman

suffering from ALS," said McCool. "She had to be carried up the stairs just to use the restroom. I talked with her for over an hour, and it's stuck with me all these years, and it's why I'm so committed to what we do to improve people's lives."

The biggest challenge, say experts, is getting older folks to admit they need one. Once installed, however, many find they wished they'd done it earlier, said one consultant, who added that older people sometimes don't want to spend the money on this kind of thing because then they have to admit they have a disability.

For more information, visit <http://www.acorn-stairlifts.com>.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Find ways to improve mobility in the home.

SENIORS

What Every Woman Should Know About Long-Term Care

(NewsUSA) - With women generally outliving men, planning for long-term care becomes more urgent for them in their pre-retirement years. After all, while longevity definitely has its upside -- including more time to enjoy travel and family -- there's no denying its biggest potential downside: the increased risk of health problems that can make caring for oneself difficult.

Today, seven in 10 nursing home residents are women.

They also represent a whopping 76 percent of assisted living residents, according to the latest statistics, and two-thirds of all home-care recipients.

And that care isn't necessarily what many would consider "affordable" -- unless you're perhaps lucky enough to have the opportunity to enroll in the likes of the Federal Long Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP).

"Like other forms of health care, long-term care is expensive, and costs continually increase," says Paul Forte, CEO of Long Term Care Partners, which administers the FLTCIP. The program is specifically de-

signed to help current and retired federal employees safeguard their retirement income and savings while maintaining their independence and avoiding reliance on their children.

How Will You Pay for Care?

The most recent John Hancock Cost of Care Study puts the national average cost of a licensed home health aide at \$20 per hour, with private and semi-private nursing home rooms going for \$235 and \$207, respectively, a day.

Those costs aren't generally covered by health plans such as Medicare, the Defense Department's TRICARE, TRICARE for Life, or even the regular Federal Employees Health Benefits Program. And as for Medicaid, as Forte notes, "it covers long-term care only for those with very low income and assets, so the responsibility for paying may fall on you."

Now suppose you're a woman who's eligible for the FLTCIP, but you haven't yet applied. Ask yourself these four questions:

- Considering your health and family history, might you live a long life with health con-



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Seven in 10 nursing home residents are women.

ditions that could hinder caring for yourself?

- Do you live alone?
- If you don't live alone, how might tending to you disrupt the professional and personal lives of others, and do you wish to be dependent on them?
- If you do live alone, will you have the resources not just to pay for care, but to also maintain a comfortable lifestyle?

The Advantages of the FLTCIP

Established by an act of Congress in 2000 and overseen by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the program is tailored exclusively to meet the budgetary and lifestyle needs of what's referred to as "the federal family." And as so often is the case with the federal workforce, the cost to enrollees is surprisingly affordable.

How affordable?

Well, there's a choice of four prepackaged plans that combine the most popular program features, with customized plans also available.

So, say you're a 45-year-old woman who chooses the FLT-

CIP's most popular prepackaged plan (Plan B, with the 4 percent inflation rider). You'd pay a biweekly premium of \$33.90 -- less than \$68 per month, or slightly more than \$2 a day -- for protection that can save you thousands of dollars in future care costs.

The program's consumer-friendly website lets you calculate the premium rate for your age and choice of plans (www.LTCFEDS.com/rate), and view current and past informational webinars (www.LTCFEDS.com/webinar). Personal consultants can also walk you through the entire process, including plan design and applications, by calling 1-800-582-3337 or 1-800-843-3557.

Again, not everyone is eligible for FLTCIP, and certain medical conditions, or combinations of conditions, will prevent some from being approved for coverage. Premiums are set with the expectation that they'll suffice, but aren't guaranteed. While the group policy is in effect, OPM must approve an increase in premium.

5 Tips for Healthy Eating as We Age

(NewsUSA) - Good nutrition plays an important role in how well you age. Eating a healthful diet helps keep your body strong and can help reduce your risk for heart disease, diabetes, stroke and osteoporosis. Studies even show a link between healthful eating and longevity.

"As we age, the body becomes less efficient at absorbing some key nutrients. Appetite and taste can suffer from loss of sense of smell and taste or from side effects of medications. Bad teeth can make some foods difficult to chew or digest," said Arthur Hayward, MD, a geriatrician and the clinical lead physician for elder care with Kaiser Permanente's Care Management Institute. "So choosing foods carefully is smart."

Here are five tips to help you get the nutrition your body needs:

1. Avoid empty calories.

Foods with empty calories may contain very few vitamins and minerals. "Convenience foods," such as packaged snacks, chips and sodas, are common sources of empty calories. Avoid the "bad" carbs -- foods that have white flour, refined sugar and white rice.

2. Choose nutrient-rich foods.

Eat a variety of foods. The more you vary the foods you eat, the more vitamins, minerals and other nutrients you get. For example:

- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables -- Choose fresh, frozen or no-salt canned vegetables and fruits in their own juice or light syrup.
- Eat foods with protein -- Protein is found in lean meat, fish, poultry, eggs and cheese, cooked beans, peanut butter and nuts and seeds.
- Get enough calcium and vitamin D -- Calcium and vitamin D are found in milk and milk products, including yogurt and cheese. They are also in green leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collard greens) and tofu.
- Include foods high in vitamin B12 -- After 50, the body produces less gastric acid and absorbs less B12, which helps keep blood and nerves vital. B12 is found in milk, meat, poultry, fish and eggs.
- Eat high-fiber foods -- This includes fruits, vegetables, cooked dried beans and whole grains.

3. Drink plenty of fluids.

Drink plenty of fluids -- enough so that your urine is light yellow or clear like

water. Fiber and fluids help with constipation.

4. If your appetite is poor.

Try eating smaller meals, several times a day, instead of one or two large meals. Eating while socializing with others may help your appetite. You might also ask about changing medicines. Medication can cause appetite or taste problems.

5. Eat soft foods.

As we approach our senior years, chewing food is sometimes difficult. Choose low-sodium canned vegetables or cooked fruits and vegetables. These are often softer. Chop or shred meat, poultry or fish. Add sauce or gravy to the meat to help keep it moist.

For healthy recipe ideas, check out Kaiser Permanente's Food for Health blog at <https://foodforhealth.kaiserpermanente.org>.

In addition to eating a balanced diet, aim for 150 minutes of physical activity each week. Ten-minute sessions several times a day on most days are fine. For more information, visit kp.org and everybodywalk.org. For questions or advice about a specific condition, talk with your physician.

Take Your Multivitamin to Control Diabetes

(NewsUSA) - For people with diabetes, taking a multivitamin every day can mean much more than a little protection against the common cold.

Research is finding that multivitamins can be the first line of defense against many different types of infections, including respiratory infections and influenza.

"Once a person with diabetes gets an infection, it's much harder for them to get rid of it, and it can lead to dire consequences, even death," says Registered and Certified Dietitian-Nutritionist Debra Spector. "And since some diabetic patients don't normally respond well to treatment, prevention is key."

Taking a special diabetes multivitamin -- usually found in the diabetes section of a drugstore, not the vitamin section -- allows a diabetic person to be proactive with their health, and avoid nutrient deficiencies that can lead to problems.

The year-long study among 130 patients, published in the Annals of Internal Medicine, found that the incidence of infection was much lower among diabetics who took a multivitamin versus those who did not.

Infection occurred in only 17 percent of diabetic patients who took a multivitamin versus the 93 percent who took a placebo. The study also found that regular multivitamin usage reduced the rate of minor urinary tract and gastrointestinal infections in people with diabetes.

Because of the nature of the disease, it's not uncommon for diabetics to experience nutrient deficiencies. Diabetes medications and frequent urination



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Multivitamins can help those with diabetes fight infections from nutrient deficiencies.

can lead to the loss of vital nutrients that protect the body.

"Since there are many health risks that can result from vitamin and mineral deficiencies, I encourage my diabetic patients to find a multivitamin supplement with more potent levels of important nutrients to meet their needs," says Spector. "It should contain Alpha Lipoic Acid (ALA),

an important nutrient that most 'regular' multivitamins do not have. I like Multi-betic Diabetes Multi-Vitamin since it has 23 important nutrients, including ALA, designed to help maintain healthy blood sugar levels, support vision and promote nerve function."

Learn more about Multi-betic and other diabetic products at www.diabeticproducts.com.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

How many calories do people over age 50 need each day?

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HEALTH

Insuring the Health of America's Emerging Multigenerational Workforce

(NewsUSA) - For the first time in modern history, America's workforce spans four generations. In this new era of multigenerational workers, a "one size fits all" approach to health insurance is a thing of the past.

The generational gap is as varied as it is immense. There are the young-adult Millennials, the middle-aged Gen Xers, Baby Boomers nearing retirement age and the Silent Generation in their 70s and beyond. Each group has vastly different health insurance needs.

Take, for example, Millennials. A recent Bankrate survey shows many prefer health plans with lower deductibles and higher premiums. Meanwhile, Pew Research reports that the Baby Boomer population is hyper-focused on long-term care coverage needs and how best to manage associated costs beyond Medicare.

This workforce shift is unprecedented and poses significant hurdles for businesses as they seek to provide affordable and appropriate health coverage options across employee lifespans. Both large and small group employers are impacted, though companies with 100 or fewer employees are more likely to feel the financial squeeze because there are fewer individuals to spread risk and defray costs.

Juggling vastly different insurance coverage needs can be quite difficult, especially for the more than 28 million small businesses employing nearly half of all U.S. workers. Affordable Care Act legislation adds further complexity as companies assess their group health plan options, or in some cases whether to offer them at all. So, what are employers to do?

In response, many are increasingly turning to private healthcare insurance exchange solutions as an effective answer to meet the diversity of benefit needs from Generation Me to Generation We.

"Private exchanges are marketplaces of health insurance and other related products," according to management consulting group Booz Allen. They offer access to multiple health plans in a single, unified program and are attractive because they enable workers to individually select the right coverage for their current life needs.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

A multigenerational workforce means a new approach to health insurance.

According to management consulting group Booz Allen. They offer access to multiple health plans in a single, unified program and are attractive because they enable workers to individually select the right coverage for their current life needs.

The private exchange platform provides an ideal bridge across generational divides. For example, a 22-year-old single female starting her first job out of college will likely want a different plan than the 59-year-old man-

ager with a spouse, three children and plans to retire in the near future.

Employers are moving to these exchanges more quickly than forecasted, according to new data from consulting firm Accenture. The company estimates that some six million individuals signed up for workplace health coverage through private exchanges in 2014 alone, roughly two times the number expected. It's predicted that private exchange participation will exceed public exchange enrollments by 2018, if not sooner.

Much of this expansion is driven by the combination of health care reform and a workforce that now spans a 50-plus year spectrum.

"At the heart of the solution is access to choice," said Ron Goldstein, president and CEO of CHOICE Administrators, the nation's leader in developing and administering employee-choice health benefit programs and exchanges for employer groups. The company's exchanges include the country's first and only multicarrier private exchange, CaliforniaChoice, as well as CaliforniaChoice 51+ and Choice Builder, the nation's first ancillary exchange for dental, vision, chiropractic and other benefits.

"Smart business owners are teaming with their broker to identify and select a platform that enables their employees to design plans that best fit their lifecycle needs."

The age of the four-generation workforce has dawned. Owners and small businesses are wise to embrace the private exchange that technology employees have come to rely on, such as online enrollment, as they seek to cost-effectively address the needs of their workforce across all stages of their lives.

For more information about employee-choice health benefit programs and private health insurance exchanges, visit choiceadminexchanges.com.

5 Things You Don't Know About Superbugs

(NewsUSA) - The news is full of headlines about the flu, CRE and the measles. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently reported that Clostridium difficile (C.diff) infections have doubled in recent years. If you or a loved one needs to go to the hospital, how do you avoid contracting a deadly infection?

There's no disputing the facts -- infections are caused by microorganisms like C.diff, MRSA, VRE, CRE and norovirus. These antibiotic-resistant germs lurk on high-touch surfaces in hospitals and health care facilities -- and some, like C.diff, can live for months on bedrails and tray tables. With new and deadlier viruses and bacteria emerging everyday, what do you need to know to avoid getting sick?

1. Superbugs are everywhere inside hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and even surgery centers. Research shows that even after the most thorough manual cleaning, 50 percent of the surfaces in a room are still contaminated enough to cause infection.

2. Do you need that antibiotic? Is it the right one? Don't use antibiotics for viral ailments, and don't insist on them for children's viral infections. C.diff reproduction in a patient's intestines is aided by broad-spectrum antibiotics and proton-pump inhibitors.

3. Be prepared, and carefully research the hospital where you are being treated. Look at the hospital's patient safety record. A good resource is www.hospital



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Hospitals using Xenex germ-zapping robots are reporting hospital acquired infection (HAI) decreases of greater than 50 percent.

talsafetyscore.org. Look at its infection rates -- available at www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov.

4. Hand hygiene may save your life. When you are in the hospital, follow hand-hygiene protocol carefully, and make sure every health care worker (such as doctors and nurses) washes their hands before they touch the patient.

5. Superbugs can be destroyed before they harm patients. Properly disinfecting a patient room with a Xenex germ-zapping robot adds only 10 minutes to room turnover time, and hospitals using Xenex UV light robots are reporting significant decreases in their hospital acquired infection rates. If you or a loved one is going to the hospital, make sure the room has been properly disinfected. Insist on only going to a hospital that uses Xenex germ-zapping robots to disinfect its rooms.

New antibiotics may be part of the solution for solving the superbug crisis, but getting the germs out of the patient environment before they make people sick is what can and should be done right now. It only takes a matter of minutes -- and it may save your life. Visit www.xenex.com to learn more.

nificant decreases in their hospital acquired infection rates. If you or a loved one is going to the hospital, make sure the room has been properly disinfected. Insist on only going to a hospital that uses Xenex germ-zapping robots to disinfect its rooms.

Another Reason to Choose Chiropractic Care First for Pain Management

(NewsUSA) - The move for a "chiropractic first" approach to treating pain just got a big boost.

In recent years, a growing number of experts have argued that the downsides of relying on drugs and invasive spinal surgery were potentially so great in certain cases -- particularly among patients with chronic back pain -- that a proven alternative like chiropractic care should officially be recognized as a serious option. Now comes word that the influential Joint Commission has done just that.

Following what it called "an extensive literature review," the not-for-profit organization, which accredits and certifies more than 20,500 health organizations and programs in the U.S., announced that it was revising its "Provision of Care, Treatment, and Services" standard to "affirm" the role of nonpharmacologic approaches including chiropractic care in pain management.

"In addition," the commission warned regarding the use of medications, "organizations should consider both the benefits to the patient as well as the risks of dependency, addiction and the abuse of opioids."



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Less drugs, more chiropractic care may be the way to go.

Nearly 80 percent of Americans are believed to experience back pain at some point in their lives. Past studies have shown that patients who turned to a chiropractor first had consistently better health outcomes and drastically reduced their odds of having to undergo costly surgery.

"As a nation, we are facing an epidemic of prescription drug abuse, and all stakeholders in health care stand to benefit from a conservative approach focusing on chiropractic first, drugs second and surgery last," said Gerard Clum, D.C., of the not-for-profit Foundation for Chiropractic Progress.

To learn more about chiropractic care or to find a chiropractor near your area, visit www.F4CP.org/findadoctor.

HEALTH

4 Basic Exercises to Help Older Adults Improve Strength and Balance

(NewsUSA) - As you grow older, being physically active is one of the most important things you can do to stay healthy. Whether you're well into your golden years, a baby boomer or younger, studies show regular exercise can lower your risk of heart disease, some cancers, diabetes and dementia. It also helps improve your mood, energy level and overall well-being.

"The great thing is, no matter what your age, size or fitness level, it's never too late to start exercising," said Jaza Marina, M.D., a Kaiser Permanente physician who specializes in elder care. "We strongly recommend seniors do exercises that maintain strength, balance and flexibility. Our goal is to reduce their risk of falls and injuries, so they can stay healthy and independent."

Dr. Marina advises that good ways to exercise include low-impact aerobic activity, swimming, tai chi and yoga if you're physically able. "We have 80-year-olds who run 5k or 10k races. Everyone is different, so pick an exercise that you enjoy."

She believes walking is probably the easiest exercise. All you need is 30 minutes a day, five times a week. If that's too much, you can break that up -- 10 minutes in the morning, 10 in the afternoon, and 10 in the evening. Some seniors walk at their local indoor shopping mall.

"The important thing is to get off the recliner, turn off the T.V. and get active," said Dr. Marina. Below are four basic exercises to get you started.

1. Knee bends. Holding on to a sturdy chair or counter at your side, keep your back straight, feet on the ground and gently bend your knees and lower your body. Then, raise your body back up. It's a slight squat but not a deep one. Repeat 10-15 times.

2. Heel raises. Holding on to a chair or counter at your side, raise up on toes slowly and then lower the heels to the ground slowly. Heel raises strengthen the calf muscles. Repeat 10-15 times.



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPS1

Performing simple exercises as you age can help you stay healthy and independent.

3. Side leg raises. Holding on to a chair or counter at your side, raise one leg out to the side and bring it back down. Repeat 10-15 times and switch to other leg.

4. Sit to stand. If you're able -- sit in a chair and rise to a standing

position with arms stretched in front of you. Make sure the chair is in a stable position or against a wall so it won't fall over. Sit back down and repeat 10 times.

Kaiser Permanente offers exercise classes at several

of its medical facilities. To find classes in your area and for further information about these exercises, visit kp.org. Also, talk with your physician before starting a new exercise routine.

New Drug May Help Control the Spread of Cancer



PHOTO SOURCE: NAPS1

A drug that may help slow the spread of cancer will be a welcome addition among the medical community.

(NewsUSA) - Each year 14 million people worldwide find out they have cancer, and 8 million die from the disease. It is now the leading cause of death around the world, and there is no cure. However, one company is working on what it believes to be an effective method to help control the spread of the disease, and treat and stabilize the cancer.

Propanc Health Group is a Melbourne, Australia-based health care company currently focusing on developing new cancer treatments for patients with solid tumors such as pancreatic and colorectal cancer. With its lead product, PRP, currently in animal trials -- and soon moving to clinical trials, the company believes it has a way to extend the life expectancy of cancer patients. In a previously conducted compassionate care study, PRP did increase life expectancy in terminal patients.

The way it works is this: Propanc has identified that pancreatic proenzymes are able to suppress, or stop, a long-silent embryonic program reactivated by cancer cells, by returning cancer cells back toward normal behavior. This is important because certain cancer cells develop traits such as motility, invasiveness and a resistance to death. They also become "stem-cell" like and develop the ability to seed new tumors. This process, called metastasis, is re-

sponsible for about 90 percent of deaths from cancer.

"From our research we observed that pancreatic proenzymes enforce the re-entry of cancer cells into normal cellular pathways and could represent an exciting new method of managing the disease process," said Dr. Julian Kenyon, Chief Scientific Officer of Propanc Health Group. "We believe this small but significant step supports my initial observations from clinical practice that pancreatic proenzymes have the potential to prolong life and stop tumors from spreading, especially if we treat patients during earlier stages of the disease process."

The company's vision is to identify active anti-cancer agents, which have anti-cancer effects and are a less-toxic and effective way to treat patients, compared to standard treatment approaches.

"Propanc is a very well tolerated medication and has been shown to extend survival time well beyond that expected in any of the patients it has been used on," said Dr. Kenyon. "These results are by far and away better than I have ever seen with chemotherapy, radiotherapy or monoclonal antibodies, which are the treatments offered currently."

More information can be found at www.propanc.com. Media and investors should reach out to Regal Consulting at 702-575-9157.

Take a Bite Out of Gum Disease By Seeing a Periodontist

(NewsUSA) - Many people know that seeing a dentist twice a year is a key to keeping teeth clean and healthy. Those regular visits ensure your choppers are cavity-free, and perhaps it's a chance for the dentist to chastise you for not flossing enough. However, you shouldn't simply stop there.

According to a new study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently published in the Journal of Periodontology, nearly 65 million Americans suffer from gum disease, also known as periodontitis. Symptoms can include red, tender, or bleeding gums; loosening of the teeth; and receding gums. If you experience these symptoms, a trip to a periodontist -- a dentist who specializes in treating gum disease -- should be added to your twice-yearly dental check-ups.

"Periodontal disease remains a significant public health issue for people of all backgrounds," said Joan Otomo-Corgel, DDS, MPH, president of the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) and a practicing periodontist in Los Angeles. "However, with the proper treatment and care, periodontal disease is often reversible."

If you suspect that you might require the expert care of a periodontist, here are four things you should know:

- Know the cause. Poor oral hygiene is a major culprit in the development of gum disease. More than 500 different

species of bacteria can be found in dental plaque, highlighting the importance of brushing your teeth twice a day and flossing regularly.

- Know your risk. There is a genetic component to gum disease, but lifestyle choices also can increase your chances of developing gum disease. Smoking, age, taking certain medications, obesity, poor nutrition and stress may all increase your susceptibility.

- Know where to go. Take the "Gums 101" quiz on perio.org/loveyourgums to evaluate the overall health of your gums, learn the signs and symptoms of periodontal disease and find tips on how to care for your gums. You can also search for a periodontist in your area.

- Know how often to go. The AAP recommends that adults undergo a comprehensive periodontal evaluation every year to ensure the health of gums and teeth.

"If a person is found to have periodontal disease, a periodontist can determine the best course of treatment," said Otomo-Corgel.

For more information about the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of gum disease, visit perio.org.



PHOTO SOURCE: NEWSUSA

Take steps to improve your gum health.

For Advanced Heart Failure Patients, There Is Hope

(NewsUSA) - NewsusaInfographic - Advanced heart failure is a serious and deadly disease that needs to be managed and understood. As a progressive

disease that is rarely cured, it can get worse over time. That is why it might be time to consider other treatment options -- like LVAD therapy.

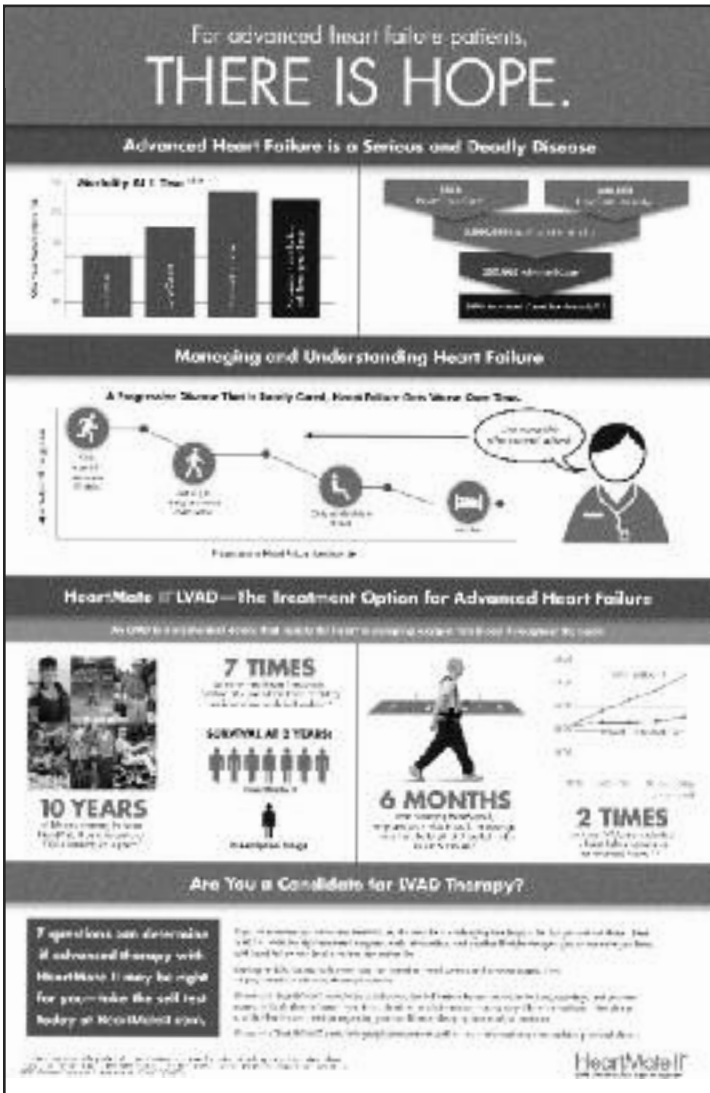


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Watch from A4

will cause even more children to go hungry, push families deeper into poverty, and have negative repercussions for the entire nation. There are many other choices. The Children’s Defense Fund’s recent Ending Child Poverty Now report shows increasing SNAP benefits 30 percent would decrease hunger for 12.6 million families with children and the added resources would lift 1.8 million children out of poverty, reducing child poverty 16 percent. Families like Kaylyn’s need more help, not less—and it’s not too late for our leaders on all sides of the political aisle to do the right thing. In a nation where millions of working families still can’t earn enough to pay rent, pay the bills, and put food on the table at the same time—and where in fiscal year 2013 there were 4.9 million households with no income but SNAP including 1.3 million households with children—relying on the charity of PB and J Day is not a substitute for justice.

tice. Tell these leaders seeking to make already hungry children hungrier that they should instead cut the \$38 billion from the defense budget the Pentagon did not ask for and restore the \$269 billion in lost revenue from the repeal of the estate tax that only helps the top 2/10th of one percent of wealthiest Americans. It boggles my mind to try to understand such skewed moral values and lack of understanding that the real security of our nation is in the minds and bodies and education of our children.

Marian Wright Edelman is President of the Children's Defense Fund whose Leave No Child Behind® mission is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities. For more information go to www.childrensdefense.org. Mrs. Edelman's Child Watch Column also appears each week on The Huffington Post

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