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First Lady Yumi Hogan launches new anti-litter campaign.

First Lady Yumi Hogan Celebrates Keep Maryland Beautiful; Launches New Anti-Litter Ad Campaign

State Awards Nearly \$2 Million to Support Community Clean-Up and Beautification

By PRESS OFFICER MDHCD

ANNAPOLIS, MD—First Lady Yumi Hogan highlighted first-year accomplishments and launched a new transit advertising campaign for the Keep Maryland Beautiful program in a ceremony held at the Annapolis Maritime Museum's Back Creek Nature Park Campus. Officials also announced awards of nearly \$2 million to support community clean-up initiatives and workforce development.

"Keep Maryland Beautiful encourages local activism and volunteerism for a cleaner and more beautiful community," said First Lady Yumi Hogan. "With this new advertising cam-

paign, we want to promote pride in our state and remind our citizens that by working together, they can make a difference in their neighborhoods and change Maryland for the better."

A cooperative multi-agency partnership led by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, the Keep Maryland Beautiful program focuses on neighborhood beautification through increasing greening, citizen stewardship, community education, and litter removal. Keep Maryland Beautiful is the officially designated state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to volunteer-based community improvement.

Joined by Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Kenneth C. Holt, Annapolis Mayor Gavin Buckley, Keep America Beautiful President and CEO Helen Lowman, and other state officials, the First Lady unveiled a sneak preview of new Keep Maryland Beautiful advertising to be featured on the interior and exterior of Maryland Transit Administration buses, as well as bus station platforms. Secretary Holt announced a number of Keep Maryland Beautiful program awards and initiatives, including:

- Over \$300,000 in Keep Maryland Beautiful grants to approximately 70 local governments, nonprofits, community

organizations, schools, and land trusts to support cleaning and greening activities, environmental education and stewardship practices. The grants are administered by the Maryland Environmental Trust, a unit of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and funded by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

- Awards of up to \$350,000 each to Living Classrooms Foundation, Inc. and CivicWorks Inc. to support their workforce development training programs to provide commer-

See LITTER Page A7

Council Action on Compensation Review Board Recommendations

By PRESS OFFICER PG County Council

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—The Prince George's County Council greatly appreciates the work of the 2017-2018 Compensation Review Board, established by CB-70-2017 and authorized in County Charter Sections 308 and 406.

The Compensation Review Board worked diligently to conduct an extensive review of the salaries, benefits and pensions of Prince George's County elected officials, and those in our

neighboring jurisdictions. On Tuesday, January 23, 2018, the board presented its final report and recommendations for a compensation plan for the Council Members and County Executive to be elected in November 2018. We are thankful for their dedication to this effort.

After careful consideration of the final report, the County Council has decided to accept all compensation recommendations for the County Execu-

See COUNCIL Page A22

5th Grader Crowned as 2018 Prince George's County Spelling Bee Champion

By PRESS OFFICER PG County Government

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Kayden Wilkins, a 5th-grade student at Melwood Elementary School in Prince George's County, was crowned champion of the county's 2018 spelling bee presented by the Washington Informer Charities on Friday.

Kayden joined 5th- through 8th-grade students representing 33 schools across the county on the stage at the Clarice Performing Arts Center at the Uni-

versity of Maryland, College Park campus and vied for the opportunity to represent the county in the National Scripps Spelling Bee in June at National Harbor.

Pronouncer Dave Zahren, a television instructional specialist with Prince George's County Public Schools, offered each word, along with its definition, word origin and usage, to the nervous spellers, who went eight

See SPELLING BEE Page A6

Women of Prince George's Host 8th Annual Conference

United Way NCA President, Bowie State University First Female President Among Those Being Honored

By PRESS OFFICER Women of Prince George's

LARGO, MD—Women of Prince George's, the premier resource for entrepreneurs and business women in the Greater Prince George's County area, is hosting their 8th Annual Women's Conference themed "All of Us". The event will take place on Thursday, May 24, 2018 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Greenbelt Marriott in Greenbelt, Maryland. In addition to robust general sessions, the conference will include several panels, an engaging Q&A with local Maryland political candidates, two roundtables, and the annual community leader's awards, where Aminta Breaux, Bowie State University's current and first female president will be honored, alongside the Rosie Allen Herring, president and CEO of United Way NCA.

Professional women will be represented across multiple industries: education, health and wellness, finance and government, motivational speaking and

more. The Small Business Administration, Women Impacting Public Policy, and other organizations will provide information and updates for professionals.

The event's morning success panel will focus on sustainability and your business. Panelists include Bernadette Clay, well-known president and CEO of BLE Executive and Virtual Office suites LLC, Karen Dale, a 2017 recipient of Washington Business Journal's Women Who Mean Business award, J.L. Wilson Bolton, one of the area's most successful African-American independent beauty consultants with Mary Kay Cosmetics.

The government success panel will feature small business representatives from various federal agencies, who will provide information on contract opportunities. In addition, several candidates running for Office in the State of Maryland and Prince George's County will engage with attendees at the Local Candidates Q&A.

See CONFERENCE Page A7

Laurel Branch Library 2018 AIA/ALA Library Building Award Winner

By PRESS OFFICER PGCMLS

LAUREL, MD—The Laurel Branch of the Prince George's County Memorial Library System is the proud recipient of the 2018 AIA/ALA Library Building Awards for excellence in architectural design. The Laurel Branch Library is the only library in the state of Maryland to receive this award in the past 43 years. The AIA/ALA Library Building Awards recognize entire library structures in all aspects of their design. Our Laurel Branch Library was designed by Grimm + Parker architects. Michael Gannon, now the Library System's Co-Chief Executive Officer manages all capital improvement projects for the Library, including the award winning Laurel Branch. "We are honored to be one of only six libraries in the nation this year to receive this prestigious award," Gannon said.

Capturing the history of this Laurel community with deep African American roots, the textured stone, dynamic lines and



PHOTO COURTESY PGCMLS; AIA/ALA

The Laurel Branch Library in Laurel Maryland, Designed by Grimm + Parker Architects.

bold forms were incorporated into the design. The landscape of the library's grounds showcases cherry trees, oak trees and drought-resistant plants. The Laurel Branch Library boast of many "green" features: roof mounted solar panels, electric

car charging stations, stormwater management, filtered water fountains, energy efficient lighting and a living plant wall.

Imaginative uses of the building's 32-thousand square feet of interior space include a replica paleontological dig site

in the floor of the children's area, dinosaur seating, public art pieces by local artists, a café with vending machines and study, meeting and conference

See LIBRARY Page A7

INSIDE

U of M Laurel Regional Hospital Files Regulatory Plan to Transform Healthcare Services to Meet Community Needs

A public meeting regarding the transition of the current UM Laurel Regional Hospital will take place on May 7, 2018 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center. Community, Page A3

Child Opportunity and Stability Starts at Home

The national multi-sector campaign includes organizations addressing poverty, economic equality, civil rights, nutrition, health care, education, mental health, and more that recognize how essential quality affordable housing is to their own goals. Commentary, Page A4

Maryland Explores Changing Tolls to Electronic Only

Drivers in Maryland could start seeing new plazas that only collect tolls electronically at highway speeds by the summer of 2019, said Kevin Reigut, executive director of the Maryland Transportation Authority. Business, Page A5

Movie Review: Love Simon

The blackmail subplot provides conflict for a story that otherwise wouldn't have any, and for which not having any is kind of the point. Because this isn't a movie about a gay teen who bravely comes out of the closet in the face of adversity, which it would have been if it were made even 10 years ago. Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

Why on earth would cans and other food storage containers contain toxic BPA that can make us sick? Is there any way to avoid it?

—Melinda Billings Hixson, TN

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Carolyn Hall dies, enjoyed 30 years as secretary of Forest Heights Elementary

Carolyn L. Hall, 85, of Skyline, who had a rewarding 30-year career as secretary at Forest Heights Elementary School, died April 13, two months to the day after her husband Richard "Dick" Hall. He died Feb. 13.

She was born in Hot Springs, Ark., daughter of Jack and Ruby Litz, but lived most of her young life in Arlington where she graduated from Washington-Lee High School. In 1954, while volunteering at the USO in Washington, she met a handsome Marine, danced with him and fell in love. On April 3, 1954 Carolyn and Dick were married and, in time, moved to John Street in Skyline where they raised their son and daughter.

For 30 years, at Forest Heights Elementary, she bandaged countless knees and elbows, was fill-in Principal and back-up Mom to thousands of kids ... and loved it.

She was a dedicated member of Oxon Hill Methodist Church, used her skill at needlepoint for the kneelers that adorn the altar and, for 40 years, sang soprano in the church choir.

Carolyn is survived by her son Michael and his wife Cathy, daughter Kristi and her husband Kevin Wright, seven grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren. Services were at Oxon Hill United Methodist Church with burial at Cheltenham.

People

Ciara Johnson, of Waldorf, was one of the contestants on The Wheel of Fortune April 11. Unfortunately she didn't make it to the Bonus Round.

Paul Pascal, 80, who died April 9 at his home in Bethesda, was a lawyer dubbed "Mayor of the Market" (for fighting to preserve Union Market in N.E. Washington). During his years in the Air Force, he was a bassoonist at Andrews AFB.

Academia

Friendly High School has added a new Academy of Health Sciences facility to its current health program.

Seventh-grader Max Legaspi won the Geography Bee at St. Philip's School and went on to finish 8th in the County Bee.

Tracey Spivey-White, principal of Judith P. Hoyer Montessori School, has been named a finalist for Principal of the Year, Prince George's County.

Changing landscape

Among the projects funded by the Maryland legislature is \$8,707 for urban reconstruction is (as it is written): "MD5/Branch Avenue: Curtis Drive to north of Suitland Parkway/ Naylor Rd. from Branch Avenue."

Also funded is a \$25,000 grant for Camp Springs Elks Lodge # 2332, for outreach programs for veterans and individuals with special needs and for renovations to allow the lodge to be used as a community disaster emergency shelter.

Giant has launched a plan to redevelop Livingston Square shopping center in Fort Washington and hopes to have the project completed by early 2019.

Glassmanor Community Center will be receiving funding for a new facility, providing recreational and educational programs for the community.

Coming up

Saturday, May 5: Girl Scout Day at Darnall's Chance in Upper Marlboro. Brownies and Juniors can earn four fun patches in one day! This year's activities include block printing, family genealogy, birdhouse building, and bird-feeder art. Space is limited. Reservations and payment required in advance. Rain date, May 6. Fee for scouts, \$20 (includes all patches). Leaders and chaperons are free. Info: 301-952-8010.

Monday, May 7: Morningside election, to fill two Council seats.

Tuesday, June 26: Maryland Primary, with dozens running.

Morningside Memories: 40 years ago

The Morningside Sportsmen held their fifth Annual Installation of Officers and Awards Banquet on April 29, 1978, at the VFW. Frank Journey was elected president. Other new officers were Lee Collins, vice president; Dave Hockenbrought, recording secretary; Dick West Jr., corresponding secretary; Gary Journey, treasurer; Dave Williams, sergeant-at-arms. Other board members: Dick Journey, George Playfair, Ernie Bayne and Don Journey.

Dice West was named recipient of the Sportsmen's biggest honor, the Laddie Beardmore Award, given annually for outstanding civic achievement. Morningside Mayor Gerald Glaubitz made the presentation.

Dwight Holloway's brother, Tuskegee Airman, dies

Retired Lt. Col. Clarence Wesley Holloway, 96, an original Tuskegee Airman and brother of the late Dwight Holloway, of Skyline, died April 11 in Montgomery, Ala.

He was the last living charter member of Tuskegee's Gamma Phi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, the first intercollegiate Greek-letter fraternity established for African American men. He served in the Air Force for 33 years and, most notably, as the first commander of the groundbreaking Air Force ROTC detachment at Alabama State University.

His wife of 63 years, Frances, predeceased him. Among his survivors is his nephew, Dwight Holloway, Jr., who grew up in Skyline, worked for some years in London and now resides in Annapolis. He attended his uncle's funeral in Montgomery.

See **MORNINGSIDE** Page A22

Neighborhoods

The Department of Parks and Recreation's Fairland Sports & Aquatics Complex Hosts 11th Annual Health Fair

LAUREL, MD—On Saturday, April 28, 2018, Fairland Sports & Aquatics Complex is hosting the 11th Annual Sports, Health & Wellness Fair. Delivering Inclusive Solutions for Total Body Health at the Fairland Complex from 10 AM–2 PM. Admission is free. There will be door prizes, giveaways and free activities throughout the day. The fair will encourage participants to join in free classes and training sessions and receive free bone density, hearing, vision, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings.

This year's theme, "Connect-Commit-Conquer," encourages family and friends to adopt healthier lifestyles. The fair will feature the First Annual Color Walk/Run. There will be FREE health screenings, sports classes and entertainment going on throughout the day. On-site trainers and fitness instructors will be available to assist guests in planning their personal health and fitness programs. This year, there will be a bigger and better 'Children's Row' with tons of health and fitness activities to engage children, including visits from "Arts on a Roll," the "Fit Mobile" and face painters. And, the Therapeutic Recreation team will be onsite with trainers from the Healthy Minds/Healthy Bodies program for disabled veterans. Fresh produce, food trucks, music and entertainment are also planned for this jam-packed community event.

WHAT: Community Health Fair

WHERE: Fairland Sports & Aquatics Complex, 13820/13850 Old Gunpowder Road, Laurel, MD

WHEN: Saturday, April 28, 2018, from 10 AM–2 PM.

For additional information, contact Lisa Irving at 301-362-6094; TTY 301-699-2544 or lisa.irving@pgparks.com.

Some of the partners for this year's health fair include, Maryland Physicians Care; Washington Regional Transplant Community; Lions Club of College Park; Columbia Scuba; Prince George's County Family Justice Center; DHHS Montgomery County Cancer Crusade; Walmart Vision Services; Do Terra Essential Oils; Community Advocates for Family & Youth; Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Program; Young Living; GoPink!DC; Block Chiropractic & Rehabilitation Center, LLC; QCI Behavioral Health; Heaven Helpers Ministry; and Hemali Vora Health & Wellness Center. Freestate Happy Wanderers will also be hosting a 10K walk on Fairland's trails that day.

FSAC is located on the grounds of Fairland Regional Park. Inside you will find a 50-meter competition pool, a 25-yard leisure pool, a 12,000 square foot indoor gymnastics facility, six indoor tennis courts, an indoor racquetball court, a weight training center, a fitness and dance studio and a trampoline training room. Sports training (land and water), weight training, and massage therapy are all available at FSAC for athletes at all stages of training. In the park,

there's hiking/biking trails, football and softball fields. 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.

WSSC Releases Annual Water Quality Report Region's Largest Water Utility Meets All Federal Safe Drinking Water Standards

LAUREL, MD—Continuously providing water that meets all strict federal Safe Drinking Water Act standards, WSSC today released its annual water quality report for 2017. The report provides customers with important information about the source of their drinking water, how it is purified and detailed water quality data. For 99 consecutive years, WSSC has produced and delivered water without a single drinking water quality violation.

"Delivering safe, clean water is at the heart of everything we do," said WSSC General Manager and CEO Carla A. Reid. "Our skilled scientists conduct more than 500,000 water quality tests each year to ensure we provide our 1.8 million customers with water that meets all federal standards."

To guarantee water quality, WSSC regularly performs stringent tests for 365 substances. Additionally, WSSC analyzes tap water at nearly 100 locations in communities throughout Montgomery and Prince George's counties. WSSC treats surface water from the Patuxent and Potomac rivers. WSSC's Patuxent and Potomac Water Filtration Plants provide an average of 164 million gallons of safe drinking water each day.

The 2017 water quality report is available online at wsscwater.com/wqr. Customers may also request a hard copy of the report by calling WSSC's Communications and Community Relations Office at 301-206-8100 or via email at communications@wsscwater.com.

HUD Awards \$1 Million to Help Permanently House Homeless Veterans in Maryland

PHILADELPHIA, PA—The U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and Veterans Affairs (VA) are awarding more than \$1 million to help 118 homeless veterans in Maryland find a permanent place to call home. The rental assistance announced today is provided through the HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program, which combines HUD's rental assistance with VA case management and clinical services.

"I am honored to announce this important funding for our veterans who have fallen on hard times," said Joe DeFelice, Regional Administrator of HUD's Mid-Atlantic region. "This funding will help meet their housing needs first and then supportive services will quickly follow. Our veterans deserve a permanent home of their own."

HUD-VASH works to reduce veteran homelessness, providing funding for both the housing and supportive services that are essential for ending homelessness among veterans in Maryland (see chart below). In December, HUD announced veteran homelessness is down 3.4 percent in the state.

In the program, VA Medical Centers assess veterans experiencing homelessness before referring them to local housing agencies for vouchers, taking into consideration their duration of homelessness and their need for longer term, more intensive support. These medical centers, which are located across the U.S., Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, offer eligible homeless veterans clinical and supportive services. Veterans participating in the program rent privately owned housing and generally contribute no more than 30 percent of their income toward rent.

Nationally, \$43 million in HUD-VASH funding is being awarded to 325 local public housing authorities (PHAs) across the country—in the Mid-Atlantic region, 304 PHAs will receive more than \$2 million. Since 2008, more than 87,000 vouchers have been awarded and approximately 144,000 homeless veterans have been served through the program.

Governor Larry Hogan Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Maryland Fraternal Order of Police

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Governor Larry Hogan commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Maryland Fraternal Order of Police today in Ocean City, Md., where he spoke to over 120 members at the organization's Board of Directors meeting. The governor emphasized the importance of supporting those who serve in law enforcement, touted tax relief for first responders, and recognized members for their service to our communities.

"I have been deeply moved by the selflessness, the unwavering loyalty, and the dedication of Maryland's law enforcement family," said Governor Hogan. "These outstanding men and women are at their best and their goodness and compassion shines brightest when others are in need."

Governor Hogan also discussed successful efforts in the 2018 legislative session, which ended on Monday, to provide more tax relief for retired law enforcement officers and first responders. The expanded Hometown Heroes Act reduces the state tax burden on retired law enforcement, fire and rescue, and emergency services personnel, and was expanded this year to include correctional officers.

The Hogan administration has a strong record of support for law enforcement across the state, investing \$10 billion for public safety and security programs, with \$75 million in police aid to local governments and municipalities in the upcoming Fiscal Year 2019 budget alone.

See **HOGAN** Page A5

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

FREDERICK DOUGLASS GRADUATES

We are looking for a few good Frederick Douglass Graduates to lead the way in preserving the Legacy of Frederick Douglass High School by running to fill an office in the newly formed Frederick Douglass High School Alumni Association of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, Inc.

Elections will be held May 18, 2018 to fill offices of President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Parliamentarian and Sergeant at Arms. For more information, please send an email to: fdhsauppermarlboro@gmail.com or leave a message at 1-720-721-4869.

OPEN HOUSE

Join us Saturday May 5 from 10:00AM–1:00 PM at our OPEN HOUSE at Prince Georges Community College. This will be a free, fun and interactive day for all interests and ages. You will be able to explore a growing Largo Campus. There will be information sessions and tours. You will be able to explore academic continuing education programs, and community life through interactive displays.

All Prince George's County residents are welcome. For more information, please call 301-546-7422 or email enroll@pgcc.edu. The college is located at 301 Largo Road, Largo Maryland. Explore and Connect. Visit website at PGCC.edu/OpenHouse.

ARTS GALA CULTURAL TAPESTRY: RENAISSANCE THROUGH THE ARTS

Prince George's Arts & Humanities Council in partnership with Prince George's County Public Schools, organizer of 2018 Arts Gala Cultural Tapestry: *Renaissance Through the Arts* will be held Saturday, April 28, 2018 from 7:00 PM–9:30 PM: Arts Gala, featuring PGCPSS student performances, seated dinner, and cash bar. The VIP Reception will begin an hour before the Gala (6:00–7:00 PM), and includes bar, hor d'oeuvres, and live entertainment. (tickets are limited!)

Tickets cost \$80–\$120. Purchase tickets thru Eventbrite. For more information, please call 301-808-8256. No refunds. Location is College Park Marriott Hotel & Conference Center 3501 University Blvd., E Hyattsville, Maryland.

This is a benefit dinner showcasing the artistic talents of students in the PGCPSS Arts Program. Proceeds will go to the Prince George's Art & Humanities Council in support of PGCPSS Arts Education.

SEMINAR

Please join us Thursday, May 10, 2018 from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM for informative, interactive seminar. The topic is "Brain-understanding, preventing and treating stroke."

The Seminar will be presented by Aabha A. Shah, MD, and Anne Constantino, MD at MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Multi-Purpose Room 7503 Surratts Road, Clinton, Maryland.

Admission is free but you must reserve a seat in advance. Register online today at MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Ask-theDoc or call 855-211-8405.

CASINO TIME

Join us for our 2018 Sunday Casino Slots Fun to Midway Harrington Raceway & Casino Slots in Harrington, Delaware Sunday, May 20, 2018. Fun Package includes a \$15.00 slot play rebate with a \$7.00 Buffet Food Voucher, Oldies but Goodies, 50/50 Raffle and Cake Sale. Cost is \$40.00. Absolutely no refunds. Purchase your ticket early so you won't be left out. Tickets must be purchased by May 6, 2018. Benefit St. Philip's Church.

Bus leaves Clinton Park-N-Ride at 10:30 AM and St. Philip's Church, Brandywine, Maryland at 11:00 AM and returns at approximately 7:30 PM. Points of contact for tickets are Shirley A. Cleaves (302) 690-4260, Doretha A. Savoy (301) 233-3136 and St. Philip's Church (301) 88-1536.

See **BRANDWINE** Page A22

COMMUNITY

U of M Laurel Regional Hospital Files Regulatory Plan to Transform Healthcare Services to Meet Community Needs

By PRESS OFFICER
Office of the Lt. Governor

CHEVERLY, MD—Representing a significant step in a body of work that began more than two years ago, today the University of Maryland Laurel Regional Hospital filed documents with the Maryland Health Care Commission seeking approval to transform and enhance the health care services offered in Laurel. The filing, called a Request for Certificate of Need Exemption, lays out plans to transform the aging hospital into a new state-of-the-art health care destination offering services including but not limited to emergency care 24/7, short-stay overnight care, outpatient surgery and enhanced outpatient behavioral health programs and services.

The multi-phase planning process for what is proposed to be the new UM Laurel Medical Center and its surrounding campus began in July 2016 when the University of Maryland Medical System (UMMS), Laurel Mayor Craig Moe and other community leaders launched a Strategic Planning Work Group (SPWG) to address the future of health care in Laurel. The collaborative process resulted in a set of recommendations regarding the transformation and modernization of Laurel Regional Hospital. The 11-member work group Execu-

tive Committee was co-chaired by Mayor Moe and Stephen T. Bartlett, MD, now the UMMS Chief Medical Officer. The co-chairs established seven subcommittees to focus on issues key to a successful campus transition:

- Behavioral Health
- Campus Development
- Clinical Operation
- Emergency Medicine/EMS
- On-Campus Services
- Volunteer Services
- Workforce Development

The membership of both the Executive Committee and subcommittees included state and local elected representatives, business leaders, first responders, health care providers, hospital administrators, Laurel Regional Hospital employees and volunteers, union representatives, K-12 and higher education leaders, and members of the community at-large.

“While the journey has not been without its challenges, I am confident about and excited by the plans for health care in Laurel,” says Mayor Craig A. Moe. “We have had the right voices, expertise and input from many contributors to bring us to this juncture, and I believe that our citizens will have a health care facility and campus that they can be proud of and that will meet the most pressing medical needs they, their families and neighbors face every day.”

Following the formal affiliation of UMMS and the new University of Maryland Capital Region Health (formerly Dimensions) in September of last year, a second phase of planning for the new Medical Center and surrounding medical campus was initiated. Phase II transition work has included planning, sizing and design of the new state-of-the-art facility that will house a 24/7 emergency department and serve as the anchor for the larger medical campus. Meetings with various stakeholders including emergency room personnel, EMS personnel and law enforcement have informed the design of the facility. A community engagement team has been formed to keep patients, Laurel-area residents, elected leaders, and other stakeholders informed regarding transition planning and to solicit their feedback. In addition, market research, ongoing community needs assessments and feasibility analyses are helping to refine the list of services to be provided in the new anchor facility and on the surrounding medical campus. Other campus development plans include expansion of outpatient programs such as chronic disease management and wellness promotion in collaboration with UMMS and its partners from the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

Proposed services, pending regulatory approval, for the

new UM Laurel Medical Center include:

- 24/7 Emergency Department
 - Short stay overnight care
 - Outpatient surgery
 - Enhanced outpatient behavioral health programs and services
 - Pharmacy
 - Lab
 - Imaging
- Current campus programs that will remain include:
- Primary care
 - Women’s Health
 - Lung Health program
 - Wound Care Center
 - Chronic Pain Management

Upon regulatory approval of the conversion of the hospital, this new model of care will allow the medical system to invest more in services that keep residents healthy in their community and avoid unnecessary inpatient admissions and emergency room visits. This model also allows for expansion of ongoing services including ambulatory surgical care and intensive outpatient treatment for patients with behavioral health needs, with a goal of reducing the need for hospitalizations. The current building will house the approved services until the construction of the new facility is complete.

Current traditional inpatient medical/surgical units and behavioral health services will be provided primarily at UM Prince George’s Hospital Cen-

ter. Regulators have already approved the move of the existing chronic care and inpatient rehabilitation units at UM Laurel Regional Hospital to UM Prince George’s Hospital Center. The relocation of these units is projected to occur by fall 2018.

“We are excited to reach this milestone in this project,” says Stephen T. Bartlett, MD, the Peter Angelos Distinguished Professor in Surgery, University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Executive Vice President and Chief Medical Officer, University of Maryland Medical System. “We are one step closer to a modern facility with enhancements that will allow us to continue to meet the needs of the communities we serve now and in the future with the level and quality and expertise the residents of this vibrant community deserve to have.”

The new facility alone will represent a \$50 million UMMS investment in the Laurel community and will be located on the southwestern portion of the existing UM LRH campus at the intersection of Van Dusen and Contee roads. Subject to regulatory approval, construction of the new UM Laurel Medical Center is expected to be completed in spring 2021. Significant private sector investment is also anticipated as the surrounding medical campus is developed.

Almost three years ago, in the context of a rapidly shifting health care environment, the members of the Dimensions Health System (DHS) board made the difficult decision to transform Laurel Regional Hospital from an acute care inpatient facility to an ambulatory site designed to be responsive to the needs of Laurel and the surrounding community.

“I offer my thanks to the Laurel Strategic Planning Work Group for their dedication; these plans represent their vision and dedication to the people of this region and a commitment to meet their needs in an evolving health care environment,” said Bradford Seamon, Chairman of the Board of Directors of University of Maryland Capital Region Health. “I also express my appreciation to Former Board Chair The Hon. C. Philip Nichols and the Dimensions board for the difficult task they took on to initiate necessary changes to Laurel Regional Hospital for a viable future.”

For more information on the project and renderings of the new facility, visit <https://umcapitalregion.org/um-capital-laurel>.

A public meeting regarding the transition of the current UM Laurel Regional Hospital will take place on May 7, 2018 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Laurel-Beltsville Senior Activity Center.



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COMMENTARY

Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator for Maryland



Cardin, Van Hollen Announce \$490,300 for University of Maryland Sea Grant Program

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen (both D-Md.) today announced \$490,300 in federal funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's Sea Grant Program. Maryland Sea Grant (MDSG) projects have produced significant results that aided fishers, businesses, policy makers, and conservation volunteers in Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay region. Senators Cardin and Van Hollen fought for and secured significant funding for the Sea Grant Program after President Trump's Fiscal Year 2018 budget proposed eliminating the program and its funding entirely.

"A healthy Chesapeake Bay means a healthy economy, and maintaining the Bay is a team effort. The MDSG program has been an important contributor to this mission by bringing together environmental scientists, students, local business owners and community leaders to preserve our coastal waters and improve the health of our state's most valuable natural resource," said Senator Cardin, a senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "This federal investment will help ensure that MDSG can continue to develop sustainable solutions that will keep our Bay and our economy healthy for generations to come."

"The Maryland Sea Grant Program is essential to efforts to improve the health of the Bay," said Senator Van Hollen, a member of the Budget and Appropriations Committees. "This funding will help ensure this crucial work will continue — from scientific research, to community education, to stakeholder outreach. A clean and thriving Bay is vital to Maryland's economy, wildlife, and environment, and I will continue to fight for those priorities in the Senate."

"Maryland Sea Grant is excited to continue our efforts to support science and community engagement to help sustain healthy and economically vibrant coastal waters and resources for all Marylanders," said Dr. Fredrika Moser, Director of the MDSG program.

The MDSG program is a University System of Maryland program administered by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and is a part of a network of 33 National Sea Grant programs. Locally, the program utilizes educational outreach, scientific research and public awareness to support the preservation and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay and Maryland's coastal waters. Through these initiatives, the MDSG has con-

See SEA GRANT Page A22

Marc Morial, President and CEO National Urban League



50 Years After the Fair Housing Act, America Has a Long Way to Go Toward Ending Segregation

"The housing problem is particularly acute in the minority ghettos. Nearly two-thirds of all non-white families living in the central cities today live in neighborhoods marked with substandard housing and general urban blight. Two major factors are responsible. First: Many ghetto residents simply cannot pay the rent necessary to support decent housing. In Detroit, for example, over 40 percent of the non-white occupied units in 1960 required rent of over 35 percent of the tenants' income. Second: Discrimination prevents access to many non-slum areas, particularly the suburbs, where good housing exists. In addition, by creating a 'back pressure' in the racial ghettos, it makes it possible for landlords to break up apartments for denser occupancy, and keeps prices and rents of deteriorated ghetto housing higher than they would be in a truly free market."

—Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (the Kerner Commission), 1968

Former Vice President Walter Mondale, who co-sponsored the Fair Housing Act along with Edward Brooke, the first popularly elected African-American U.S. Senator, was interviewed this week on the occasion of the Act's 50th anniversary.

"There's been a struggle to get the Fair Housing Act recognized as real law, and enforce it at the state and local level," he said. "I would say we haven't done very well at it. I think it has made significant progress possible in America, but we're not there yet."

According to Mondale, a significant problem with enforcement of the Fair Housing Act was proving intent. He was encouraged by a 2015 Supreme Court ruling that found that only impact, and not intent, was necessary to prove discrimination. But, he said, he had little faith that he current administration would aggressively enforce the law.

Indeed, just last month, the National Urban League and other civil rights groups reacted with horror to a decision by Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson to strike the words "inclusive" and "free from discrimination" from HUD's mission statement.

Around the same time, news broke that the head of the department's Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Division had ordered a hold on the fair housing investigations given the highest priority by Secretary Carson's predecessor.

In late 2016, HUD opened an investigation into a report that Facebook allowed advertisers to exclude Black, Hispanic and Asian-American users from seeing their ads. One of Secretary Carson's first actions upon taking office was to kill the investigation. Secretary Carson also tried to cancel a program created under President Obama that would make it easier for housing voucher recipients to move to more stable neighborhoods. A federal court blocked the move.

Fair housing has been a top priority of the Urban League Movement since our founding more than a century ago. Among the seven objectives outlined in the founding documents of the Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes — later renamed the National Urban League — was a focus on housing conditions, employment opportunities and business development.

Urban League programs have helped millions of Americans to prepare for and buy a home, prevent mortgage default and foreclosure, achieve financial literacy and manage credit, and learn how to enforce their rights as tenants and borrowers.

It's impossible to extricate economic justice and fair housing. According to a Harvard study, moving from a high-poverty neighborhood to a low-poverty neighborhood raised incomes, improved college attendance, and reduced teen-age pregnancy. Zip code can predict life expectancy better than genetic code.

That's why the nation must prioritize fair housing. Fifty years after the passage of Fair Housing Act, it's clear that we are not. As we said in our letter to Secretary Carson:

"You have spoken of the squalid conditions of your childhood neighborhood in Boston; you have experienced first-hand the demoralizing wounds of segregation and racism, and for a time, according to your spokesman, benefitted from the safety net of housing subsidy. You must bring these experiences to bear in your responsibility to uphold the duties of your office."



Montpelier Arts Center

Open to the Public

PHOTO CREDIT: FRANK MONALDO

MONTPELIER ARTS CENTER

The Arts Center which opened in 1979 houses three galleries, artist's studios, and classrooms. Exhibitions include cutting edge work as well as more traditional approaches and feature both emerging and established regional, national and international artists. The Main Gallery is also the site for the performances of the Jazz, Folk/Blues and Classical music series. The gallery is also available on a limited basis for rental by community groups. Artist studios are open to the public, and offer insight into the process of creating artwork.

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



Child Opportunity and Stability Starts at Home

Fifty years ago this week the *Civil Rights Act of 1968*, also known as the *Fair Housing Act*, became law after passing Congress in the wake of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. *The Fair Housing Act* prohibited discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin, or sex. It followed up the landmark *Civil Rights Act of 1964* by addressing the persistent and pervasive housing inequality undergirded by federal policy that threatened to derail other efforts towards a more integrated and equal society. As he signed it President Lyndon B. Johnson said, "With this bill, the voice of justice speaks again. It proclaims that fair housing for all — all human beings who live in this country — is now a part of the American way of life."

The hope at the time was that the *Fair Housing Act* signaled the beginning of a new era giving all Americans access to safe, affordable housing. But as with so many of the historic promises during the Civil Rights Movement era, we have made great progress but huge implementation gaps and barriers remain. Fair access to housing for all is far from a reality and many Americans still have no access to decent and safe shelter they can reasonably afford as gentrification floods the land pushing the poor into shelters and the streets. Recently the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), an organization dedicated to achieving more just public policy that assures people with the lowest incomes in our nation affordable and decent homes, launched the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign together with partnering organizations to champion federal policies to protect and expand affordable housing today.

The national multi-sector campaign includes organizations addressing poverty, economic equality, civil rights, nutrition, health care, education, mental health, and more that recognize how essential quality affordable housing is to their own goals. The Children's Defense Fund (CDF) is pleased to be one of its steering committee members. In a 2015 CDF report on the impact of modest improvements in nine existing policies and programs

that could help reduce child poverty significantly right now, CDF found increasing housing subsidies for low-income families would have the largest impact. We know having a safe, stable home is a basic need for all children. Homelessness, unstable housing, and the unavailability of affordable housing all have dire consequences. But the critical demand far outweighs the supply for those most in need.

As NLIHC explains: "There are only 35 affordable and available rental homes for every 100 ELI [extremely low income] households nationwide, and no state has an adequate supply of affordable rental housing for the lowest income renters. Just one out of four eligible low income households receives federal housing assistance." NLIHC research shows 11 million extremely low income renter households spend more than half of their incomes on housing, leaving them with far too little left over to fully cover other necessities, and there are only 12 counties in the entire nation where a full-time worker earning minimum wage can afford a one-bedroom rental home. In many cases the lack of affordable housing drives families into overcrowded rental units with extended family members or into homeless shelters.

Our housing crisis is felt in every state as new families, seniors, people with disabilities, and young adults entering the labor market face great barriers in their search for affordable apartments or homes. The Opportunity Starts at Home campaign's goals are to "advance federal housing solutions that bridge the growing gap between renter incomes and rising housing costs; provide aid to people experiencing job losses or other economic shocks to avert housing instability or homelessness; expand the affordable housing stock for the lowest income renters; [and] defend existing rental assistance and other targeted housing resources from harmful cuts." It is clear that such a broad national movement is desperately needed. At a time when on any given night more than half a million people are homeless in America, fair housing enforcement is being cut back under Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson and housing assistance is under attack in the Administration's budget proposals that included deep funding cuts, harmful rent increases, and arbitrary work requirements increasing the bur-

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The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty —

Allocating Small Business Income to Husband and wife

by Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: My wife and I own a small company, so we can allocate our pay as we wish. She had not paid into Social Security in her career so 6 years ago her pay was increased so she paid more into SS, and me less. My yearly Social Security statement showed I went from about \$3200 in estimated benefits per month to about \$2800. We plan to work about another 5 years, so how should we allocate our pay? And can you recommend a resource for us to get more in depth understanding of how Social Security works?

Signed: Small Business Owner

Dear Business Owner: The reason your benefit estimate went down is that when estimates are done before you've reached your full retirement age (FRA), they assume that you will continue earning at your most recent level until you reach your FRA. So, when you reduced your annual earnings it also reduced your estimated Social Security benefits. By raising your wife's earnings, she has now been accumulating "quarter credits"; 6 years of work equals 24 quarter credits for your wife, but she needs 40 to claim benefits on her own work record. The question you should ask yourself is this: Will any benefit your wife gets from her own work record be greater than ½ of your benefit at full retirement age? (FRA is 66 + 2 months for you and 66 + 4 months for your wife.) Your wife's benefit after she accumulates the 40 credits will presumably be small in comparison to yours. And even if she gets a small benefit on her own record, as your spouse at her full retirement age she'll be entitled to ½ of the benefit you were entitled to at your full retirement age (you must be already collecting). Let's use an example:

- If you continue to allocate earnings to your wife for another 4 years she will be eligible for a small "retirement" benefit based upon her own minimum earnings record.

- When you start collecting your own benefit your wife's spousal benefit amount will be ½ of yours if she takes it at her FRA (reduced if she takes it sooner).

- Your wife's total benefit (her own and her spousal benefit) will at maximum be 1/2 of yours; so even if she has a small benefit on her own she'll STILL get only up to her spousal benefit amount which will (presumably) be considerably higher than her own.

- If you allocate more/most of your business earnings as payroll to yourself, you will be increasing your own benefit, but you will also be increasing your wife's spousal benefit because she will get ½ of whatever your FRA benefit is, regardless of what her own benefit is (unless her own benefit would be more than ½ of yours).

Keep in mind that only your earnings up to Social Security's "payroll tax cap" count. That is \$128,400 for this year (changes annually), so you really don't need to allocate any more than that to yourself to improve your own benefit. If your business earnings are more than that you can allocate any excess to your wife, so she can earn more quarter credits because any excess won't be otherwise used to improve your SS benefit. But unless her estimated benefit exceeds half of yours she will still only get ½ of yours. While I can't make the decision for you, I hope this gives you enough information to make the right choice on how to allocate your company's earnings as payroll.

You asked for a resource to get a more in-depth understanding of Social Security, and I recommend that you try our AMAC Foundation Social Security Web site for all of the latest information about the complex topic of Social Security. You might want to peruse the Q&A section, which contains numerous articles I have written about Social Security matters, including much more depth on Spousal Benefits.

The information presented in this article is intended for general information purposes only. The opinions and interpretations expressed are the viewpoints of the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory staff, trained and accredited under the National Social Security Advisors program of the National Social Security Association, LLC (NSSA). NSSA, the AMAC Foundation, and the Foundation's Social Security Advisors are not affiliated with or endorsed by the United States Government, the Social Security Administration, or any other state government. Furthermore, the AMAC Foundation and its staff do not provide legal or accounting services. The Foundation welcomes questions from readers regarding Social Security issues. To submit a request, contact the Foundation at info@amacfoundation.org.

Hogan from A2

"Our administration will continue fighting to make sure that all of our police officers and law enforcement officials have the tools and resources you need to do your jobs effectively and efficiently," said Governor Hogan. "Time and time again, we have called on our troopers, our county and municipal officers, police agencies, and our sheriff's deputies in times of need; and every single

time, you answer the call with no regard for your own personal safety."

At the event, Governor Hogan presented State Lodge President Vince Canales with a Governor's Citation officially recognizing the Maryland Fraternal Order of Police's 50th anniversary.

The Maryland Fraternal Order of Police, formed in 1967, represents and serves more than 20,000 active and retired law enforcement officers from agencies throughout the state.

Maryland Explores Changing Tolls to Electronic Only

By KATHERINE BRZOZOWSKI
Capital News service

ANNAPOLIS, MD—The Maryland Transportation Authority is exploring the phasing out of all cash toll booths across the state.

Today, tolls are collected three ways: by cash, or electronically, by either an E-ZPass transponder or by video tolling—when the state uses a license-plate photo and mails drivers their bill.

Transportation officials say that the transition to all-electronic, high-speed toll collection will: save drivers time on their commute, save the state money, reduce accidents at toll plazas, and reduce CO2 emissions as less fuel is being burned, according to a national study by the University of Central Florida.

Drivers in Maryland could start seeing new plazas that only collect tolls electronically at highway speeds by the summer of 2019, said Kevin Reigut, executive director of the Maryland Transportation Authority.

However the state has no specific timetable or budget for all-electronic tolling at this time, Maryland Transportation Authority Communications Director Cheryl M. Sparks told Capital News Service.

The transition would also mean that anyone driving on Maryland toll roads could soon need an E-ZPass to avoid paying higher fees, and 218 toll operator positions will be phased out across the state.

If you pay using video tolling, Reigut said, you pay 1.5 times the base rate for that road—and if drivers don't have an E-ZPass by the time Maryland's electronic tolls are phased in, that's the price they'd pay across the state.

This means that drivers from other states who use Maryland roads will be forced to pay more if they don't have an E-ZPass by the time of the transition.

As part of the transition, which has been a strategic goal of the transportation authority since 2004, the state has eliminated the monthly fee and offered toll discounts to pass holders to prompt more Marylanders to buy an E-ZPass, Gov. Larry Hogan said at a Board of Public Works meeting Feb. 21.

Drivers who use E-ZPass save 25 percent at tolls on all but two roads across the state and 37.5 percent on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, compared to paying cash, said Reigut.

The two exceptions are the Intercountry Connector and the I-95 Express Toll Lanes, which already reflect the cost savings, and already collect tolls electron-

ically at highway speeds, via video tolling or E-ZPass.

The state has already seen the advantages of all-electronic tolling facilities at the Inter-county Connector—the second-most used toll facility and the quickest route for commuters who are traveling east-west across the state. This is because drivers can travel through tolls on this road at highway speeds.

The discount was funded by a \$270 million toll relief incentive over 5 years by the Hogan administration in July 2015—the first time tolls have been cut across the state in 50 years—according to a May 7, 2015, press release.

"There is no better time to be a Maryland E-Zpass customer than right now," Reigut told Capital News Service.

The budget is still under development for the entire All Electronic Toll project, Reigut said, but the initial contracts were approved by Maryland's Board of Public Works on Feb. 21. Sparks explained that the contract does allow for all-electronic tolling but a start date has not yet been set.

The two, 13-year option contracts totaled more than \$360 million—\$89 million to Kapsch USA Inc. for tolling systems and services and \$273 million to Transcore LP for customer service center services.

A toll increase isn't likely when the all-electronic tolls are entirely phased in, Reigut said.

In the long term, Reigut said, there will be cost savings as a result of this project because there won't be a need to pay for toll collector salaries and benefits, armored cars to transport money to secured rooms at the transportation building or for significant auditing functions relative to using cash.

The transition would phase out 218 toll collector positions over the 13-year contract, and the transportation authority is no longer hiring for the positions, Reigut said. They will be using temporary employees to fill vacant positions to minimize the number of employees affected by the project.

As toll facilities are converted, collectors will be given the opportunity to serve at nearby toll plazas, and can apply for other jobs within the state, Reigut said.

The transportation authority's approach to the project is to address one to two facilities at a time, starting with toll plazas that have the highest number of people who already use E-ZPass.

The first two areas that will be prioritized are the Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge in Cecil County—where 93 percent of

those who cross use E-ZPass—and the Francis Scott Key Memorial Bridge on I-695 in Baltimore County—where 78.5 percent of those who cross use E-ZPass, according to Reigut.

There will "never" be an issue where lanes will be closed during the all-electronic transition, and any work that requires traffic changes will occur in off-peak hours, said Reigut.

The all-electronic toll conversion at the Key bridge will not be completed by the start of the I-895 project, and therefore won't offer traffic relief at the onset.

I-895 has two safe, but "structurally deficient" bridges, according to Reigut, that need to be rebuilt. The first stage of the project included reconfiguring the lanes leading up to the bridges and began in March.

The second phase of the project will begin around Thanksgiving of 2018 and will direct north- and southbound traffic across one of the bridges, knocking down and rebuilding the other, and then channeling the two-way traffic across the new bridge while the second is completed, according to a Dec. 21, 2017, press release by the transportation authority.

The entire I-895 project is scheduled to be completed by the year 2021.

In anticipation of the I-895 project, the transportation department announced a \$49.4 million project in March 2017 to reconfigure 4 miles of I-95 roadway, north of the Fort McHenry Tunnel, by the summer of 2018, according to a March 31, 2017, press release by Maryland's Department of Transportation.

According to Reigut, facilities undergoing change will start with the installation and coverage of signs to signal the cashless transition.

Then, at existing toll plazas, booths will be converted for non-cash operations to encourage drivers to keep moving without stopping, and overhead tolling equipment will be built and activated.

Finally, the old equipment will be turned off and the booths themselves will be gutted, one to two booths at a time, and the roadways will be reconfigured.

For example, 10 toll lanes that merge to two lanes on a bridge will see new speed limit signs, new road striping, and construction to narrow the road to a consistent two-lane approach to the bridge.

Though drivers can start to see non-cash toll at some plazas within the next year, the Customer Service Center system cannot transition into the new system

until all the toll lanes across the state have been transitioned, according to state documents.

Customers will start seeing these changes two years into the project start, Reigut said.

Customer service improvements will include a mobile app for payments, notifications and account management, a Web chat service, a modernized website and a content management system, according to state documents.

Customers will also have the ability to transfer video tolls to a prepaid account and receive faster notification. A "robust" system will also be implemented for toll users who have credit issues or have missed paying their mailed video toll charge, Reigut told Capital News Service.

Today, E-ZPass has slightly more than 1 million customers in the state, which has a population of about 6 million people. In 2017, 78 percent of toll transactions—including out-of-state drivers—were recorded using E-ZPass, Reigut said.

The transportation authority expects to engage in nine to 12 months of "aggressive public outreach" to notify Maryland drivers of facilities they will be converting, said Reigut. This outreach would include attending city council meetings in person, posting information online, direct marketing and paying for radio and billboard advertisements.

John Townsend, AAA's public affairs manager in the District, said he worries about the people who don't have E-ZPass and agrees that there needs to be an aggressive marketing campaign to create awareness for the transition.

Out-of-state drivers, who are not from E-ZPass states, often use the Bay Bridge; and the Baltimore tunnels will be most vulnerable to this change, because outreach is only happening in-state, Townsend said.

When Virginia began converting Route 66 inside of the Capital Beltway to electronic lanes, the Virginia Department of Transportation engaged in marketing and also increased the number of vendors selling E-ZPass transponders, said Townsend.

In Maryland, the transportation department is using a similar strategy—selling E-ZPasses at the cash toll booths, in some supermarkets, and on their website when drivers register their vehicle.

"You'd have to work hard not to get this information," Reigut said.

Today, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia and West Virginia use E-ZPass.

Watch from A4

den of vulnerable people already facing many challenges.

In a recent Child Watch column I cited findings from the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall Center on Children's Missed Opportunities: National Estimates report which highlighted results from a national survey on unaccompanied youth homelessness in America.

The study, also published in the Journal of Adolescent Health, captures the horrible burdens of youth homelessness, including sleeping on the streets, in shelters, running away, being kicked out, and couch surfing. It showed one in 10 young adults 18–25 years old and at least one in 30 adolescents 13–17 years old experience some form of homelessness unaccompanied by a parent or guardian over the course of a year. This is horrific and demands urgent action. As a na-

tion we are hurting our growing edge and abnegating our responsibility to ensure all young people can reach their full potential and contribute to stronger communities and economies across the country. I can think of nothing worse than having no place to call home.

Another recent survey reports nearly one million American households received eviction judgments in multiple states in 2016. Author Matthew Desmond taught many of us in Evicted the profound repercussions of evictions. Families may lose their benefits when they are sent to an old address, be denied employment, and be required to find new schools for their children and transportation to help them get there.

Healthy child development is linked to safety, nurturance, and predictability in daily routines. Yet too many children are being bounced around from pillar to post jeopardizing their

positive cognitive and emotional development during a critical stage of their lives when stability is crucial. Find out how you can become involved in the Opportunity Starts at Home campaign. It provides many ways you can take action including sharing your own story about how housing needs have affected your family. It also shows you how to contact your Members of Congress to urge their support for stable, safe, affordable housing everyone, especially children, needs.

May 1–May 8 will be a "Our Homes, Our Voices" National Housing Week of Action, with events across the country including letter-writing campaigns to elected officials, meal- and story-sharing, community discussions, housing site visits, press events, rallies, meetings with elected officials, and nonpartisan voter registration drives. I agree with Doug Rice, senior policy analyst for

the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a campaign partner, that: "[A] home is much more than just four walls and a roof; it's the pathway to a healthier, more prosperous, and more secure life, and something that far too many Americans cannot attain." It's way, way past time to make that pathway of stability and safety accessible to all of America's children and families.

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.

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

Love, Simon

Love, Simon

Grade: B

Rated PG-13, a little profanity, one F-word, some mild sexual dialogue

1 hr., 49 min

Love, Simon is the first film about a gay teenager's coming out ever distributed in wide release by a major studio. We've seen mainstream films with queer youth as supporting characters, and numerous coming-out-centered films that played the arthouse circuit. But one of the majors (20th Century Fox in this case), backing a sort of gay teenage romantic comedy, showing it in every multiplex in the country? That's new. And given the number of people now running Hollywood who WERE gay teens 20–40 years ago, it's surprising.

One of those gay former teens is Greg Berlanti, a writer for gay-friendly turn-of-the-century teen drama *Dawson's Creek*, creator of like-minded *Everwood*, and producer of the current *Riverdale*. His indie comedy *The Broken Hearts Club* was notable at the time (2000) for NOT being about Important Issues, with gay characters just living their lives at a time when most cinematic gays were dying of AIDS or marching in protests. He's made one other movie since then, the (straight) rom-com *Life As We Know It*, and now returns to the big screen with the warm and fuzzy *Love, Simon*. Even though it's based on a novel (by Becky Albertalli) and adapted by *This Is Us* producer/writers Elizabeth Berger and Isaac Aptaker, it feels like a personal movie for Berlanti.

I mention all of this up front because there are a few fusty, out-of-touch moments in *Love, Simon* that remind you it was directed by a 45-year-old man whose own teen years were radically different from his protagonist's. (Not just the prevailing attitude toward sexuality, either: everything about high school was different 30 years ago.) It's altogether a friendly, old-fashioned movie, very tame in its depiction of burgeoning sexuality, without life-or-death melodrama or rejection—and that pleasantness can make it seem less revolutionary than it is, like it's the hundredth one of these, not the first.



ROTTENTOMATOES

Everyone deserves a great love story. But for seventeen-year old Simon Spier it's a little more complicated: he's yet to tell his family or friends he's gay and he doesn't actually know the identity of the anonymous classmate he's fallen for online. Resolving both issues proves hilarious, terrifying and life-changing. Directed by Greg Berlanti (*Riverdale*, *The Flash*, *Supergirl*), written by Isaac Aptaker & Elizabeth Berger (*This is Us*), and based on Becky Albertalli's acclaimed novel, *LOVE, SIMON* is a funny and heartfelt coming-of-age story about the thrilling ride of finding yourself and falling in love.

Simon (Nick Robinson), a dreamy, nonthreatening senior, narrates the film via emails he's writing to his pen pal, a fellow student at his school who came out anonymously on the school message board and calls himself "Blue." Simon has begun a correspondence with Blue (calling himself "Jacques"), discussing their shared secret and falling in love. Meanwhile, of course, Simon is trying to figure out which of his classmates Blue is, plugging each new suspect into his imagination as he makes his guesses.

Simon hasn't come out to anyone but Blue. He hasn't told his lifelong best friend Leah (Katherine Langford), who has a crush on him that he doesn't see; or Abby (Alexandra Shipp), who's just been cast as the lead in the school musical; or Nick (Jorge Lendeborg Jr.), a soccer player who's in love with Abby. He hasn't told his affectionate, progressive parents (Jennifer Garner and Josh Duhamel) or his younger sister (Talitha Bateman).

His secret is threatened when another student, smart-mouthed busybody Martin (Logan Miller), discovers Simon's emails to Blue and blackmails

him: He'll out Simon unless Simon sets him up with Abby and gets her to like him. This thread of the story is tiresome, a contrived conflict that lacks authenticity (though it's on par with the nonsense typical of a teen rom-com), but it spotlights the film's curious position.

Set among non-religious people in a non-backwards part of America in 2018, the movie can't realistically present Simon's sexuality as a major problem. When he does come out, whether on his own terms or Martin's, we know that none of his friends or family are going to reject him, and that any opposition he faces will be the minority opinion (and a socially unpopular one at that). His reluctance—and he seems to know this, at least subconsciously—is self-inflicted, caused by uncertainty over whether he accepts HIMSELF as gay.

The blackmail subplot provides conflict for a story that otherwise wouldn't have any, and for which not having any is kind of the point. Because this isn't a movie about a gay teen who bravely comes out of the closet in the face of adversity, which it would have been if it were made even 10 years ago.

This is a movie about a teen who overcomes his own hangups to come out into a world that largely accepts him—which is the only way to make this movie in 2018. Our progress as a society has rendered a once-reliable fictional device ineffective. Being gay is no longer an automatic source of conflict unless it's set in the past and/or involves religious conservatism.

Love, Simon is important because it conveys this new reality in a way that's loving and affirmative, not to mention funny and sweet, with an unabashedly cornball finale to tug at the heart of romantics across the sexuality spectrum. (I suspect the teenage girls who would swoon over Simon in a traditional rom-com will be just as delighted to see him find happiness on the "other team.") The message isn't "Be tolerant of gay people." It's "We're tolerant of gay people now, so let's enjoy some fun, kind, uplifting stories about them the way we would anybody else." For people like Greg Berlanti and me who grew up in a very different world, it's cathartic to see stories we can relate to told with a degree of love and compassion that we can hardly imagine.

Spelling Bee from A1

rounds before the final word was spelled correctly.

"I am so proud of all of you," Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker told the students. After sitting through the first round, Executive Baker was happy to wish them well.

This was the first year that fifth-graders were included in the bee, said Chauka Reid, the bee's coordinator.

Fifth-grader Andre Stewart of Bowie Montessori Children's House was excited by his opportunity to compete.

"My grandmother and my family gave me the motivation to compete," Stewart said.

This also marked the third year of the Washington Informer Charities' sponsorship of the bee in Prince George's County following the sale of the former sponsor, the Prince George's County Gazette.

"We are excited to see so many parents and supporters of Prince George's County's top spellers here with us tonight," said Denise Rolark Barnes, publisher of The Washington Informer and president of Washington Informer Charities. "Your presence helps to encourage these students who are already winners because they competed and won in their respective schools."

Rolark Barnes commended Reid as "a committed, hard-working and dedicated proponent of the spelling bee and a strong advocate for the children enrolled in the Prince George's County Schools."

The auditorium was filled with spelling coaches, family members and sponsors including Tracey Funn of Washington Gas, Apera Nwora of AltaGas, Vic Samuels of Educational Systems Federal Credit Union and Toni Lewis of FAME. Other sponsors and partners included

Toyota, Southwest Airlines, Comcast, Giant, Safeway Foundation, Merriam-Webster, Washington National, Six Flags, Champion Trophies, Silver Spring Signarama, the Baysox and The Clarice.

"Education is so important today and to find avenues and opportunities for young people to learn in a fun, innovative and meaningful way is a wonderful thing," Funn said. "We applaud The Informer for having been the longtime sponsor of the event which we have been a supporter of for many years."

When Kayden approached the mic to spell his winning word "cambio," he exemplified maturity and confidence beyond his young years. Zahren announced him the champion and in a flash, his his younger brother raced to the stage to give him a huge hug.

Ron Burke, advertising and marketing director for The Washington Informer, proudly

presented four roundtrip tickets to any destination Southwest Airlines flies to the first-place winner and his family.

Kayden's mother and father told the audience that their son's success comes from his love for books with began when he was in kindergarten.

"We are very proud of him," they said.

Three contestants finished in a tie for second place after seven rounds. They are: Inioluwa Olaniyan, 7th grade, Judith P. Hoyer Montessori School; Alyssa Burgos, 7th grade, Holy Redeemer School; and Olivia Allen, 8th grade, St. Mary's of the Mills School.

In addition to a bee-themed gift basket provided by Educational Systems Federal Credit Union, the participants will meet again at the Washington Nationals-Colorado Rockies game on April 14 where the winners will be honored on the field at home plate prior to the game.

A Little This, A Little that

Colorful Caladiums Brighten Shade Gardens All Season

By MELINDA MYERS

Tuck them into the garden, pop some in a container or dress up a window box. Then water as needed, add a bit of fertilizer and wait for the color explosion.

The showy heart-shaped leaves of caladiums come in combinations of pink, red, white and green. These heat-loving plants provide beautiful color all season long. Best of all, no deadheading is needed.

Caladiums can be used to create a stunning garden almost anywhere around your home. These tropical beauties grow well in full to partial shade, and some varieties grow equally well in full sun. Choose varieties that will provide the color, size and look you want to achieve, and that match the light conditions in your yard.

Compact caladiums, such as lime and dark pink Miss Muffet, grow about 12" tall and are perfect for lining a pathway, edging a flowerbed or dressing up a container. Florida Sweetheart's bright, rose-pink leaves have ruffled green edges, and Gingerland has creamy white leaves that are decorated with splashes of green and red. All of these miniature varieties combine nicely with larger caladiums and elephant ears.

Step up the color impact with caladium Red Flash. This full-size caladium grows about 20" tall and has brilliant red centers, decorated with pink dots that pop against the large, deep green leaves. Use these anywhere you want a big splash of color in a garden bed or container.

Combine caladiums with shade-loving annuals like begonias, coleus, and mildew-resistant impatiens or other summer bulbs like cannas and elephant ears. Visit Longfield Gardens (longfield-gardens.com) for a bit of inspiration and container design ideas. You'll find simple combinations that provide big impact on a deck, patio or entryway.

When planting caladiums directly into the garden, wait until at least two weeks after all danger of frost has passed. Nights should be warm, and the soil temperature should be at least 65 degrees F. Prepare the soil before planting. Add compost or other organic matter to improve drainage in clay soil and the moisture-holding ability in fast draining soils. Plant tubers about six inches apart and two inches below the soil surface. Water thoroughly and often enough to keep the soil moist, but not soggy.

Those gardening in cooler climates may want to start the tubers indoors for an earlier show outdoors. Plant indoors four to six weeks before moving them into the garden. Set the tubers near the surface of a shallow container filled with a well-drained potting mix. Grow them in a warm sunny spot indoors, keeping the soil barely moist. Move outdoors once the danger of frost has passed and the soil has warmed.

As the summer temperature rises, watch your caladiums shine while many other flowers fade in the summer heat and humidity. Continue to water as needed and fertilize throughout the summer to encourage new growth.

Those gardening in zones nine through eleven can leave their caladiums in place year-round. Others can either treat these colorful beauties as annuals or dig up the tubers and overwinter them indoors. Dig tubers in early fall when soil temperatures drop to 55 degrees. Spread them out in a warm, dry location for at least a week. Label each variety, remove the foliage and place tubers in a mesh bag or pack loosely in dry peat moss. Store in a cool, dark location at around 60 degrees.

Make this the year you add caladiums for beautiful splashes of color throughout your landscape all season long.



PHOTO COURTESY LONGFIELD-GARDENS.COM

Caladiums planted in container gardens to dress up patios and decks.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Small Space Gardening* and the *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*. She hosts *The Great Courses* How to Grow Anything: Food Gardening For Everyone DVD set and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV and radio segments*. Myers is also a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by *Bonnie Plants* for her expertise to write this article. Myers' website is www.melindamyers.com.

Calendar of Events

April 26 — May 2, 2018

G.E.A.R. : Arts & Crafts

Date and time: Friday, April 27, 2018, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Let your imagination run wild and your creativity overflow during this arts and crafts workshop! Learn how to make jewelry including necklaces and bracelets, for yourself, a friend, or a loved one. No experience is necessary, but your imagination is mandatory!
 Cost: FREE with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10–17
 Location: Kentland Community Center
 2413 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover, MD
 Contact: 301-386-2278; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

Date and time: Friday, April 27, 2018, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Too much sauce? Do you like barbeque chicken? No, we're not practicing our culinary skills, but there will be some cooking on the basketball court in a single-elimination 3-on-3 tournament! Make sure you come hungry!
 Cost: FREE with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10–17
 Location: Vansville Community Center
 6813 Amendale Road, Beltsville, MD
 Contact: 301-937-6621; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: Kindness Rocks

Date and time: Friday, April 27, 2018, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Modeled after the Kindness Rocks ProjectSM, we will paint and create rocks with inspirational messages to place in the community for others to find. Using a hashtag, we will follow the rocks on social media to see where they go.
 Cost: FREE with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10–17
 Location: Beltsville Community Center
 3900 Sellman Road, Beltsville, MD
 Contact: 301-937-6613; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: Open Mic Night

Date and time: Friday, April 27, 2018, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Time to step to the stage and demonstrate to your friends how you can command the mic! You can show your talents of verbal wordplay through poetry, rap, or R&B. Let's see what you've got! Don't worry, we're all friends here!
 Cost: FREE with M-NCPPC Youth ID
 Ages: 10–17
 Location: Good Luck Community Center
 8601 Good Luck Road, Lanham, MD
 Contact: 301-552-1093; TTY 301-699-2544

Dallas Black Dance Theatre

Date and time: Friday, April 27, 2018, 8:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Playhouse patrons flock to Dallas Black Dance Theatre performances because of its compelling and innovative choreography, superbly trained dancers, and dance pieces that speak to our collective experience. This year's program includes a new work by DBDT Principal Dancer and Washington, D.C. native, Claude Alexander III. No performance would be complete without the Playhouse favorite, "Ostrich/Awassa Astrige!"
 Cost: \$30/person; \$25/person for seniors, students, and groups of 20 or more
 Ages: All ages are welcome
 Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly, MD
 Contact: 301-277-1710; TTY 301-699-2544

Glenn Dale Farmer's Market

Date and time: Saturday, April 28, 2018, 9:00 AM–1:00 PM
 Description: Shop with your local organic food and produce vendors from the Glenn Dale area at the Farmer's Market, including C & E Farms, Rudy's Produce, The Baker's Table, and more! Don't miss out—see you there!
 Cost: FREE admission
 Ages: All ages are welcome
 Location: Marrietta House Museum
 5626 Bell Station Road, Glenn Dale, MD
 Contact: 301-464-5291; TTY 301-699-2544

Annual Montpelier Festival of Herbs, Tea, and the Arts

Date and time: Saturday, April 28, 2018, 10:00 AM–4:00 PM
 Description: Celebrate Spring at this fun festival for the entire family! Visit the resident artists' studios, watch art demonstrations, paint the Montpelier bird, and create Spring-themed crafts. Stroll the Arts Center's galleries and view the exhibition, as well as art by Linda Bernard, Roslyn Logsdon, Bonnie Crawford Kotula, and Mike McConnell.
 At 1 pm, join us in the Main Gallery for a classical recital featuring percussionist Jeff Stern and at 3 pm, join us in the Library Gallery for an artist talk with Bonnie Crawford Kotula. Don't forget to visit the Montpelier Mansion/Historic site adjacent to the Arts Center. Stroll the beautiful grounds where you can purchase art, crafts, food, herbs, plants, and more. Self-guided tours are available year-round, Thursday to Tuesday, 11 am to 3 pm.
 Cost: FREE
 Ages: All ages are welcome
 Location: Montpelier Arts Center
 9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD
 Contact: 301-377-7800; TTY 301-699-2544

Xtreme Teens: T-Shirt Design

Date and time: Saturday, April 28, 2018, 7:00 PM–10:00 PM
 Description: Do you have visions of becoming a fashion designer? Well, maybe not but you will get to see how good you can be during this T-shirt design workshop! Old shirt or new shirt—it doesn't matter! Just bring in a T-shirt to design your very own runway fashion gear!
 Cost: FREE
 Ages: 10–17
 Location: Kentland Community Center
 2413 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover, MD
 Contact: 301-386-2278; TTY 301-699-2544

EARTH TALK ... Avoiding BPA Exposure: Not So Easy Anymore

Dear EarthTalk:

Why on earth would cans and other food storage containers contain toxic BPA that can make us sick? Is there any way to avoid it?

—Melinda Billings, Hixson, TN

If you like the occasional can of tomato soup or diced pears, chances are you're walking around with trace amounts of bisphenol A (BPA) in your bloodstream. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 90 percent of us are walking around with trace amounts of this toxic synthetic chemical—commonly used as a constituent component in the epoxy resins lining the inside of cans, boxes and other food storage containers to prevent corrosion and breakages—in our bloodstreams.

One of a class of so-called "hormone disrupting" or "endocrine mimicking" chemicals, BPA fools the body into thinking it's the naturally occurring hormone estrogen. The result can be negative effects on brain development, metabolism and the reproductive system. BPA exposure has also been linked to cancer, heart disease and other serious health disorders.

"Evidence suggests the developing fetus and young child are most at risk, but adolescents also appear uniquely vulnerable," reports the Environmental

Working Group (EWG), a leading non-profit research and advocacy group. Of course, the harm isn't limited to children and teens; adults can suffer the ill effects of a lifetime of bio-accumulated BPA coursing through their veins as well.

According to EWG, we can cut down on the amount of BPA we ingest by steering clear of canned and processed foods and replacing them with fresh, frozen and dried options. Get your tomato soup from the hot prepared foods section of your local natural foods market or, better yet, make it yourself from scratch from organic ingredients. And instead of buying diced pears in a can, buy a real pear and dice it up yourself.

"For those who cannot avoid foods in BPA-lined cans, rinsing the food in water may help lower the level of BPA in the food," reports EWG, adding that rinsing cuts back on other unhealthy additives—such as sodium on beans or sweet syrup on fruit—as well. EWG also warns never to heat up food directly in a can: "Transfer it to a stainless-steel pot or pan for stovetop cooking, or microwave in glass—not plastic."

If you're not sure whether your favorite foods are at risk of containing BPA, you can search EWG's Food Scores database to find out, and also to look for safer alternatives that don't contain hormone disruptors.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned BPA



CREDIT: MATTHEW HURST, FLICKR/CC

A good old can of soup might not be as good for you as you would expect, given the toxic chemicals in the lining of the can itself.

in baby bottles, sippy cups and infant formula packaging, but the vast majority of us are still at risk. Environmental and health advocates are calling on the agency to ban BPA outright from any packaging materials that come into contact with foods, drinks or water, but so far officials don't seem inclined to take the now ubiquitous chemical off the market completely. In 2014

and again in 2016, Democrats in Congress floated legislation that would have banned BPA and other potentially dangerous food additives in all food storage containers, but neither bill ever made it out of committee.

Without any help from the government, then, it's up to us to wean ourselves off of BPA by making smart choices about what we buy and what we eat.

CONTACTS: CDC Bisphenol A Fact Sheet, www.cdc.gov/bio-monitoring/BisphenolA_FactSheet.html; EWG's Food Scores, www.ewg.org/foodscores

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

Library from A1

rooms. The building's self-explanatory layout and logical flow patterns, reduces the need for signage. "The library has today and tomorrow in mind with its design and flexibility and provides the modern library user with all the experiences necessary to make a great library visit," a juror reflected.

Prince George's County Memorial Library System

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System

(PGCMLS), consisting of 19 branches, offers strategies for lifelong learning. Skills development library resources include: Rosetta Stone Library Solution, Lynda.com, Brainfuse's HelpNow and JobNow, Artist-Works for Libraries and Learning Express Library. Early literacy resources are: Ready 2 Read Centers, Ready 2 Read Backpacks, ABCmouse, AWE Early Literacy Stations, Beanstack, Playaway Launchpads and PebbleGo. All these services are free with your PGCMLS library card. Also, enjoy Minecraft, 3D print-

ing, DREAM (Digital Resources for Electronic Applications in Media) lab, chess clubs and MAC (Manga and Anime Clubs) free at your library. Engage with us on social media: Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, Pinterest, Instagram and YouTube. Check out our mobile apps! Learn more about what your Library has to offer at www.pgcmls.info.

Grimm + Parker

At Grimm + Parker our mission statement is creating together: meaningful architecture + client success. We're a diverse

group of architects and designers who aspire to make our communities wonderful places to live, learn and play. As community architects, we seek to give meaning to the buildings and spaces that shape our lives. Our purpose is to serve our clients and their neighborhoods through the design of schools, libraries, mixed-use developments, multi-family residential spaces, and a wide array of cultural and civic buildings. The buildings we create serve a meaningful purpose and give back to their communities for years to come.

Litter from A1

cial façade and cleaning and greening improvements.

- A Community Legacy program award of \$500,000 to purchase 15 new all-terrain litter vehicles to pick up trash in Baltimore City.

- Funding in the amount of \$380,000 from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources' Center for Restoration Finance to support park improvements and development in the Darley Park and Druid Heights neighborhoods.

- More than \$100,000 combined from the Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development to fund clean-up crews for Baltimore City trash hotspots and gateways into and out of the city.

"Keep Maryland Beautiful has had an extremely successful first year thanks in large part to facilitating partnerships," said Secretary Holt. "Its foundation is the great relationship between the state and Keep America Beautiful and the cooperative efforts of multiple state agencies and organizations."

"Our department is proud to be a partner in this outstanding way for communities to engage in environmental education, neighborhood beautification, and stewardship of natural resources," Maryland Natural Resources Secretary Mark Belton said. "I'm encouraged by the success and continued growth of Keep Maryland Beautiful."

In recognition of the Keep Maryland Beautiful program's rapid implementation and success, Ms. Lowman announced that the 2019 Keep America Beautiful National Conference

will be held in Baltimore City. The conference is the premier annual educational and networking forum presented by Keep America Beautiful for its affiliate network, partner organizations, and corporate sponsors. The conference attracts nearly 400 attendees and provides professional development and training in the best practices of litter prevention, recycling, and environmental stewardship.

For more information about Keep Maryland Beautiful, visit <http://dhcd.maryland.gov/Keep-MDBeautiful>.

Conference from A1

"This conference is what our community requires. Our attendees are talented and ambitious; but, are often seeking a quality professional resource to help grow their business. Women of Prince George's has been doing that and continues to make a name for itself both in and outside of Prince George's County", said Quianne Perrin Savoy, Founder of Prince George's County's OfficialistMagazine.

In the afternoon, WJLA-TV (ABC) DC news anchor, Victoria Sanchez, will host the Commu-

nity Leaders Awards. Bowie State University's current and first female president, Aminta Hawkins Breaux, is among those being honored for her impact in the Prince George's County region. Honorees from the Washington Women's Center, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Doctor's Hospital and more will also be recognized.

"Every year we try to introduce new components of our signature community event, and we can say that this year will bring new tools, information and inspiration to equip women to reach the next level.

When you educate the women, you improve the community and improve our economic position, said Stephanie Bolton James, Co-founder at Women of Prince George's.

Gourmet breakfast buffet and plated lunch is included. Exclusive door prizes will be given away, and unique vendors will be onsite.

Register for the at conference at www.womenofpg.com

About Women of Prince George's

Women of Prince George's is a premier resource for es-

tablished entrepreneurs and professional women in the Greater Prince George's area. We provide education, inspiration, and tools necessary to support business growth. Through our business relationships in the Washington D.C. area, we connect professionals with neighboring markets and provide exposure to businesses targeting the Prince George's County community. We aspire to educate women, which strengthens our families and builds our communities, thus, increasing our economic position as a global leader.

The Prince George's Post

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