

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY SINCE 1932

Vol. 89, No. 42 October 21 — October 27, 2021 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents

Prince George's County Supports Humane Efforts To Capture Loose Zebras

Asks public to report any sightings to PGC311

By LINDA LOWE

Prince George's County Department of the Environment

LARGO, Md. (Oct. 15, 2021)—The Prince George's County Department of Environment's Animal Services Division reports continuing joint efforts to corral two loose zebras sighted in the Upper Marlboro and surrounding areas in Southern Prince George's County. Animal Control personnel are in ongoing communication with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the owner, and the caretaker of the exotic animals, who is working to capture the zebras separated from the rest of the herd.

The Prince George's County Department of Environment (DoE), through its Animal Services Division is responsible for the enforcement of the Animal Control Ordinance. The County has robust laws to protect the welfare of animals and has clear administrative and court processes to ensure animals are protected. The County recently completed an overhaul to its Animal Control Ordinance that became effective in February 2020.

The caretaker has informed the County that one of the initial three zebras that got loose was caught in a snare trap and died

due to its injuries in early September. The caretaker reported the incident to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Police (NRP). Their role is to investigate the placement of the snares, as snare traps are illegal in Prince George's County. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources is responsible for all enforcement of all fish and wildlife laws and regulations, and the NRP is assisting in this case in that capacity.

The current capture plan is to utilize food and other zebras to attract the zebras at-large into a corral so they can be returned to the herd and eliminate any other potential risk to the animals. USDA veterinarians and DoE Animal Services staff agree this is currently the best approach proposed for successfully capturing them, with the least risk to the two zebras still at-large.

"Our priority is to make sure the zebras are captured and returned to the herd," says DoE Director Andrea L. Crooms. "Once this is accomplished, the County will conduct a further investigation, and any actions including any appropriate charges against the owner will be evaluated."

The public is asked to continue to report any sightings of the zebras to PGC311 or by contacting the Animal Services Division at 301-780-7200.

Not One Campaign for Domestic Violence

Please join State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy, Dr. Felicia Williams, President, Prince George's Community College and other partners for the "Not One Campaign Against Domestic Violence" **Wednesday, October 27** from 6-8 p.m.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Domestic violence affects millions of people, women and men alike. It touches every race, religion, culture and social status. It's not just hits, punches and slaps. It's humiliation, stalking, manipulation, threats and isolation. One out of 10 people personally know someone who is or has been a victim of domestic violence. Masks are required.

Join in with survivors and special guest speakers! If you would like to attend, please register: <https://notone2021.eventbrite.com>.

When: **Wednesday, October 27** from 6-8 p.m.

Location: Prince George's Community College - Proscenium Theater, 301 Largo Road, Largo, MD 20774

Board of Education to Resume In-Person Meetings

By PRESS OFFICER

Prince George's County Public Schools

UPPER MARLBORO, Md. (Oct. 14, 2021)—The Prince George's County Board of Education resumed in-person meetings that began with the Thursday, Oct. 14 Work Session. Board meetings have been held virtually since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meetings will operate under limited attendance to ensure safety amid the ongoing pandemic. Attendance will be limited to Board members, staff and individuals who have registered to provide public comment. Guests, spectators and media will not be permitted to attend in-person but may view meetings online.

The Board will continue to allow 45 minutes for public comment by a maximum of 15 in-person public comment speakers at each meeting. Those who wish to provide public comment must register online or call the Board Office at 301-952-6115. Registration is taken on a first-come, first-served basis starting four business days prior to the scheduled meeting (at 5 p.m.) up until noon the day of the meeting.

The following COVID-19 safety procedures will apply to all meetings:

- Before entering the building, attendees are required to provide either (1) proof of completion of COVID-19 vaccines; or (2) proof of negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours. Any individual who does not provide proof of completed vaccination or a negative test within the 72-hour window will not be permitted into the Board meeting.
 - All attendees will be required to provide photo identification and complete a COVID-19 questionnaire to enable contact tracing by the local health department in case an individual attending the meeting later tests positive for COVID-19.
 - Face masks must be worn at all times, including when providing public comment.
 - Social distancing will be enforced at all times.
 - Once an attendee has entered the Board Auditorium, they will not be permitted re-entry for any reason.
- For meeting agendas or to view a meeting online, visit the Board of Education website. Spanish speakers may call 508-924-5155 for interpreting.

Fall for These Events

Register Through PARKS DIRECT! for these fall M-NCPPC events:

Story & Craft—Pumpkins

Saturday, October 23, 2021, 10-11 a.m., Ages 2 to 10

Join us for a farm-related story, followed by a craft, and an animal meet and greet.

Location: Old Maryland Farm, 301 Watkins Park Drive Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 Contact: 301-218-6770; TTY 301-699-2544 Cost: \$3/ resident, \$4/ non-resident

Pumpkin Mania 2021

Sunday, October 24, 2021, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Come have fun at PUMPKIN MANIA 21! You can choose to try any of our pumpkin-themed activities, the skate mobile (must bring your own socks), creative hand painting, festive fall music, and line dancing. Pumpkins will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve

basis. There will be a food truck available for refreshments to purchase and much more! All ages welcome. Pre-registration is required!

Location: Westphalia Community Center, 8900 Westphalia Road, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 Cost: Free; All ages

Campfire—Going Batty

Friday, October 29, 2021, 10-11 a.m., Ages 2 & up.

Enjoy nature tales and roasted marshmallows over a community campfire! Bring hot dogs, if you like! Patrons will be notified of weather-related cancellations.

Location: Watkins Nature Center, 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774 Contact: 301-218-6702; TTY 301-699-2544 Cost: \$3/ resident, \$4/ non-resident

Windsock Wine Down: Haunted Hanger



PHOTO CREDIT MORGUEFILE.COM, KBURGGRAFI

Wednesday, October 27, 2021, 6-8 p.m., Ages 21 & up

Decorated for the occasion, the Museum welcomes you to celebrate the spooky season! Enjoy seasonal cocktails and mocktails, explore the gallery, and listen to haunted tales! Price includes admission to the

museum and two free drink tickets.

Location: College Park Aviation Museum, 1985 Corporal Frank Scott Drive College Park, MD 20740 Contact: 301-864-5316; TTY 301-699-2544 Cost: \$20/ person

Bridge Center at Adam's House Hosts One-Stop Resource Fair for Prince George's County Residents Needing Support Re-Entering Community

More than 50 service providers offered returning citizens (formerly incarcerated), returning military veterans, and transitional aged youth (18-24) a variety of services including job training, employment resources, behavioral health counseling, transitional housing, legal services, and free COVID-19 vaccinations

By DELLIA HAWTHORNE WILLIAMS
Prince George's County Health Dept

LARGO, Md. (Oct. 13, 2021)—Today the Prince George's County Bridge Center at Adam's House hosted a one-stop resource fair (online and in-person) at the Palmer Park Community Center to give County residents, especially formerly incarcerated citizens, returning military veterans, and transitional-aged youth, an opportunity to connect with community organizations that help them succeed in the next phase of their lives.

The fair was a partnership between the Bridge Center and the Prince George's County Council Reentry Advisory Board, the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office, Employ Prince George's, and the Prince George's County Department

of Corrections.

The Bridge Center provides a central and accessible location for County residents 18 and older to receive an array of integrated services that support and promote a positive and productive life in their communities.

"We are so Prince George's Proud of the Bridge Center at Adam's House and all of the many service providers who made today's re-entry resource fair possible," said Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks. "As a County government, we value every member of our community, including our returning citizens. This resource fair reaffirms our commitment to ensuring all Prince Georgians have the resources and opportunities they need to build a brighter future."

More than 50 public, private, nonprofit,

and community-based organizations provided critical connections to support services and resources at today's fair. Individuals who attended the fair were also offered free COVID-19 vaccinations.

"The Bridge Center at Adam's House is here to help Prince Georgians get their lives back on track," said Bridge Center Director Dr. Ron Garrett. "New chapters in life can be overwhelming and we want Prince Georgians to know we are here to support your way forward."

The Bridge Center is an inter-agency collaboration between the Health Department, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Social Services, the Department of Family Services and other

See SUPPORT Page A7

Free Halloween Lyft Rides Offered Throughout Prince George's County To Prevent Drunk Driving

Over 40% of U.S. Highway deaths on Halloween involve drunk drivers

By PRESS OFFICER
WRAP

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, Md. (Oct. 11, 2021)—Preparing to combat that time of year when, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 41-percent of all U.S. traffic deaths involve drunk drivers*, free Halloween Lyft rides will be offered to deter impaired driving throughout the Washington-metropolitan area, beginning Saturday, October 30, 2021.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the Halloween SoberRide® program will be in operation beginning at 10 p.m. Saturday, October 30 until 4 a.m. on Sunday October 31, 2021 as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers

during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

During this six-hour period, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download the Lyft app to their phones, then enter the SoberRide® code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no-cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's Halloween SoberRide® promo code will be posted at 7 p.m. on Saturday, October 30 on www.SoberRide.com.

"Well over one-third (41%) of all U.S. traffic fatalities during Halloween from 2015 to 2019 involved drunk drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration," said Kurt Erickson, WRAP's President.

See SOBERRIDE® Page A3

INSIDE

- PGSAO Expungement Fair
- Help M-NCPPC Shatter the Silence
- PGCMLS Announces Teentober P.A.D. Initiative
- Workshops Offer Coping Strategies for Those Living With Loss

Around the County, Page A2

Introducing the NEW AGAPE GIFT BAGS for Homeless Men, Women and Children

Rabies: Animal Bites Can Come at a Price

Community, Page A3

ChildWatch: Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune: Honoring a Great Role Model

Congressman Anthony Brown's Statement on the Passing of Gen. Colin Powell

Commentary, Page A4

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Welcomes New Gastroenterologist Tilak Baba

Dr. Baba believes in prolonging the life of patients by providing healing through a continuity of compassionate care.

Business and Finance, Page A5

News: Mussels, Ripe for Investment, Could Power Cleaner Rivers

... mussel restoration is ripe for broader investment by those looking to clean up the Bay and its rivers.

Environment, Page A6

TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

In & Around Morningside-Skyline by Mary McHale 301-735-3451

Morningside celebrates Halloween Oct. 30 with outdoor Happenings

The Town of Morningside is not condoning door-to-door Trick-or-Treating due to the Covid pandemic. Instead, they are celebrating ghost-&-goblin day by hosting an evening of fun Halloween outdoor events on Saturday, Oct. 30.

The celebration begins at 6 p.m. with Trunk-or-Treat in the parking lot at the Municipal Center. (If you wish to participate, call 301-736-2300 to register your vehicle.)

Following Trunk-or-Treat, there'll be a Costume Contest for all ages. Winners will receive a certificate award.

The evening closes with an outdoor showing—on the big screen—of the Halloween movie classic, "Hocus Pocus," starring Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy.

What if it rains? Call 301-736-2300.

Adventures in Washington (Part 1)

Daughter Therese has flown home to Brownsville, Texas, but during her three weeks here, we made several trips into Washington, each one an adventure. And I had my first chance to travel the beautiful new Frederick Douglass Bridge.

One of our trips took us to a museum, Planet Word, which opened in October 2020 and is still expanding, with more galleries and an eatery planned. As the website says:

"Aloha. Konnichiwa! Guten Tag. Hola! However you say hello, we welcome you to Planet Word.

"Planet Word is an immersive language experience located at the historic Franklin School in Washington, D.C. Ideal for all ages, Planet Word is a voice-activated museum (the world's first!), and our interactive galleries and exhibits bring words and language to life in all sorts of fun ways."

Planet Word is located at 925 13th Street NW (entrance on K St.). Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday thru Sunday, last entrance 3:30. Admission is free, with a suggested \$15 donation. Actually worth twice the price. And remember, street parking in DC is free on Sunday.

Next week I'll report on another adventure.

Neighbors & other good people

Patti Selby-Foshée, 78, Gwynn Park HS class of 1960, died Aug. 1. She's survived by her husband James Foshée, children Chris Fosbrook and Deanna Mann Wilkinson, grandchildren and siblings. Funeral Mass was at St. John's in Clinton.

David Billman, owner of Clinton Hardware, told me the raffle to celebrate their 75th Anniversary, was highly successful. Each day for one week there was a drawing: Monday, Patrick won a Milwaukee Drill; Tuesday, Wayne won a Rejuvenate Le Fleur Cake; Wednesday, Beth won Black & Decker Lawn Care; Thursday, Mrs. Walls won Bird Feeding stuff; Friday, Duke won a Sawall Kit w/Blades; Saturday, the Grand Prize of a Weber Grill went to Elmo. Profits from the drawing were distributed to three local charities.

Paula Brown Performing Art Center is now registering for classes in Ballet, Horton Dance, Contemporary and Jazz at the Creative Suitland Arts Center, 4719 Silver Hill Road in Suitland. For information, drop by or call 301-899-0047.

Changing landscape

New York Chicken & Grill is opening at 9021 Woodyard Road in Clinton. Dine-in or Take-out.

New homes at Towne Square, in Suitland, are under construction and already sold out!

Volunteers from M-NCPPC are building a new kid-designed playground and multi-sport court at the Suitland Community Center, 5600 Regency Lane, in Forestville.

The public got its first look Oct. 13 at the buildings that will be home to new security checkpoints set to open Nov. 9 at Reagan National Airport. The checkpoints will be housed in large separate buildings across from Terminals B and C.

A house at 4718 in Skyline has just sold for \$335,000.

Protect our squirrels

Therese and I dropped by the Spaulding Branch Library, now fully open—my first library visit in more than two years. It was good to be back. I checked out

John Grisham's "A Time for Mercy." I recommend it.

As we headed back to the car, Therese pointed out a cautionary sign posted in front of the library:

Please do not drop your cigarette butts on the ground. The rabbits come out at night to smoke them. And we are trying to get them to quit.

Mary's Covid report: 27 more deaths!

As of Tuesday, Oct. 12: Maryland had had 411 new cases, for a grand total of 545,439. As for Covid deaths, there were 27 more, for a new total of 10,627.

Annette Mangold, former resident

Annette Benford Mangold, 78, of Largo, Fla., and formerly of Camp Springs, died Aug. 29. She was a native of Huntington, W.Va., daughter of Hazel and Dale Benford.

She attended the University of Ohio where she met her husband, Robert "Bob" Mangold. They were married June 12, 1965.

During her years in Camp Springs, the Mangolds were parishioners at St. Philip's Church and Annette was Prefect of the Sodality in 1978.

Survivors include her husband Bob; their children Kenny (Robyn), David (Judy) and Tracey; and six grandchildren. Services were at St. Jerome Church in Largo, Fla.

One of Annette's favorite charities was Forgotten Angels, support for teens that age out of Foster Care.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Denise Williams, Kim Miller and my daughter Kathleen Shearer, Oct. 30; Don Eisenberg, Oct. 31 (1947); Carolyn Follin and former Morningside Councilman Jim Ealey, Nov. 1; Pearl McNamara and Carl McKlveen, Nov. 2; my son-in-law Luke Seidman and Flossie Keck, Nov. 3; and Bella Cordero, Nov. 4.

Happy anniversary to Michael and Maria (Blankenship) Jink, their 19th on Nov. 1; and Al and Debbie Callison, Nov. 4.

Brandywine-Aquasco

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY BOLD

Save the date to celebrate the Launch of "BSU BOLD" The Campaign for Excellence Thursday, December 9, 2021, live-streamed 6–7 p.m. Bold details to follow.

CASINO ACTION

Get Ready, it is Casino Time again so come join us on our Trip to Delaware Park Raceway & Casino-Wilmington DE. Saturday, November 20, 2021. Bus leaves St. Philip's Church at 11 a.m. and Clinton Park-N-Ride at 11:30 a.m. and returns at approximately 9 p.m.

Fun package includes a \$30.00 slot play rebate, Plus Ole School Music, 50/50, and Cake Sales. Mask are required at all times. Tickets must be purchased by November 2, 2021. Donation is \$45.00. Absolutely no refunds. Come help celebrate Shirley Ann 72nd Birthday. You are welcome to bring your own spirits. Sponsored by: Shirley Ann Cleaves.

For tickets contact Doretha Savoy (301) 233-3136, Vivian Rich (804) 301-9530, Shirley Cleaves (302) 690-4260.

EXPUNGEMENT FAIR

Do not let a criminal record be a barrier to your records. Office of the State's Attorney for Prince George's County in partnership with Glenarden Councilmembers James Herring, Ward 1 & Maurice Hairston, Ward 2 Expungement Fair (no registration required) will be held Saturday, October 23, 2021, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. at James R. Cousins, Jr., Municipal Center (Gold Room) 8600 Glendarden Parkway Glenarden, Maryland 20706.

Early arrival is recommended, social distancing will be maintained, masks are mandatory, free give-a-ways, employment services and additional resources on site. Community legal services will also be providing attorneys to assist with petitions for expungement.

To register: <https://expungeglenarden.eventbrite.com>. Registration is not required but strongly encouraged. For more information: Sean Wilson, Municipal Liaison, SMWilson2@co.pg.md.us.

Let us connect on social media@pgsaonews on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Aisha N. Braveboy State's Attorney Prince George's County, Maryland.

MIDDLE STATE TEAM VISIT

The Bowie State University community welcomes the Middle States Evaluation Team to the Bulldog Nation. The visit will be virtual and will include meetings with students, faculty, staff, administrators, and friends of BSU November 8, 2021, from 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Location: Virtual. Please email Gayle Fink if you have any questions. Email: gink@bowiestate.edu. Categories Meeting/Conference.

LIVE AT 5 FACEBOOK CHAT

October 6, 2021, Live at 5 Facebook Chat was with Martin

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

Mitchell ('18), President, Prince George's County Young Democrats. Conversation was about civic organization with one of our #Bowie Bold Alumnus who is running for public office. For more information visit: martinforlaurel.com.

Make sure you stop by the virtual Alumni House every Wednesday at 5 p.m. on the Office of Alumni Engagement Facebook Page. If you have questions, please email alumn@bowiestate.edu.

PRINCE GEORGE'S SEMINARY

The reference material has been prepared so that the alumni of Frederick Douglass High School can appreciate the perseverance and hard work that was required to make Frederick Douglass High School the educational institution it is today. Our special thanks to Bianca Floyd for her role in researching the information to compile this period of history. Prince George's Seminary (name of first colored school in Upper Marlboro, Maryland). The second school to be established for Black people in Prince George's County, the first being Bladensbury Colored School, was in the small community of Valley Lane at Upper Marlboro. In October 1867, Henson Greenleaf, Nicholas Greenleaf and George Boulding, all former slaves, purchased five acres of land from Frederick Sasscer. Sasscer, a former slave owner and noted member of the Marlboro community sold the tract to the freedmen for \$300. The Greenleafs and Boulding were all trustees of the Colored Methodist Congregation at Marlboro and were active community organizers.

In 1935, the school was constructed on land south of the present County Court House at Upper Marlboro. This new building would be already overcrowded when the fall term of 1936 commenced.

The original Marlboro colored school had been constructed in 1877. It was sold to Susie Diggs-Lanham in 1935 and served as a private residence until the fall of 1982. In that year, it was demolished, taking with it a 105-year history of tumult and triumph in the lives of Black Prince Georgians.

The new High School contained eleven rooms, an office, and a library. In the spring of 1948 four more classrooms were added, and these rooms were for the elementary classes. In the fall of 1954, the elementary division was moved to another location.

The Marlboro High School became the Frederick Douglass High School. Mr. Doswell E. Brooks was Supervisor of Colored Schools. The first students at the Frederick Douglass High School provided their own transportation. Some came by train, others came in private carriages or cars, and still others walked. By 1940, there were seven buses.

In April 1960, the present Frederick Douglass High School was opened, and the previous building was remodeled in the Board of Education Annex. During the summer of 1990, Frederick Douglas High School opened after its most recent renovation. It is currently viewed as one of the more progressive high schools in Prince George's County. As you tour the school, make a memorable visit to the newly dedicated Robert F. Frisby Media Center.

Around the County

PGSAO Expungement Fair in Glenarden—October 23

The Office of the State's Attorney is partnering with the City of Glenarden for an expungement fair on **Saturday, October 23 at 10 a.m.** Community Legal Services will also be providing attorneys to assist with petitions for expungement.

Registration is not required but strongly encouraged. If you would like to attend, please register at <https://expungeglenarden.eventbrite.com>.

WHEN: Saturday, October 23, 2021, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

LOCATION: James R. Cousins Municipal Center, 8600 Glenarden Parkway, Glenarden, MD 20706

For more information, contact Sean Wilson, Municipal Liaison, SMWilson2@co.pg.md.us.

Help M-NCPPC Shatter the Silence:

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

RIVERDALE, Md. (Oct. 15, 2021)—This October, Maryland-National Capital Park Police goes 'purple' for Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM). Over the past few years, the M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George's County and Park Police have raised and donated thousands of dollars to the Prince George's County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Center (DVSAC).

This year, M-NCPPC Park Police, Prince George's County Division, is recognizing DVAM with a "Shatter the Silence" event. On October 30, a 5K Run/Walk/Bike will take place at Watkins Regional Park in Upper Marlboro. All donations and funds raised will go to DVSAC.

WHAT: "Shatter the Silence" on Domestic Violence 5K
WHEN: **Saturday, October 30, 2021**, from 7:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
WHERE: Watkins Regional Park, 301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774

COST: FREE, registration required
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/shatter-the-silence-on-domestic-violence-and-sexual-assault-5k-race-tickets-166688139713?aff=erelexpmtl>.

—Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation

PGCMLS Announces Teentober P.A.D. Initiative to Support Women Coping With Domestic Violence

LARGO, Md. (Oct. 5, 2021)—October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) Teen Action Group (TAG) volunteers are out to make a difference in the lives of individuals confronting domestic violence with their Teentober signature initiative P.A.D. (Period Action Drive). **For the month of October**, PGCMLS TAG teens will be collecting period and hygiene products at all open PGCMLS branches to donate to I'm Bruised But Not Broken, Inc.

This local nonprofit organization's mission is to empower, encourage, embrace, and equip women coping with domestic violence. "These feminine hygiene items will meet a basic need of women who are or were victims of domestic violence through our Am I My Sister's Keeper...For I Am My Sister program," shared Alicia Stukes, CEO/Founder of I'm Bruised But Not Broken.

Teentober celebrates and highlights teen programs and services within PGCMLS, many of which have been curated by teen volunteers in the Library's Teen Action Group (TAG) with support from the Library's teen services staff. P.A.D. offers area teens the opportunity to earn service learning hours, increase domestic violence awareness, and meet a tangible need. P.A.D. supports the Library's healthy living strategic focus area, which aims to support the health and wellness of all Prince Georgians with educational programs and resources.

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) helps customers discover and define opportunities that shape their lives. Learn more at pgcmls.info/about-us.

—Donna Scott-Martin, PGCMLS

Workshops Offer Coping Strategies for Those Living With Loss During the Holidays

PASADENA, Md. (Oct. 11, 2021)—The holiday season can stir up a variety of mixed emotions for many people. For those who have lost someone dear to them, navigating this time of year is even more complicated.

To help those grieving in the community find ways to manage the stress and sadness of this season, Chesapeake Life Center will offer Living with Loss through the Holidays. This workshop will offer support, honor memories, and explore coping strategies with others who are experiencing similar loss.

Attendees have a choice of two sessions, both on Thursday, Dec. 9. The first will be held from 10 a.m. to noon in-person in the center's office at 9500 Medical Center Drive, Suite 250, in Largo, Maryland, as well as virtually via Zoom for Healthcare. The second session will be in-person only and will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. in center's office on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland. The cost to attend is \$10 and for those attending in person, there will be light refreshments. Registration is required and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeake-lifecenter.org.

In-person participation is limited, and restrictions will be updated prior to the event using the most recent Centers for Disease Control guidelines and organizational policies. Visit www.hospicechesapeake.org/events for a complete listing of in-person and virtual groups and workshops for adults and children.

Chesapeake Life Center, a program service of Hospice of the Chesapeake, serves hospice family members and the community with bereavement services and activities aimed at enhancing the quality of life for those grieving the loss of a loved one. For details, visit www.chesapeake-life-center.org.

—Elyzabeth Marcussen, Hospice of the Chesapeake

COMMUNITY

Introducing the NEW AGAPE GIFT BAGS For Homeless Men, Women and Children

By JANICE EUPELL

Something to THINK About Podcast

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (Oct. 13, 2021)—Two community groups have partnered to create and assemble new and unique Agape Gift Bags to be distributed to displaced individuals in the DMV to provide a little ray of sunshine as they enter shelters.

Janice Euell, founder/host and Toni Colwell host of "Something to THINK About Podcasts and Pastor John McCain of the 21st Century Faithful Church, have joined forces to provide a much-needed service for displaced families, as they struggle to find their way through life's complicated challenges.

The bags will contain necessities that may not be at their disposal when entering a shelter. Although contents may vary, each colorful cheerful bag may contain toothbrushes/ paste, scarves, knit or baseball caps, gloves, ponchos, facial tissues, white socks, hand and foot warmers, lotion, mugs, shampoo, soap, or tissues. Every bag will also have a card with the signatures of all who are assembling the bags with the message that they are receiving this gift BECAUSE WE CARE. There will also be a reference card with numbers to resources that can help rebuild their lives.

YOUR help is needed to fill 150 bags by the end of the year. We have already

filled twenty (20) and your donations of cash or supplies can help us reach that goal. The first twenty (20) were donated in September 2021 to the Easter Seals Homeless Veteran's Program. This will be a monthly project with bags being donated or distributed to individuals as part of our street outreach. October is our street outreach, and the bags will be filled with a "cup of love" containing a mug filled with coffee packets/tea bags/hot chocolate packets, sweetener, creamer for those chilly mornings or cold nights. Lots of socks are needed, hand and foot warmers, hats and gloves are requested to fill those bags and donations are appreciated.

According to Pastor John, "I saw men under a bridge with their feet uncovered and thought of starting a sock outreach." After sharing his vision with Euell, she added, "their needs are so far reaching, but maybe we can do more." Hence the birth of a vision and a dream realized showing our concern and CARING about our fellowman.

Please visit our websites to donate cash or supplies at: www.somethingtothinkaboutpod.com or www.faithfulchurch.org

For more information contact: Janice Euell. 301-523-2677.

SoberRide® from A1

During the 2019 Halloween holiday (COVID-19 prevented last year's campaign), a record 1,122 persons in the Washington-metropolitan area used WRAP's SoberRide® program rather than possibly driving home impaired. The charity also offers its SoberRide® program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and the winter holidays.

SoberRide® is offered throughout Lyft's Washington D.C. coverage area which includes all or parts of: the District of Columbia; the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William.

"Lyft is proud of the role ridesharing has played in reducing impaired driving across the nation. Here in the DC area, partnering with the Washington Regional Alcohol Program allows us to take our commitment to providing reliable, convenient, and responsible transportation a step further," said Geoff Berman, Lyft's National Regional Manager, East.

Sponsors of WRAP's 2021 Halloween SoberRide® campaign include the 395 Express Lanes, Anheuser-Busch, Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Kendall-Jackson, Lyft, Molson Coors Beverage Company, New Belgium

Brewing, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association. In addition, WRAP's 2021 Public Partner SoberRide® Sponsors include the District of Columbia Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office and the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide® program has provided 80,407 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Founded in 1982, the non-profit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average.

More information about WRAP's SoberRide® initiative can be found at www.SoberRide.com.

*Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

<https://www.trafficsafety.com/marketing/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/halloween>

Rabies: Animal Bites Can Come at a Price

By CATHERINE WILSON
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Oct. 11, 2021)—In 2016, Nicholas Fletcher said, he was in the process of moving out of his Baltimore home when several bats migrating from his neighbor's bat-infested house swept in through the chimney and into his basement.

As Fletcher was ushering the winged creatures from his home, he was bitten on his left foot leaving a faint but potentially life-threatening red mark.

With little hesitation, Fletcher decided to get treated at the nearest emergency room.

When Fletcher was seen shortly after arriving, the first question out of the medical professional's mouth was whether he had brought the bat with him so that it could be tested for rabies.

"No. Why would I bring you the bat?" Fletcher said. "I don't have the bat. The bat's outside living its best life."

Without the culprit in hand, it was paramount that he receive the rigorous treatment to prevent the virus. Fletcher endured the first round of immunizations to the tune of \$5,000, which his insurance luckily covered—but not everyone is as fortunate.

Rabies treatment consists of a single immunoglobulin injection made up of rabies antibodies administered at the wound site and the arm followed by four vaccinations given over a 14-day period. The regimen is proven to be virtually 100% effective in preventing rabies.

"If I didn't have health insurance, I probably would have hesitated a little bit. But at the end of the day five grand is not worth my life," Fletcher told Capital News Service.

Each year an average of 13,000 animal bites are reported in Maryland, according to data collected by the Maryland Department of Health from 2015 to 2019, and those who are bitten can face an expensive treatment to prevent contracting the fatal virus.

In the last five years Maryland has administered an average of 446 post-exposure rabies treatments every year, a media representative for the Maryland Department of Health said.

Those seeking treatment for rabies in Maryland are required to receive medical attention at an emergency room so that professionals can assess the risk of getting the initial care needed to prevent the virus, which often adds to the overall costs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 55,000 Americans receive the treatment every year. As of 2019, the average cost of rabies preventatives is \$3,800, which doesn't include the cost of the ER visit and costs associated with wound care, according to the CDC.

Thanks to the vaccine's success rate, there have only been about 30 rabies-related deaths

in the U.S. from 2009 to 2018, according to the CDC. The most recent rabies fatality in Maryland was in 2013 via kidney transplant.

Rabies hasn't been eradicated and still poses a public health threat that needs to be addressed, said Dr. David A. Crum, the public health veterinarian for the Maryland Department of Health.

Crum has acted as the state's public health veterinarian for the last several years and part of his role is overseeing and coordinating with health departments across Maryland to control and survey rabies cases.

"We know rabies is here (everywhere)," Crum said, expressing the importance of seeking treatment when advised by health professionals.

In 2018, Maryland had the seventh-largest number of positive animal rabies cases in the United States with almost 270 cases, which ranks it above some of the more populated states, according to CDC data.

The biggest perpetrators of rabies in Maryland—raccoons.

These pesky creatures are prominent in Maryland and are notorious for scavenging in trash cans and food left outdoors to feed pets. Raccoons tend to be attracted to urban areas, which have more garbage receptacles on the streets.

In the last several years, Baltimore City, and Prince George's, Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties had the highest number of reported cases of human rabies exposure in the state.

For those who require rabies treatment in the state and can't afford it, the Maryland Department of Health has a program that helps cover the costs for patients who demonstrate the financial need.

However, the decision to waive costs is dependent on the necessity of the treatment and some requests have been denied based on a number of factors, including assessing whether it meets exposure standards and a patient's income, according to Crum.

Health professionals use a risk assessment written by state health officials to determine whether or not a person who has encountered an animal requires post-exposure immunizations.

Those recommended for treatment are often attacked by an unprovoked animal that has yet to be apprehended and is known to carry the virus.

In Maryland raccoons, skunks, foxes, bats and woodchucks are among the animals that pose the highest risk for rabies, according to an algorithm developed by the Center for Zoonotic and Vector-borne Diseases, the agency that responds to rabies in the state.

Additionally, ideal candidates must have a wound that exhibits an exchange of fluid from animal to human that could turn into rabies.

Rabid Beaver Alert in Prince George's County

Health Department seeks public's help identifying others who may have been exposed.

LARGO, Md. (Oct. 7, 2021)—The Prince George's County Health Department is alerting community members that a rabid beaver was recently found in the 14700 block of Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD (by the pond of County Administration Building-CAB), on or around Oct. 1, 2021. The beaver was found dead. The beaver was described as brown with several unknown wounds. The beaver was sent for rabies testing. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) confirmed that the beaver tested positive for rabies on Oct. 6, 2021.

Due to the risk of rabies exposure, the Health Department seeks the public's help in finding any persons who may have had contact with the beaver in the identified area. If you know of any persons or animals that may have had contact with the above beaver between Sept. 16 and Sept. 30, please contact the Health Department immediately at 301-583-3750.

"Rabies is often a life-threatening disease; however, it is highly preventable by beginning post-exposure treatment immediately following exposure. Treatment is determined by the type of animal contact and patient assessment," said Dr. Ernest Carter, Prince George's County Health Officer. "Rabies is transmitted through the saliva of an infected animal and is easily transmissible through a bite of an infected animal. The best method to eliminate the risk of rabies exposure is to avoid contact with unfamiliar animals. We encourage community members to report any unusual or erratic animal behavior they notice and to avoid handling and feeding any unknown animals in their community."

"Those who meet the criteria are not going to be denied the vaccine in Maryland," Crum said.

While there are financial resources available to those who need them, some people commonly opt out of treatment, according to Crum.

For those who disregard the advice of medical professionals and refuse the rigorous process of rabies immunizations, the virus is considered to be fatal if contracted.

Those who have had contact with the saliva of an animal are encouraged to report the incident to the police so they can find the animal responsible then seek treatment within the first 24-48 hours.

The Hybrid 2021 Chesapeake Film Festival Draws Crowds and Dollars

By PRESS OFFICER
Chesapeake Film Festival

EASTON, Md. (Oct. 13, 2021)—The 2021 Chesapeake Film Festival (CFF) surpassed expectations for an event in the time of COVID, with an overflow-crowd at a VIP reception, hundreds attending the live festival Oct. 1 and 2, and several thousand watching at home during the virtual festival, Oct. 3 through 10.

CFF did not host a live event in 2020 because of COVID. But, with a mandatory proof-of-vaccination requirement, audiences returned this year to the Avalon Theatre for the excitement of watching films on the silver screen, discussing the films with the filmmakers, and enjoying the camaraderie of film lovers.

The Festival kicked off Friday night with a VIP reception honoring more than 150 sponsors and major donors on a perfect fall afternoon at the Eastern Shore Conservation Center in Easton. The reception included a drawing for a solar generator donated by Enel Green Power, sponsor of this year's environmental programming.

About 325 people attended the Friday night screenings, led by the premiere and panel discussion of *Water's Way: Thinking Like a Watershed* by local filmmakers Tom Horton, Dave Harp and Sandy Cannon-Brown.

On Saturday, 225 people turned out for the narrative features, sponsored by Bluepoint Hospitality. First up was Tyndall Typewriters, by Ted Adams III, starring his son Ted Adams IV. The younger Adams won the CFF award for best actor. The screening was preceded by a well-attended event at the Academy Art Museum featuring a hands-on experience with vintage typewriters.

"The turnout was astounding. With COVID still a concern, we didn't know what to expect. The great response confirms that the Chesapeake Film Festival has become a much-anticipated annual event for the community," said Festival Director Cid Collins Walker.

While delighted to be back live, the success of the 2021 all-virtual festival convinced CFF to continue offering dozens of films for home-viewing. This year approximately 6,400 viewers watched more than 50

films at home—for free.

"The hybrid festival seems the way to go from now on," Collins Walker continued. "But we do want to have many more filmmakers here in person for the live festival next year."

The Festival was pleased that films by four of its board members—Monda Raquel Webb, Harold Jackson, Cannon-Brown and Adams—were among the most-viewed films in the virtual festival. Other filmmakers represented in the virtual festival came from Los Angeles, New York, Boston and many other locations to experience CFF and explore the Eastern Shore.

Once a best-kept secret, the Chesapeake Film Festival is now a sought-after event by filmmakers as well as film-lovers. About 300 films were submitted to the 2021 Festival.

The most-viewed film in the virtual festival was *Sky So Blue*, a stunning tribute to the victims of the attacks of September 9, 2011. *True North: Sailing to Salvation*, a documentary short about war veterans who find healing, connection and a sense of belonging on the Chesapeake Bay was second.



PHOTO COURTESY CHESAPEAKE FILM FESTIVAL

Two narrative shorts by Webb, Pooch Sitter and Zoo, ranked in the top ten. "The size of the audience is only one measure of success," stated Nancy Tabor, Executive Director. "Support from donors and sponsors is another measure and we are pleased to report that contributions from our donors and sponsors was at a record high in 2021."

Sponsors of CFF 2021 include Shared Earth Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. Paul

Prager on behalf of Bluepoint Hospitality, Enel Green Power, The Nature Conservancy, Maryland State Arts Council, Talbot Arts, Artistic Insights Fund, Richard and Beverly Tilghman, U.S. Small Business Administration, Maryland Humanities and the Ravelan Foundation.

To see a list of the 2021 awardees, listen to interviews with filmmakers, and learn about CFF events throughout the year, please go to chesapeakefilmfestival.com.

COMMENTARY

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune: Honoring a Great Role Model

Growing up in segregated Bennettsville, South Carolina, I was blessed to have parents who always tried to be and expose us to good role models. Daddy believed in learning by example, exposure, and osmosis, and would pile us children into our old Dodge and drive us to hear and meet great Black achievers whenever they came within 200 miles of our hometown. I heard the great Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune speak at Benedict College in Columbia, South Carolina.

I remember as if yesterday how she completely commanded the dinner table recounting stories about straightening out white folks as I sat listening as a young girl. When a white hat shop clerk attempted to prevent her from trying on a hat—the usual Southern treatment of Black customers who were expected to look, buy, but not try on clothes or sit down for lunch while shopping—she brushed aside the shocked clerk's refusal with "Do you know who I am? I am Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune!" It was from

her that I first heard the saying, "The blacker the berry the sweeter the juice." She exuded pride in her God-painted Black skin. The power of her forceful personality in a room—even one mostly full of men who listened very attentively to her—never left me. She was confident about who she was, proud of what she had achieved, and never ashamed of where she came from.

The daughter of formerly enslaved parents, she built Bethune-Cookman College on top of a garbage dump with faith, will, and an initial investment of \$1.50. She was the founder of the National Council of Negro Women. Eleanor Roosevelt was her friend, and through her Dr. Bethune would transmit messages to President Franklin Roosevelt that "The President needs to see me!" One of my favorite Bethune stories was her reply to a white train conductor who called her "Auntie" and asked whether she could cook biscuits. She replied, "I am Dr. Mary

McLeod Bethune. I am a college president, a founder of a national women's organization, and a friend of the President of the United States. And yes, I also can cook good biscuits." I remembered this decades later when I was sitting in an Aspen, Colorado restaurant, peacefully reading a book over a cup of coffee, when a white woman interrupted me to say she was looking for a maid and ask if I was interested. I asked how much she was paying and then told her what I would cost. I was not as gracious as Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune.

Dr. Bethune reinforced my parents' message that racial and gender barriers should never be more than momentary inconveniences to be challenged by will and action. I'm delighted that her legacy is now breaking barriers again. Every state chooses two statues of prominent citizens to be included in the U.S. Capitol's National Statuary Hall Collection. On October 11th a statue of Dr. Bethune was unveiled in Daytona Beach, Florida and will be installed in the Capitol early next year. Dr. Bethune will become the first African American to have a state-commissioned statue in Statuary Hall. Her statue was created from a block of marble culled from the same quarry used for Michelangelo's David by Nilda Comas, the first Hispanic woman sculptor to create a statue for Statuary Hall. Dr. Bethune's statue representing Florida will replace one of a Confederate general, which will make her smile in Heaven.

The unveiling coincided with a Washington Post article highlighting a national study of nearly 50,000 public monuments that found "more mermaids than congresswomen, more Confederates than abolitionists." The research comes from the Monument Lab's National Monument Audit, which seeks to help

"transform the way our country's histories are told in public spaces and ensure that future generations inherit a commemorative landscape that venerates and reflects the vast, rich complexity of the American story." Exposing children and all of us to great role models through national, state, and local monuments matters.

I am pleased that school desegregation heroines and civil rights pioneers Daisy Bates and Barbara Johns will soon represent Arkansas and Virginia in Statuary Hall. They join busts of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sojourner Truth and statues of Rosa Parks and Frederick Douglass Congress previously placed in the Capitol to begin to mitigate states' omissions of African Americans. Other states have added more women and other heroes of color. Dr. Bethune is once again at the forefront of transforming change.

An earlier statue of Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune in Washington, D.C.'s Lincoln Park, funded by the National Council of Negro Women in 1974, was the first statue erected on public land in our nation's capital to honor an African American and a woman. The memorial shows her handing a paper symbolizing her legacy to two children with these words: "I leave you love. I leave you hope. I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another. I leave you a thirst for education. I leave you a respect for the use of power. I leave you faith. I leave you racial dignity. I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow men. I leave you finally, a responsibility to our young people." Dr. Bethune's words and legacy must continue to guide us today.

Congressman Anthony Brown's Statement on the Passing of Gen. Colin Powell

"Through his candor, strategic mind, and leadership he rose through the ranks, clearing the path for others to do the same."

WASHINGTON (Oct. 18, 2021)—Congressman Anthony G. Brown (MD-04), a member of the House Armed Services Committee and 30-year Army veteran, released the following statement on the passing of Gen. Colin Powell:

"Gen. Colin Powell was a model soldier, military leader, public servant, statesman, and patriot. For decades, Powell served our country with honor and kept us safe. He broke barriers becoming just the second Black American in history to receive his fourth star, the youngest officer and first Black American to serve as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the first Black National Security Advisor and our country's first Black Secretary of State. Born in Harlem to Jamaican parents, his

path wasn't always assured. But through his candor, strategic mind, and leadership he rose through the ranks, clearing the path for others to do the same and serving as an example for what was possible as a Black man in America.

"Our country has lost a hero. An American who recognized his own faults and failings, but nevertheless persevered to continue to do everything in his power to serve his country and make it stronger. We can learn much from the life and legacy Gen. Colin Powell leaves behind. He put our country first and understood the gravity of service. My prayers are with his family during this difficult time."

Practice Equity—When None Are Ignored, All Will Thrive

By Rosie Allen-Herring

Your United Way of the National Capital Area (United Way NCA) has always worked to address the inequities in our systems for employment, education, health and food access, financial stability and opportunities for all. But, most importantly, we recognize that these inequities existed long before COVID.

While we have all been reeling from the pandemic and social justice, we must continue taking the next steps to help diminish the disparities and racial inequities in the region. In July 2020, we began work towards our next five-year commitment, which focuses on equity and actualizing our work in the community. Our goal is to create an equitable society where everyone in our community has fair and equal access to health, education and economic opportunity.

We're asking the community to join us as we practice equity as a mindset and a personal journey to support a greater movement. United Way NCA supports and encourages these journeys by providing those who join us with facts, stories and events focused on inequities in education, health and economic opportunity.

The work your United Way NCA is doing with Project Community Connect, October 18–23, 2021, includes more than a dozen hygiene and feminine hygiene kit distribution events and a series of virtual workshops covering topics in food

access, basic needs, education and economic opportunity. Project Community Connect provides equitable access to meet residents where they are and resources for those at risk of or experiencing homelessness, as well as the region's ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population, representing the growing number of individuals and families who are working but cannot afford the necessities. 2020 ALICE reports show that in Prince George's County 42 percent of Black households and 56 percent of Hispanic households struggle to afford basic needs.

Project Community Connect exemplifies that your United Way NCA serves as a connector for individuals and organizations that share our goal. Our organization champions connections and conversations that advance our journey toward equity for all people in Prince George's County. As we continue our work as equity advocates, we ask you, our friends and neighbors, to join us as we listen to, respond and deliver needs to the community. We strongly believe that when none are ignored, all will thrive.

Please join us for Project Community Connect if you are in need of resources or services or if you would like to give back to the community. For more information, please visit UnitedWayNCA.org/PCC.

Rosie Allen-Herring is the President and CEO of United Way of the National Capital Area.

Maryland Congressional Delegation Announces More Than \$600,000 for Community Policing Development Programs

WASHINGTON (Oct. 15, 2021)—U.S. Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen and Congressmen Steny H. Hoyer, Dutch Ruppersberger, John Sarbanes, Kweisi Mfume, Anthony G. Brown, Jamie B. Raskin and David Trone (all D-Md.) today announced \$603,327 in federal funding to bolster de-escalation and crisis intervention training for police departments across the state.

"Cultivating meaningful and trusting relationships between law enforcement personnel and the communities they protect is essential,"

the lawmakers said. "This new round of federal funding will provide for important crisis intervention training so that our officers can increase de-escalation techniques to help keep residents and our streets safe. These funds will supplement the recent police reform legislation passed in the Maryland General Assembly. We will continue working in Congress to advance the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act and fund programs to strengthen Maryland's community policing models, effective practices and outcomes."

Funding comes from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) through Fiscal Year 2021 Funds. Awardees include:

- \$230,000 for the City of Hyattsville Crisis Intervention Teams
- \$199,052 for Baltimore County De-Escalation Law Enforcement Agency
- \$105,158 for the City of Salisbury De-Escalation Law Enforcement Agency
- \$69,117 for the City of Annapolis De-Escalation Law Enforcement Agency

Awards will be used to develop the abilities of law enforcement to implement community policing by providing guidance on de-escalation and crisis intervention practices and supporting new approaches to prevent crime and promote safe communities.

Chris Van Hollen

United States Senator for Maryland



Van Hollen Announces over \$17 Million in Direct Investments for Prince George's and Montgomery County Projects Included in Key Committee Legislation

WASHINGTON (Oct. 18, 2021)—Today, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, announced the inclusion of over \$17 million in direct federal funding for local projects across Prince George's and Montgomery Counties within the Committee's proposed annual funding legislation. The projects encompass a wide array of local and regional priorities, ranging from infrastructure improvements to economic development to supporting local schools and universities. Overall, Senator Van Hollen included over \$62 million in federal dollars directly for Maryland within the Committee's proposed legislation. A full list of the funds included by Senator Van Hollen in the legislation is available here. This legislation, released by the Committee as part of the annual Congressional Appropriations process, will proceed to consideration before the full Senate.

"Securing federal investments for key local projects that support our communities is one of my top priorities. These initiatives will impact the everyday lives of countless Marylanders by creating new job opportunities, modernizing our infrastructure, and supporting new education and workforce training programs. I was proud to fight for these investments to support Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, and I will keep working to get this funding over the finish line in Congress," said Senator Van Hollen.

The funding announced by Senator Van Hollen includes:

- Over \$7.3 million in funding for infrastructure projects, including the Bethesda Metro South entrance, Route 218 Suitland Road Improvements, Reconstruction of MD 97 at Montgomery Hills, the City of Bowie's Pipe Replacement Project, and the Hyattsville

Ward 1 Stormwater Project

- Over \$3.6 million in funding for economic development and workforce training initiatives, including for The University of Maryland's Economic Opportunity Center, UMBC-Shady Grove's Biomufacturing Center, small business development by the People for Change Coalition, and the World Arts Focus, Inc.'s CreativeWorks Job Training Program
- Over \$3.6 million in funding for educational initiatives, including Bowie State University's Laboratory for Hydroponics Research, the renovation of the University of Maryland Baltimore School of Nursing Facility at the Universities at Shady Grove, an expansion of the Helping the Immigrant Youth of Maryland Succeed program led by Liberty's Promise, and The Lourie Center Trauma-Informed Preschool
- \$2 million in funding to support community development through the renovation of the Kingdom Global Community Development Corporation's Kingdom Cares Center
- \$200,000 in funding for environmental conservation to support the Anacostia Watershed Society Treating & Teaching Program
- Over \$295,000 in funding for public safety initiatives, including funds for the Hyattsville Evidence Lab and to provide the Laurel Police and City Government with new radios to respond to emergencies

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
Phone: 301-627-0900 • Legal Fax: 301-627-6260
Email: pgpost@gmail.com
Contents © 2021, The Prince George's Post

Publisher/Senior Editor Legusta Floyd	Editor Lisa Duan
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Administrative Assistant/ Billing -
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Web Manager Kyler Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association. The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151. Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790. Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Pathways – Land Use Matters

Virtual Session

Wednesday, November 3, 2021 • 9:30–11 a.m.

Register: <https://www.pgcedc.com/events-calendar/2021/11/3/pathways-land-use-matters>

You see a great property to buy but it's not zoned for your intended use, now what? OR You've bought a property and you wish to begin your project right away. What are your next steps?

Join PGCEDC and Lerch Early Brewer for **PATHWAYS TO GROWTH & EXPANSION – LAND USE MATTERS!**

Understanding the understanding land use rules and regulations on the front end of your business expansion and lessons learned from others in a similar position will help you save both time and money AND help you navigate land use matters. Don't make the same costly mistakes other have made. In business, time is money. Case studies and experts will discuss the processes and how to expand your business properly. **Learn from:** James Hunt, Maryland-National Capital Park & Planning Commission (MNCPPC), Lerch Early Brewer, John Mason, PGCEDC. **What You'll Learn:** Development Review Process, Red Tape & Tips to Getting through the Process Quicker, Case Study Examples, Procedural Changes in a COVID environment, EDC Services to Support Business Owners

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

If I Die, What Happens to the Social Security Taxes I Paid?

By RUSSELL GLOOR,
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor
Association of Mature American Citizens

Dear Rusty: I have heard that when my wife and I pass, the government keeps all we have paid into social security. Is this correct? **Signed: Curious Senior**

Dear Curious: The Social Security taxes paid while you and your wife were working weren't deposited into a personal account for each of you; rather they were used to pay benefits to those collecting Social Security at the time. That's the way the program has worked since enacted in 1935 and the way it still works today. The money you contributed has already been used to pay benefits to others. However, hopefully you and your wife will live to claim your own benefits, and what you get when you claim will be based upon your earnings record over your entire lifetime (up to earnings you paid Social Security FICA payroll taxes on). Those historical earnings are adjusted for inflation and your lifetime average monthly earnings amount is determined, from which your base benefit is calculated. Just as you and your wife helped pay for those getting SS benefits while you were working and paying into Social Security, those now working and paying into the program will help pay benefits to you and your wife.

You may be interested to know that studies show most workers get back everything they've personally contributed to Social Security within about 3 to 5 years of starting their benefits. One study I'm familiar with looked at how long it would take the average Social Security recipient who starts benefits at full retirement age (FRA) to get back money equal to what they paid into SS. That study looked at four different hypothetical earners – one who earned only half of the national average wage index (AWI) for their lifetime; another who earned 100% of the national AWI for their lifetime; another who earned 150% of AWI for their lifetime; and yet another who earned the maximum annual payroll tax cap for their entire lifetime. The study then figured how much each of those individuals would have paid in Social Security payroll taxes over their 35 highest-earning years (which is what SS benefits are computed from). Then, the study looked at what their SS benefit would be at full retirement age and calculated how long it would take for each to recover the Social Security FICA taxes paid over their lifetime. The analysis revealed that the lowest earning beneficiary would get back everything paid into Social Security within about 34 months, and the highest earning beneficiary would get back everything paid within about 63 months. For clarity, this study looked at employed workers who pay Social Security FICA taxes; those who are self-employed and who must pay both the employee and employer portion of SS tax must collect benefits longer to break even.

So, the answer to your specific question is that the money you and your wife contributed to Social Security while you were working has already been used to pay benefits for others who were getting benefits at the time you paid into the program. Hopefully, by the time you and your wife pass you both will have received considerably more in Social Security benefits than the taxes you paid into the program while you were working. If you were an employee, you only need to collect benefits for about 3 to 5 years to be ahead of the game.

One final note for those who contend they could do better investing that money on their own: Not paying Social Security tax on employment earnings isn't a personal option.

The 2.4 million member Association of Mature American Citizens [AMAC] www.amac.us is a vibrant, vital senior advocacy organization that takes its marching orders from its members. AMAC Action is a non-profit, non-partisan organization representing the membership in our nation's capital and in local Congressional Districts throughout the country. And the AMAC Foundation (www.AmacFoundation.org) is the Association's non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting and educating America's Seniors. Together, we act and speak on the Association members' behalf, protecting their interests and offering a practical insight on how to best solve the problems they face today. Live long and make a difference by joining us today at www.amac.us/join-amac.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA), NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center Welcomes New Gastroenterologist Tilak Baba

Board-certified, fellowship-trained physician joins hospital as member of Gastroenterology team

By CHERYL RICHARDSON
MedStar Health

CLINTON, Md. (Oct. 11, 2021)—MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center is pleased to welcome its newest board-certified and fellowship-trained gastroenterologist, Tilak Baba, MD. Dr. Baba attended medical school at St. George's University in Grenada, West Indies, prior to completing an Internal Medicine residency at MedStar Georgetown University Hospital in Washington, DC. He then obtained fellowship training in Gastroenterology and Transplant Hepatology at MedStar Georgetown.

Dr. Baba is a certified member of the American Gastroenterological Association, American College of Gastroenterology and the American Association of Study of Liver Diseases. He will be taking a certification exam for Transplant Hepatology in 2022. As a gastroenterologist at MedStar Southern Maryland, he will offer care and treatment for a variety of conditions including liver disease, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, cirrhosis, alcohol liver disease, liver lesions, acute liver failure, liver cancer and many others, in addition to certain esophageal diseases.

Dr. Baba believes in prolonging the life

of patients by providing healing through a continuity of compassionate care. From colon cancer screening to treating esophageal disorders, liver disease and other intestine issues, Dr. Baba is very intentional about creating positive outcomes when it comes to changing and saving lives.

"For me, the most important thing is putting patients first when it comes to listening to their needs, understanding their concerns and working together to come up with a treatment plan on how to manage their disease," Dr. Baba said. "The multidisciplinary approach to care at MedStar Southern Maryland is so unique because everyone here works closely together and is all about providing the best care for patients, which helps make my job easier. MedStar Health really embodies the whole patient-first mentality in terms of fulfilling community needs in an individualized, compassionate manner."

To make an appointment with Dr. Baba, please call 301-877-4599. To learn more, visit MedStarHealth.org/Baba.

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, located in Clinton, Maryland, is a 182-bed acute care hospital serving the Washington, D.C., metro and Southern Maryland



PHOTO COURTESY MEDSTAR HEALTH

Dr. Tilak Baba

area. The hospital is focused on caring for patients and their loved ones utilizing advanced technology under the guidance of expert clinicians. Quality, Safety, Wellness, and Patient Satisfaction are achieved through a spirit of patient centered services that connect us to the community we serve. For more information, visit MedStarSouthernMaryland.org.

Constance M. Achu, RN, MSN Recognized as a Professional of the Year for 2021 by Strathmore's Who's Who Worldwide Publication

By PRESS OFFICER
Strathmore Worldwide

BELTSVILLE, Md. (Oct. 12, 2021)—(PR.com)—Constance M. Achu, RN, MSN of Beltsville, Maryland, has been recognized as a Professional of the Year for 2021 by Strathmore's Who's Who Worldwide for her outstanding contributions and achievements in the field of healthcare.

Constance Achu, RN, MSN is a registered nurse at UM Capital Region Medical Center providing healthcare in Largo, Maryland. She has over 26 years' experience. Ms. Achu is responsible for providing dialysis treatments, PACU care, and serving as a midwife. She is licensed by the Maryland Board of Nursing.

Previously, Ms. Achu served as a RN at DaVita, and then at Fresenius Group. She then worked as an RN at University of Maryland Prince George's Hospital Center in Cheverly, Maryland. This facility closed in June 2021, and has been replaced by UM Capital Region Medical Center in Largo, Maryland.

Born January 1, 1969 in Cameroon, Africa, Constance obtained a M.S.N. from Southern New Hampshire University in 2016. She is a candidate for her M.S. as a Nurse Practitioner from Regis College in 2022. In her spare time, Constance enjoys Church activities, farming, cooking, and travel.

For further information, contact [https://pgccouncil.us/528/University-of-](https://pgccouncil.us/528/University-of-MD-Capital-Region-Medical-)

MD-Capital-Region-Medical- and <https://umcapitalregionfoundation.org/>.

Strathmore's Who's Who Worldwide highlights the professional lives of individuals from every significant field or industry including business, medicine, law, education, art, government and entertainment. Strathmore's Who's Who Worldwide is both an online and hardcover publication where we provide our members' current and pertinent business information. It is also a biographical information source for thousands of researchers, journalists, librarians and executive search firms throughout the world. Our goal is to ensure that our members receive all of the networking, exposure and recognition capabilities to potentially increase their business.

Hillhaven Assisted Living, Nursing, and Rehabilitation Center Receives Deficiency-free Survey for Skilled Nursing

By JANET DAVIS
Meridian Senior Living

ADELPHI, Md. (Oct. 14, 2021)—Hillhaven Assisted Living, Nursing, and Rehabilitation Center (Hillhaven) in Adelphi, MD, earned a deficiency-free survey for its Skilled Nursing community as administered by the Maryland Department of Health: Office of Health Care Quality on October 6, 2021. Hillhaven has an established history of scoring among the top in the state with deficiency free surveys. In August, the community received a second consecutive deficiency free survey for its Assisted Living community.

"The staff members at Hillhaven have exceeded all expectations by applying special attention to detail and focusing on their commitment to deliver impeccable care to their residents, an incredible accomplishment in today's environment," said Chris McGee, Meridian Senior Living Vice President of Operations. "I am amazed with each staff member's concerted effort and how they take the community's mission to heart to enrich the lives of their residents and families; thus, raising the bar in senior living."

The state of Maryland's inspection for deficiencies is a thorough and lengthy process. For a skilled nursing community to achieve a deficiency-free survey, all services provided at the facility must meet or exceed all state and federal standards. A deficiency-free survey in Maryland's rigorous inspection is exceptional and indicates a high level of service at a senior living community.

The Maryland Department of Health inspects senior living communities periodically to evaluate their services and systems in place and oversee fulfillment with federal and state laws and regulations. In a three-day process, inspectors arrive unannounced to assess the facility and evaluate compliance with regulations governing areas including policies and procedures, resident care, quality of care and quality of life, medication administration, medical records, kitchen sanitation, staff competencies, dietary needs, equipment, safety, and overall wellness of the community. The community is awarded a deficiency-free survey when all these regulations are met.

Receiving a deficiency-free state survey means that residents at Hillhaven can expect the highest level of care in a secure environment, which is key when families are selecting a senior living community for their loved one. Furthermore, Hillhaven provides all the benefits that communal living offers including socialization, safety, stress-free living, active lifestyles, and eating well.

Managed by national senior housing operator Meridian Senior Living, Hillhaven delivers high-quality assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation, and skilled nursing services for seniors in the Prince George's County, Maryland area. For more information about Hillhaven, please call (301) 304-4232 or go to hillhavenassistedliving.com.

Located at 3210 Powder Mill Road in Adelphi, MD, Hillhaven features assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation, and skilled nursing services. The community has a history of established deficiency-free surveys and is consistently recognized as one of the nation's "Best Nursing Homes" by U.S. News & World Report. With the health and well-being of residents being Hillhaven's top priority, Hillhaven implements strict infection control policies and screening procedures to ensure residents and their families are as safe as possible. Hillhaven offers a spacious, landscaped courtyard and bright amenity spaces that underscore the community's focus on active living: daily engaging and social activities, a restaurant-style dining experience, and the highest quality of care with 24-hour licensed nursing services, and in-house occupational and physical therapy. Learn more by visiting hillhavenassistedliving.com or calling (301) 304-4232.

Meridian Senior Living, a privately held company based in Bethesda, Maryland, owns and operates seniors housing communities across the country and provides operational consulting to 24 communities in China. With approximately 60 communities in 18 states and more in development, Meridian is one of the largest seniors housing operators in the U.S. The company prides itself on providing the highest quality care, exceptional lifestyle programming and a distinctive dining experience for its residents. For more information on Meridian Senior Living, visit meridiansenior.com.

ENVIRONMENT

Growing Green With Pride

Saturday, October 30 • 8 a.m.–12 p.m.

Growing Green with Pride Day will be held on Saturday, October 30, 2021! This countywide cleanup event occurs twice a year and serves as an opportunity for communities, organizations and businesses to help keep our County clean and beautiful through a collaborative day of service. **Last day to register online WAS Friday, October 15.** For additional information, visit <https://www.princegeorgescountymd.gov/2590/Growing-Green-With-Pride>.

Cardin Praises Biden Appointment of Adam Ortiz to Lead EPA Chesapeake Region

BALTIMORE (Oct. 12, 2021)—U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-Md.), a senior member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, released the following statement on the appointment by President Joe Biden of Marylander Adam Ortiz to serve as the Regional Administrator for Region 3 of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Ortiz has led the department of environmental protection for both Montgomery and Prince George's, Maryland's two largest counties. Adam is a graduate of Goucher College in Baltimore.

"I am excited to have a Marylander who understands the iconic nature of the Chesapeake Bay at the helm of EPA Region

3. I look forward to working closely with Adam as Congress makes historic investments throughout the entire Bay watershed. His extensive experience, including three terms as mayor of Edmonston, his working relationships with diverse stakeholders, and even history working the Beach Patrol in Ocean City, all make him incredibly prepared to take on this role," said Senator Cardin. "A healthy Chesapeake Bay means a healthy air, water and land, and a healthy economy, for the people of Maryland and the region."

Region 3 includes Maryland, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

Earth TALK™

Dear EarthTalk:

What is the "Climate Pledge" that Seattle's new hockey arena is named after all about?

—E. Howard, Washington, DC

When Seattle's new sports and concert arena opened its doors to the public in October 2021, many were left scratching heads as to what the heck the building's name was about. It turns out that hometown e-commerce juggernaut Amazon bought the naming rights and decided to use the opportunity to raise awareness for the Climate Pledge. The Climate Pledge calls on companies to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2040, a decade earlier than called for under the terms of the Paris climate accord. Amazon co-founded the Climate Pledge with organizer Global Optimism in 2019, and immediately became the first signatory. Cut to the present and 200 other companies—including Procter & Gamble, Hewlett Packard, Visa and PepsiCo—have since signed on.

Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena is indeed an apt showpiece for what signatory companies hope to achieve. The new building—home to the National Hockey League's expansion team, the Seattle Kraken, as well as Women's National Basketball League, The Seattle Storm—was designed by architect Jason McLennan. As founder of the International Living Future Institute (ILFI), McLennan

Hockey Goes Green at Seattle's Climate Pledge Arena

helped set the standard for how buildings in the carbon-constrained days ahead will likely operate. Indeed, ILFI's Living Building Challenge certifies "net-zero" buildings and others at the extreme end of the sustainability spectrum while advocating for the tightening of standards for new construction as to emissions reduction/elimination and energy efficiency across the U.S. and beyond.

At Climate Pledge Arena, rooftop solar panels account for most if not all energy needs. No fossil fuels are used within, making it the first net-zero arena of its size in the world. Ditching fossil fuels inside makes transportation to and from the arena the largest contributor to its overall carbon footprint. Amazon is stepping up and paying for carbon offsets through the non-profit Nature Conservancy, which purchases and expands agricultural and forest lands that serve as carbon sinks. Also, fans who purchase tickets through Climate Pledge Arena's app can download free public transit ride vouchers to get there and back.

Reusing rainwater is a big part of meeting Living Building Challenge goals, and Climate Pledge Arena was designed from the ground up to utilize a series of chutes and gutters to channel Seattle's prodigious rain water into cisterns that then feed the arena's ice making processes and all other on-site water needs.

Another aspect of the arena's green appeal



IMAGE COURTESY EARTHTALK

Climate Pledge Arena in Seattle, the first net-zero-emissions arena of its size in the world, is home to the NHL's Kraken and WNBA's Storm.

is that 75 percent of the ingredients for food and drinks served come from sources within a 300-mile radius of the facility, significantly cutting down on "food miles" emissions. Single-use plastics are a no-no; vendors must stick to aluminum or biodegradable/compostable containers, straws, cutlery and to-go packaging. All paper products must contain at least 30 percent post-consumer content while cans, bottles and other non-compostables get recycled. Given there will be no "trash" created inside the arena, visitors will have to get used to seeing only composting and recycling bins for their waste.

Only time will tell whether these green

See EARTHTALK Page A7

News: Mussels, Ripe for Investment, Could Power Cleaner Rivers

By WHITNEY PIPKIN
The Bay Journal

As the heat index crept toward 104 degrees on a mid-August afternoon, it was easy to feel what the freshwater mussels nestled into a nearby stream in Reston, Va., were up against.

"We know that mussels remove pollution, but will they live in this environment?" asked Mike Rolband, whose nonprofit Resource Protection Group is studying if mussels can improve—and survive in—restored urban streams. "If they do, this could be a really cool way to improve water quality more at the source."

Rolband isn't the only one betting on freshwater mussels as wonder workers for water quality in the upper reaches of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

After several years of workshops and research, the Chesapeake Bay Program's Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee has released a report concluding that mussel restoration is ripe for broader investment by those looking to clean up the Bay and its rivers.

Oysters have long been lauded for their role as water-clearing filter feeders in brackish and salt-water portions of the Bay.

Now, advocates argue that a new focus on mussels could help clean up freshwater systems as well.

These areas have no crabs, oysters or other iconic Bay species, but mussel advocates say the bivalves are a potential mascot for clean water in the rest of the watershed.

Many of the more than 25 mussel species known to live in the Bay watershed are the product of complex life cycles which, among other things, can involve tricking fish to help nurture and spread their larvae.

Mussels' unusual attributes—and the sheer diversity of species with names like heelsplitter, pockethook and pigtoe—are among the reasons that "people just get jazzed about them," said Joe Wood, Virginia senior scientist for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

The state-federal Bay Program report stemmed from a March 2020 workshop that brought dozens of researchers and mussel backers together to crunch numbers and prove the thesis they've

been operating on for some time: Mussels deserve as much play in clean-water conversations as oysters.

"The whole point of the workshop was really to raise freshwater mussels in the eyes of the Bay Program community and say, 'Why are we not working on this?'" Wood said. "Because it sure fits with a lot of the things that we say we care about."

The 53-page report details the ecological value of mussels and their potential to help reach Bay restoration goals. It also makes a case to establish funding streams for shellfish restoration that can be more specifically applied to mussels.

Show mussels the money

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, signed by Bay states and the federal government in 2014, includes goals to improve the habitats and populations of shellfish. But the report found that, in practice, those efforts have largely left out mussels.

"Mussels aren't the solution to all of our problems by any means, but right now they're not even a part of the conversation," Wood said.

Without dedicated funding, mussel restoration in the Bay watershed has largely ridden the tides of intermittent income. Mitigation payments for environmental disasters or permit renewal programs have bankrolled the seeding of tens of thousands of mussels in places like the James River. But mussel researchers would like to see steady funding from Bay partners, such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, opened up to mussel restoration as well.

NFWF, a congressionally chartered foundation that distributes much of the federal money for Bay restoration, is a key partner in restoring eastern oysters in the Chesapeake watershed. The foundation supports freshwater mussel programs in the Southeast as well. The report said a first step toward improving support for mussels in the watershed would be for NFWF to include them as a priority species.

Freshwater mussels could use the help. They represent the most endangered class of organisms in the country. More than a third of the species known to be in the Bay watershed are considered

threatened or endangered, and scientists estimate that the region has lost about 90% of the mussels it once had.

Many endangered mussel species tend to be geographically limited, making them more vulnerable to disturbance, while others are widespread. A 1998 tanker truck spill in Virginia's Clinch River severely impacted populations of three endangered species.

Mussel restoration up to this point in the Bay watershed has largely focused on bolstering populations of endangered or threatened species. But the region's hatcheries are increasingly capable of providing large numbers of more common species to boost water quality programs.

The Joseph Manning Hatchery in Brandywine, MD, will be expanding to include freshwater mussel propagation.

Their output will provide baby mussels for restoration projects on the Susquehanna River. The work there is supported by the relicensing agreement for the Conowingo Dam, which will generate millions of dollars to create and sustain a large-scale mussel restoration effort for the river.

The Susquehanna, which is home to 18 mussel species, will also receive an infusion of mussels from a new hatchery program at Bartram's Garden, a park in Philadelphia that will use the facility to educate visitors about bivalves while propagating them for restoration. The 8,500-square-foot freshwater mussel hatchery, supported by the

Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority, will produce up to a half-a-million mussels a year for regional streams.

Restoring mussels, though, is not as easy as throwing them in the water. The new report points toward the need for research that would help ensure restoration efforts succeed.

Surveys of historical and existing mussel populations are limited, making it difficult to know where efforts should be focused. There is also a lack of data on what caused certain mussel populations to decline, though poor water quality, development and a loss of host species are among the likely factors. Though some mussel species are harder than others,

many of those conditions may need to be improved before adding mussels to the system.

Ecosystem benefits explored

Even with these challenges, the report argues that mussels are worthy of more exploration, especially for their potential to help reduce nutrient pollution.

Scientists understand, in general, the roles that mussels play in freshwater systems. They are cornerstones of their habitats, providing food for other animals and often improving water clarity. And they filter material from the water, enhancing the removal of nitrogen—the primary nutrient fouling the Bay—as well as potentially removing other pollutants.

What's less clear is how much nitrogen various mussel species pull from the water and how long those removals last. So far, the report said, there are hints that mussels might perform as well as or better than more traditional best management practices, such as forested buffers along streams.

Based on rough estimates, the report found that the Susquehanna River in its pristine past might have supported enough mussels to remove as much as 8% of its current nitrogen loads to the Bay. Today's depleted population would remove only a fraction of that amount, the report said.

But there are large uncertainties. While mussels, like oysters, remove nitrogen from the water, they are often spread across a stream bottom, rather than clustered in reefs like oysters. Different mussel species, and those in different habitats, may filter at significantly different rates. Those are among the issues that Mike Rolband wants to explore with his mussel project in the Reston stream.

The pilot project there will compare two similar stretches of streams that were restored more than a decade ago with funds from an expansion at Dulles International Airport. Mussels were placed in one of the streams in 2020 and, if they survive their first year, hundreds more will be added. Then, both will be closely monitored for two years to measure differences in nutrient concentrations and water clarity.

One of the major obstacles for mussels in urban streams is that they can be buried by sediment from erosion after heavy rain. But, in this part of Reston, where roughly 12 miles of streams have been re-engineered to handle stormwater from nearby neigh-



BAY JOURNAL PHOTO BY DAVE HARP

Mussel enthusiasts have been working in the Anacostia River watershed for years. Shown here in 2016, Jorge Bogantes Montero of the Anacostia Watershed Society leads a group surveying for mussels through marshy areas of the river at low tide.

borhoods, mussels could stand a chance.

"If you use mussels to clean water at these headwater streams, you're solving a local water quality issue and improving the Bay," Rolband said.

Spreading the love

Mussels are already beginning to play a role as mascots for clean water, according to the report. In local streams, these backyard bivalves are helping to engage the public in a way that faraway blue crabs can't.

Buoyed by a flurry of research and excitement around mussels, water quality groups have already started spreading bivalves in areas where they've had a historical presence.

The Anacostia Watershed Society started growing mussels in floating baskets in 2018 after surveys found evidence of eight native freshwater mussels in the Anacostia River. Jorge Bogantes Montero, a natural resources specialist with the society, said the alewife floaters, eastern pondmussels and eastern lampmussels have exceeded expectations with high survival and growth rates.

"We've been talking about wetlands for decades, and they're important and cool," Montero said. "But they just don't catch the same attention as mussels. We get new members and donations just because of the mussel project."

With grants from the DC Department of Energy & Environment, NFWF and others, the nonprofit has since released about 19,000 mussels, mostly to the Anacostia's Kingman and Kenilworth lakes. The mainstem of the

river is expected to be dredged in coming years to remove legacy toxics from the sediment and could one day be a candidate for mussels, too.

Emily Franc, vice president of Development and Philanthropy at the Potomac Riverkeeper Network, watched the growth of mussels in the Anacostia while serving as its riverkeeper from 2015 to 2018. She's also seen the health of both rivers improve as sewage overflows have sharply declined in recent years.

"I thought, 'Wow, we're really at that tipping point now where we've managed our pollution issues enough that we should be able to help mussels recover,'" she said.

While researchers continue to chip away at the biology of mussels, Franc saw that groups like hers were starting to invest in restoration and wanted to serve as a catalyst. The network launched the 50 Million Mussel Project in 2020 to elevate the work being done and inspire more in advance of the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act next year.

"If we can really explode this conversation, people will get excited," said Franc, whose mother offered to donate after learning about the mussel project. "People have been well-educated about oysters, so we think about them and fund them. We want to do the same with mussels."

Whitney Pipkin is a Bay Journal staff writer based in Northern Virginia. This article was originally published in the October 2021 issue of the Bay Journal and was distributed by the Bay Journal News Service.

