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Prince George's County Health Officer Dr. Ernest Carter Statement on Recent Spike in COVID-19 Hospitalizations

By GEORGE LETTIS
Health Department
Prince George's County

LARGO, Md. (Dec. 29, 2021)—Prince George's County Health Officer Dr. Ernest Carter released the following statement today on the recent spike in COVID-19 hospitalizations in County facilities:

"I am extremely concerned that the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 in the

County has increased 27% since [last week of December], reaching over 200 patients on Monday, December 27 for the first time since February 2021. CDC studies now show hospitalized COVID-19 patients are **17 times more likely to be unvaccinated**, while individuals who have not received a booster dose are **20 times more likely to die** from COVID-19 than those who have received a booster dose.

"As your Health Officer, I am

implored every Prince Georgian five years of age or older to—as soon as possible—get vaccinated against COVID-19 and get a booster dose if you are 16 or older; it will save your life. The more people who are vaccinated and boosted will help ease the growing strain on the ability of hospitals to provide timely, high-quality care to patients with or without COVID-19.

"Please utilize urgent care facilities or your primary care

physician for minor ailments or needs and avoid coming into a hospital within the County seeking a COVID-19 test or treatment for non-emergency illness. Free COVID-19 tests are available statewide and in multiple places across the County. A list of free, County-operated or supported testing sites and an interactive map of sites regionwide are available at health.mypgc.us/COVIDtesting."

In the Interest of Public Health and Safety, M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County Closes Most Facilities and Cancels Public Programs and Events

By ANGEL WALDRON
Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (Dec. 28, 2021)—The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George's County announced today that it will close most facilities, reduce park maintenance operations and **cancel public events and programs from Dec. 29, 2021 through Jan. 18, 2022**. All parks and trails will remain open. The special election voting center will also remain open and previously scheduled rentals will be honored. The Department will reassess the status prior to reopening.

Department officials, staff, residents, partners, and vendors were informed of the decision earlier today. As COVID-19 prevalence becomes more significant in the County, the Department is taking these steps in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19.

"This proactive effort is our greatest opportunity to increase public health for the residents of Prince George's County," confirms Bill Tyler, Director of the M-NCPPC, Department

of Parks and Recreation. "Our facilities, programs, and events provide the means for community social interaction and we are taking these steps out of an abundance of caution."

The Department will continue to concentrate on preventive measures as indicated by public health agencies. Outdoor areas will remain open to the public from sunrise to sunset. For updated information and a list of facilities, visit our website at pgparks.com.

The Department of Parks and Recreation *delivers an award-winning park system through progressive, innovative leadership and a commitment to the community and the environment in Prince George's County. For more on the Department of Parks and Recreation, visit www.pgparks.com and stay connected on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and Instagram. The M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities in all programs and services.*

Searching for Chester Arthur, A Virtual Presentation

By STACEY HAWKINS
Marietta House Museum

Please join us on **Thursday, January 13, 2022, 6:30 p.m.–7:30 p.m.** for "Searching for Chester Arthur", a **virtual presentation**.

Join author Harry Goldhagen, Vermont based writer, editor, photographer, and filmmaker, as he talks about his new book that offers a fresh look at President Chester Arthur (1881–85), an often-overlooked politician. Chester Arthur was considered the most corrupt party machine politician of his time. He was never elected President, but only assumed the role after President Garfield was assassinated. And yet, once there, he tried to fight patronage, racism, and xenophobia. Follow author Harry Goldhagen as he retraces the steps of this little remembered, most "elegant" man from his birth in rural Vermont to the highest office in the land.

Not much is in the public memory about Arthur, yet he played a part in defending civil rights for Black Americans. Arthur was born

in Vermont in 1829 and was the son of an abolitionist.

As an adult, Arthur practiced law in New York City in a prominent firm lead by Erastus D. Culver. While there, Arthur's court cases involved freedom for fugitive slaves and another about racial segregation on streetcars.

In 1854, Arthur's firm defended a Black woman, Elizabeth Jennings, who had been forced out of the white section of a Brooklyn streetcar when she refused to leave the section reserved for whites. By 1855, the case was decided in her favor, and it led to the eventual desegregation of all New York City transit systems.

Thank you to the Prince George's Historical Society for their support for this program. This will be a virtual Presentation on Microsoft Teams. To register email stacey.hawkins@pgparks.com or register on Parks Direct. \$5/person Marietta is located at 5626 Bell Station

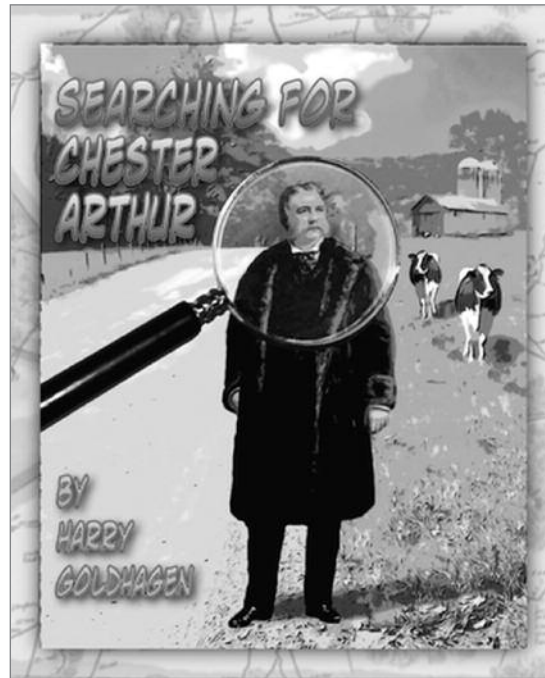


PHOTO COURTESY MARIETTA HOUSE MUSEUM

The cover of author Harry Goldhagen's book.

Road, Glenn Dale, MD 20769 and is a property of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

Historic Amtrak Funding Aims to Alleviate Delays and Replace Nearly 50-Year-Old Rail Cars

By NATALIE DRUM
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON—Emma Campbell, a technician at the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Silver Spring, Maryland, has been riding Amtrak trains at least twice a year since attending college in 2012.

Half of the Amtrak trains she has taken have been delayed anywhere from 15 minutes to four hours, she told Capital News Service.

"I have a love-hate relationship with Amtrak because I love what they could be, but I don't love what they are," Campbell said.

Amtrak hopes to change those negative experiences with a historic influx of \$66 billion in funding through President Joe Biden's \$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill. The funding will go towards reducing maintenance backlogs, improving tracks and signals, replacing nearly 50-year-old railcars and replacing or overhauling old tunnels and bridges in a massive effort to modernize the nation's passenger

railroad service.

The bill will provide \$6 billion in directed grants over five years to projects along the Northeast Corridor, a 457-mile-long route connecting major cities from Washington through Baltimore to Philadelphia, New York and Boston. The corridor is Amtrak's busiest, serving 6.1 million passengers in fiscal 2020, which is a decrease of nearly 50% in ridership from Amtrak's pre-COVID fiscal year 2019 reports.

The delayed replacement of century-old infrastructure has been a burden on Amtrak employees, Amtrak CEO William Flynn said in testimony last May before the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's subcommittee on railroads, pipelines, and hazardous materials.

"But the Amtrak and commuter train passengers who use the Northeast Corridor every day also pay the cost, as they endure the unreliability that comes with depending on infrastructure never meant for today's demands," Flynn said.

The largest cause of delays for Amtrak passenger trains is freight train interference—when passenger trains on tracks owned by freight railroads, known as host railroads, are delayed by slower freight trains ahead of them, according to Amtrak.

"The greatest threat to the future of our long distance network is not COVID-19, but rather poor on-time performance that diminishes the value of these services to our customers and ossified routes that cannot be changed or expanded because of host railroad resistance," Flynn said in October testimony before the Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee.

Federal law requires passenger trains be given priority over freight trains. However, the Department of Justice has enforced that law just once and that was 40 years ago, according to Amtrak.

"They claim passenger rail in America has the right of way and it's a lie," Campbell said. "You wouldn't believe how many times

Amtrak delays on the Northeast Corridor by cause in FY 2021

Host Railroad Responsible Delays	# of delays	Amtrak Responsible Delays	# of delays
Signal Delays	168	Car Failure	73
Commuter Train Interference	163	Passenger Related	359
Maintenance of Way	97	Engine Failure	140
Slow Order Delays	167	Initial Terminal Delay	19
Detour	2	Miscellaneous Delays including heavy train unable to make normal speed	146
Freight Train Interference	39	Servicing	46
Passenger Train Interference	110	Crew & System	97
Routing	127		

Table: Natalie Drum/Capital News Service • Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration • Created with Datawrapper

I've been told 'the train cannot move because there's freight ahead of us.'"

Interference by freight trains has accounted for about 60 percent of Amtrak's delays systemwide in recent years. Those delays are a major factor in Amtrak's operating losses, according to a 2019 report by Amtrak's Office of Inspector General. In fiscal 2018, the passenger railroad lost \$171 million.

(Amtrak said it was close to erasing its losses by fiscal 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic nearly erased ridership for a time, resulting in an operating loss of \$801 million.)

However, freight interference

is nowhere near the leading cause of delays in the Northeast Corridor, because Amtrak owns the tracks in that region. But that constitutes most of the 3% of track Amtrak owns across the 21,400 route-miles its trains use, according to Amtrak's Host Railroad 2020 report card.

Passenger-related delays such as delays related to disabled passengers, wheelchair lifts, large groups, etc., were the chief cause of the 880 delays on the Northeast Corridor that Amtrak was responsible for in fiscal year 2021 third quarter. And, of the 873 host railroad responsible delays, only 39 were caused by freight train interference.

Most of the remaining tracks throughout the country are owned by freight rail companies such as CSX, which make all the train dispatching decisions, including what trains have priority over others. The Capitol Limited route from Washington to Pittsburgh is the only route located in Maryland that is owned by CSX.

Systemwide, according to the Amtrak report card, "freight trains caused 700,000 minutes of delay to Amtrak passengers in 2020—that's equivalent to more than a year of passengers waiting for freight to go first."

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

Apostle Deborah Durham, founder of Let's R.O.C.K. Outreach, dies at 64

Apostle Dr. Deborah L. Durham, 64, pastor of Let's R.O.C.K. Outreach Ministries, Inc. on Suitland Road, died Dec. 4. She was born in Washington and attended the D.C. schools.

She earned her CDA (Child Development Associate), Doctor of Humane Letters, AA Degree in ECE (Early Childhood Education) and was pursuing her master's degree in Biblical Counseling Credentials at Light University, in Forest, Va.

Pastor Durham served with several churches and leaders. But in 2000 she moved to New Covenant Baptist Church where she was licensed in 2003, ordained in 2004 under Bishop A. Norris Smith and received her Certificate of Authorization from the Baptist Society in 2005. She produced a drama, "New Wine Explosion," and birthed the Let's R.O.C. (later, R.O.C.K.) Ministry.

She was commissioned Apostle Dr. Deborah Durham on March 6, 2011.

On Dec. 12, 2013, the Let's R.O.C.K. Outreach Ministries marched into their own building and in December 2017 moved to the current building, both on Suitland Road in Morningside.

She has been happily married to Rev. Floyd O. Durham for 36 years and they have raised "six terrific now adult children" and eighteen grandchildren. Visitation and services were at Camp Springs Community Church, Clinton, with burial at Cedar Hill.

Apostle Deborah and Rev. Floyd Durham offered to be Chaplains for the Skyline Citizens Association. They pray for us.

Town of Morningside

The Morningside Council Work Session will be Tues., Jan. 11, 7 p.m. The Town Meeting will be Tues., Jan. 18, 7 p.m. Both meetings are in the Municipal Center. For information, call 301-736-2300.

Neighbors & other good people

David Zatz, who served as an elementary school teacher and principal in Prince George's County for 27 years, died Dec. 29. The NAESP (National Association of Elementary School Principals) recognized him as one of the nation's outstanding principals.

Kenneth Ogle Dixon, founder of Ken Dixon Chevrolet-Buick in Waldorf, died Dec. 13.

Former Morningsider Julie Koch-Michael writes, "My Dad used to dress up in the Santa suit my aunt made for him for parties at our house on Boxwood, but he also dressed up for my Sunday school Christmas party at the Baptist Church in Morningside. I remember being so proud knowing it was my Dad in that suit. He made the kids laugh by pretending he had a mouse in his boot."

I know some of you received Christmas cards with newsy items about our area. If they're printable, forward them to me.

Crossland forever

By the time this column hits the newsstands (are there newsstands anymore?), the Special Primary Election for District 8 will have been decided; the Primary Election was Jan. 4. (I hope all you District 8 residents sent your ballot.)

As I read the bios of the candidates, Crossland emerged big. Edward Burroughs III is an alumnus. Vernon Wade was President of the Crossland High PTSA. And Tony Knotts collaborated with the Inter-Agency Committee on the State School Construction list to expedite the building of a new Crossland High School Auditorium.

Changing landscape

Vice President Kamala Harris, U.S. Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy and Senators Ben Cardin and Chris Van Hollen took a tour of the new Brandywine Maintenance Facility on Dec. 13 and had a briefing on the electric vehicle program.

Watermark Retirement Communities is creating a senior living community, The Sky Bridge at Town Center, in Upper Marlboro. The community is part of a larger area undergoing transformative developments. Construction on The Sky Bridge got underway in March 2020. The Arch Active Adult residences are now open. And The Parc, Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Memory Care will be opening in Spring 2022.

Lidl grocery is planned for Allentown Andrews Gateway on Allentown Road, al-

though I don't think ground has been broken yet. Online it is thus described: "Lidl is a grocery store. With groceries. Just for less money than at other grocery stores. Lidl is a real grocery store with real groceries. Only the prices are unreal. But real."

PriceRite on Silver Hill Road permanently closed on Dec. 17.

A home at 4104 Skyline Drive, in Morningside, recently sold for \$369,000.

Landscape not changing enough

I had a message from an unknown but new County resident. He or she wants to know when we're getting some good restaurants. I assume the complainant means what I call "white tablecloth restaurants."

Mary's COVID-19 report: 700,583

As of Thursday, Dec. 30, through 5 p.m. Maryland had had 700,583 cases. Of them, 14,346 (!) surfaced the day before!

As of that time and date, Maryland had suffered 11,758 COVID-19 deaths, 55 were the day before.

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) and D.C. Mayor Muriel E. Bowser (D) both granted emergency funds to help local hospitals. The health system, which includes several Maryland hospitals, has seen a 325 percent increase (!) in patients since Dec. 1. Three other Maryland hospitals have declared a healthcare "disaster."

Georgetown and American have joined other universities in going virtual through January.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Sister Haimanot, Dorothy Cullinan and Bridget Vilky, Jan. 1; Evelyn Lozano, Jan. 2; Courtni Bland and Jennifer Jung (of G. I. Market) Jan. 4; J.B. Thomas and Christa Neale (great-granddaughter of Edythe & Bob), Jan. 4; Suitland historian Darlie Norton, Ariel Thomas, Sarah Vilky and Terry Foster, Jan. 6.

Happy anniversary to Tom and Monique Laws on Jan. 3; my grandson Conor and Heather McHale, their 18th on Jan 3; my son John and Michelle McHale, their silver anniversary on Jan. 4; and James and Yvonne Ealey, their 5th on Jan. 6.

A Happy, Healthy New Year 2022 to everyone!

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

Brandywine-Aquasco

COMMUNITY SUPPORT SYSTEMS, INC.

Just a reminder to sign up for Amazon Smile. We are ordering these days. With each order you place, Amazon will donate a % of your total to Community Support Systems. Please tell your friends and family. We can all donate without coming out of our pocket.

Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/login> to your amazon account and select Community Support Systems Inc. in Brandywine at checkout and presto you have made a donation. Remember Amazon is donating monies based on your purchase. Amazon Smile's Impact: \$427.14 to Community Support Systems Inc.

CSS works diligently to improve the quality of life of our neighbors. We appreciate any contributions you are able to make to help us fulfill our Mission. Our HEART is in our work. Will you help us to help others? Peace. Ethel Shepard-Power, Executive Director, Kim Burch, Sr. Program Assistant.

CORONAVIRUS CALL CENTER

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Prince George's County Health Department Coronavirus hotline at 301-883-6627 during the hours of 8 a.m.–8 p.m. to receive updated information about the coronavirus disease. Please contact 911 for medical emergencies only. Do not contact 911 for Coronavirus related issues.

BSU ALUMNI COMMUNITY

Bowie State University provides you with an exceptional education while limiting your debt. Our proximity to major metropolitan area gives students access to top internships, cultural experiences, and recreation. We have got your back. Expand your network of support to include faculty, staff, and your peers who will not only encourage you, but who will also root for your success.

Join the Virtual BSU Alumni Community and follow the virtual conversation on all social media platforms! Facebook: @BSUOAE, Twitter: @BSUALumniOfwice, Instagram: @Bowievalum. Want to stay in the loop with BSU? Make sure you check your inbox every Saturday at 7 a.m. for the latest issue of BSU At a Glance. Highlighting BSU news, events, and alumni profiles. We are #BSU4LIFE. Taking Tomorrow. Boldly.

FREDERICK DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL

Congratulations to Frederick Douglass High School, on Winning The 2021 State 2A Championship. #GoEagles

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS

Special Prince George's County Council District 8 Primary Election Information. If you would like more information or have questions, please visit our website at elections.mypgc.us, send email to election@co.pg.md.us, or call our main number: 301-341-7300. #ProudtoVotePGYC

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to Steven Carter, Sandra (Dr.) Jones, Davion Dorsett, Khadija Hakim-Hinton, Nurbert Hughes, Jr., Walter Joiner, Jermya Stevenson, Ian Williams, Bernestine Bryan, Nicole Falby, John Powell, Beatrice Chapman, Abu Davies, Ben Fauber, Lawrence Omoregbe, Roseline Omoregbe, Yannick Bourne, William Terry, Donovan Cain and Florella Wallace, Veronica Quarm who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating birthdays in January.

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Congratulations and Happy Wedding Anniversary to Nurbert & Carol Hughes, Buddy & Betty King, Walter & Theresa Lindsey Joiner, who are Clinton United Methodist Church members celebrating Wedding Anniversaries in January.

CHILD STUDY PROGRAM

Prince George's County continues as a participating member of the Child Study Program. This is a state program which was initiated in 1945. Its purpose was to develop a group of teachers who had as their common purpose the maximum educational advantages of the children. Prince George's County places high value upon Child Study as a part of in-service training.

The program was built upon the basic principle that a teacher must study the pupil in order to understand and guide him. The whole idea was growing in intensity as evidenced by the continued of teachers. Many new teachers felt privileged to work in a state sponsoring such a program. Many secondary teachers were enrolling in the program. There were thirteen white and four Negro centers operating in the county during 1950–1951. Information received from Public Schools of Prince George's County 1950–1980 (Prince George's County Retired Teachers Association).

HBCU VIRTUAL TEACHER RECRUITMENT FAIR

The second Maryland HBCU-Virtual Teacher Recruitment Fair will be held January 13, 2022, from 11 a.m.–2 p.m. with Bowie State University, Morgan State University and Coppin State University hosted on the Handshake Platform.

MATH TUTORING SESSIONS

Prince George's County Public Schools has partnered with Carnegie Learning to offer free after school and Saturday Math tutoring sessions for students in grades 3–12. Tutors are able to identify and close skill gaps and accelerate learning while helping build students' academic confidence.

How to sign up: Log into Clever, select the Tutoring App., Set up your profile, Book a session. For tutoring questions: help@carnegielearning.com or 877-401-2527.

Around the County

PGCMLS Hosts Free Winter Coat Giveaway For Youth

The Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS), PGCMLS Foundation, and Wawa are distributing free, brand new winter coats (available sizes: 2T–18) and books for children and teens on Saturday, January 8 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Spauldings Branch Library (5811 Old Silver Hill Road, District Heights, Maryland, 20747). No registration is required and coats are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Face masks and physical distancing are required for all participants over the age of 2 years. Contact 240-455-5451 or askalibrarian@pgcmls.info with questions.

—Community Connections Newsletter, Dec. 30, 2021

Recycle Your Christmas Tree

The Department of the Environment is making it easy for residents to recycle cut Christmas trees (no artificial trees) by offering convenient drop-off locations and curbside pickup.

Due to the Christmas holiday, yard trim and Christmas tree collection will run from Dec. 27, 2021 to Jan. 31, 2022. Residents with yard trim collection may place their undecorated, unbagged, live Christmas trees at the curb by 6 a.m. on their regularly scheduled yard trim collection day.

For more information, please call PGC311 or visit environment.mypgc.us.

—The DoE Sprout

Veterans Career Connection Program

Prince George's County is home to the largest veteran's population in the State of Maryland. To assist Prince George's County's veterans and service members as they transition from active-duty military status to civilian employment, Employ Prince George's operates the Veterans Career Connection program. This free program offers workforce development training and employment opportunities for veterans transitioning to civilian life. To learn more about this program, visit the Employ Prince George's website: www.employpg.org/Veterans-Career-Connections/

—Community Connections Newsletter, Dec. 30, 2021

Salamah Peake Named to Columbia College Fall 2021 Semester Dean's List

COLUMBIA, Mo. (Dec. 27, 2021)—Columbia College recently announced its dean's list for the Fall 2021 Semester (August–December, 2021.) To be named to the dean's list, a student must have completed 12 semester hours in a 16-week period and achieved a minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0-point scale.

Among those named to the dean's list is **Salamah Peake** of Bowie, who attended Online.

Founded in 1851 in Columbia, Missouri, Columbia College has been helping students advance their lives through higher education for more than 170 years. As a private, nonprofit institution, the college takes pride in its small classes, experienced faculty and quality educational programs. With nearly 40 locations across the country, including 20 on military installations, students may enroll in day, evening or on-line classes. The college is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Columbia College has more than 95,000 alumni worldwide. For more information, visit ccis.edu.

—Sam Fleury, Columbia College

Bowie State Football Finishes Sixth in Final AFCA Poll

WACO, Tex. (Dec. 21, 2021)—The final American Football Coaches Association (AFCA) Coaches' Top-25 Poll came out on Monday, Dec. 20 after the conclusion the 2021 season this past weekend and Bowie State football finished sixth overall with an overall record of 12-2 and an appearance in the NCAA DII Quarterfinals.

The sixth ranking would be the highest for Bowie State in 2021, four spots up from the previous 10th ranking at the conclusion of the season and highest ranking from a school within the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) in nine seasons.

2021 American Football Coaches Association Division II Coaches' Poll—December 20, 2021

Rank	School (1st votes)	Rec.	Pts.	Prev.
1	Ferris St. (Mich.) (30)	14-0	750	1
2	Valdosta St. (Ga.)	12-2	720	5
3	Colorado School of Mines	12-2	651	9
4	Northwest Missouri St.	11-2	646	3
5	Shepherd (W.Va.)	13-2	626	8
6	Bowie St. (Md.)	12-2	545	10
7	Grand Valley St. (Mich.)	10-2	521	4
8	Kutztown (Pa.)	11-2	497	12
9	Notre Dame (Ohio)	11-2	454	6
10	Harding (Ark.)	11-2	448	7
11	Angelo St. (Tex.)	11-3	437	NR
12	West Florida	9-2	422	2
13	West Georgia	9-3	413	13
14	New Haven (Conn.)	10-2	307	18
15	Nebraska-Kearney	10-3	304	21
16	Western Colorado	10-2	293	11
17	Newberry (S.C.)	10-3	271	NR
18	Albany St. (Ga.)	10-2	233	16
19	Bemidji St. (Minn.)	10-3	175	NR
20	Slippery Rock (Pa.)	9-3	166	19
21	California (Pa.)	9-1	135	14
22	Frostburg St. (Md.)	10-1	134	15
23	Ouachita Baptist (Ark.)	9-2	101	17
24	Bentley (Mass.)	9-2	97	20
25	Washburn (Kan.)	9-3	84	24

For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State University Athletics and its 13 varsity sports teams, please visit www.bsbulldogs.com.

—Jolisa Williams, Bowie State University Athletics

COMMUNITY

New Exhibition at Howard University; Family Reunion: Portraits By Timothy J. Clark

Among America's foremost painters in watercolor, Timothy J. Clark is known for his still lifes, architectural interiors and exteriors, and portraits in the tradition of John Singer Sargent. Indeed, in the words of Dr. Michael Brown, Associate Curator of Art at the San Diego Museum of Art, "The luminous watercolors of Timothy J. Clark are the successors to Sargent's ethereal atmospheres of light, mist and color." At the inspired invitation of the Howard University Gallery of Art Director, Dr. Lisa Farrington, Clark created new works especially for this one-man show at the historic HBCU in Washington, DC (alma mater of Vice President Kamala Harris)—namely portraits of the "family" of friends that he has gathered around him over the years. Among them are painters Gaye Ellington (granddaughter of Duke Ellington) and Faith Ringgold; musicians Jack McVea, Teddy Buckner, Art Davis, Michael White and others from the world of jazz. Jan 22–Mar 7, 2022.

WASHINGTON (Dec. 31, 2021)—(PR.com)—Among America's foremost painters in watercolor, Timothy J. Clark is known for his still lifes, architectural interiors and exteriors, and portraits in the tradition of John Singer Sargent. Indeed, in the words of Dr. Michael Brown, Associate Curator of Art at the San Diego Museum of Art, "The luminous watercolors of Timothy J. Clark are the successors to Sargent's ethereal atmospheres of light, mist and color." At the inspired invitation of the Howard University Gallery of Art Director, Dr. Lisa Farrington, Clark created new works especially for this one-man show at the historic HBCU in Washington, DC (alma mater of Vice President Kamala Harris)—namely portraits of the "family" of friends that he has gathered around him over the years. Among them are painters Gaye Ellington (granddaughter of Duke Ellington) and Faith Ringgold; musicians Jack McVea, Teddy Buckner, Art Davis, Michael White and others from the world of jazz. (Music, especially jazz, is love of Clark.)



Image: Dr. Michael White, 2020, watercolor on laid paper, 24 1/4" x 18 1/2" by Timothy J. Clark

Created over the past year, this suite of stunning

See PORTRAITS Page A7

DUI Fatalities Decrease in Greater Washington, Countering National Level Trends

New data released in 2021 "How Safe are our Roads" Report

By ALEXANDRA LUCCHESI, M.S. WRAP

WASHINGTON (Dec. 30, 2021)—Alcohol-related traffic fatalities, injuries, crashes, and drunk driving arrests all decreased in the metropolitan Washington area in 2020, according to the 29th-annual "How Safe Are Our Roads?" Report prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) for the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).

While overall traffic deaths in the area increased by nearly four percent (3.9%) during the COVID-impacted period, area drunk driving deaths decreased by 20-percent last year.

Such trends would appear to counter those at the national level, with traffic fatalities increasing by 7.2 percent in 2020 and deaths involving "police-reported alcohol involvement" increasing by an estimated nine percent, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

For the first six months of 2021, NHTSA estimates an 18.4-percent jump in traffic fatalities which the federal

agency labeled as the "highest half-year percentage increase" ever recorded in the U.S.

"While the latest version of this local, annual report shows Greater Washington favorably bucking national trends regarding traffic incidents during the COVID era, no one is waving a victory flag when we're still arresting nearly 10,000 persons for drunk driving every single year in the metropolitan Washington area," said WRAP President Kurt Erickson.

"Without question, the continuing COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges to many first responders and the law enforcement community is not exempt from such issues," said COG Police Chiefs Committee Vice Chairman and Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority Police Department Chief David Huchler. "While this year's annual 'How Safe are Our Roads' Report showed the lowest number of local DUI arrests in years, drunk driving is still a pressing issue in the community. We must remain vigilant and continue using this data to make smart decisions regarding roadway safety for all travelers."

Findings from the report include:

Fatalities: Local alcohol and/or drug-impaired traffic fatalities decreased by nearly 20-percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 90 to 72 such fatalities).

Injuries: Regional alcohol and/or drug-related traffic injuries decreased by nearly 27-percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 1,777 to 1,298 such injuries).

Crashes: Area traffic crashes attributed to alcohol and/or drugs decreased by nearly 23-percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 4,273 to 3,292 such crashes).

Arrests: Local arrests for either driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while impaired (DWI) decreased by 29-percent between 2019 and 2020 (from 13,920 to 9,882 such arrests).

In addition, one-quarter (25%) of Greater Washington's traffic fatalities last year involved impaired drivers. Nationally, 28-percent of total U.S. vehicular fatalities in 2019 were reported as alcohol-impaired, according to NHTSA.

MORE: View the "How Safe are our Roads?" Report: https://wrap.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/HSAOR_Final_2021_-1.pdf

Bible & Leadership Institute—2022 Winter Semester

By ROSE ARMSTRONG Accokeek First Church of God

Classes will be held online, via Zoom

DATE: Saturdays, beginning Saturday, January 15, 2022, to March 5, 2022

VENUE: Accokeek First Church of God online, via Zoom 301-283-2116, www.accokeekchog.org

DESCRIPTION: The Winter semester of our Bible & Leadership Institute is offering the following classes:

The Triune God (Bible and Theology) led by Minister Ben Snyder: Saturdays from 9–10:15 a.m.

New Testament Survey (Bible and Theology) led by Pas-

tor Paula Collins: Saturdays from 9–10:15 a.m.

The Truth About WorldViews (Evangelism and Outreach) led by Minister Lisa Kirby: Saturdays from 10:30–11:45 a.m.

Registrations are open now up to January 15, 2022. To register and learn more about our entire course offerings and benefits, send an email to: adminasst@accokeekchog.org. Or call or text Rose Armstrong at 301-885-8124.

Our certified instructors are Pastor Paula Collins, Minister Lisa Kirby and Minister Ben Snyder

DURATION: Eight (8) week semester

Fees for all classes: \$45.00 (includes tuition and textbook) ALL ARE WELCOME!!

Historic Sotterley Awarded 2021 Underground Railroad Free Press Prize for Leadership

By KRISTINA KUSS Historic Sotterley

The 2021 Underground Railroad Free Press Prize for Leadership has been awarded to Historic Sotterley of Hollywood, Maryland, for its exemplary Common Ground Initiative and Descendants Project that has brought together Black and White descendants of people who lived at Sotterley Plantation in the era of slavery. Says Free Press publisher Peter H. Michael, "With this initiative, Historic Sotterley has become an American trailblazer in racial healing and understanding."

To date more than 200 Sotterley descendants of both races living in thirty states and four countries have self-identified. Several, both Black and

White, hold leadership positions on Historic Sotterley's governing board of trustees. A full calendar of public events closely involves the descendants.

In April of 2017, Sotterley launched its Descendants Project when it dedicated its 1830s slave cabin exhibit to the memory of Agnes Kane Callum, a Sotterley descendant and board member emerita who descended from an enslaved person at Sotterley.

Dating from 1699, Historic Sotterley has been designated as a National Historic Landmark, a Middle Passage Port Markers Site, a UNESCO Site of Memory for the Slave Route Project, and has been honored with numerous awards such as a Maryland Sustainable Growth Award and two Maryland Preservation Awards.

Historic Sotterley has come far since its designation 25 years ago as one of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. At the time, a dedicated board of trustees helped to save Sotterley from being lost. Notable were two special members: John Hanson Briscoe, former Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates who was descended from the last owner of enslaved persons at Sotterley, and Agnes Kane Callum, respected genealogist and historian, whose descendants were enslaved by the Briscoes. These remarkable individuals, who were not only board colleagues but friends, set the stage for the Descendant's Project which would be formalized two decades later. Their children, Jan Briscoe and Martin Callum, serve on the

board today along with three other Sotterley descendants. In a variety of capacities, descendants are helping to shape Sotterley's future, and they are modeling to our nation how it is possible to come together for understanding, dialogue, and healing. For more on Historic Sotterley and its work, visit <https://www.sotterley.org>.

Published bimonthly since 2006, Underground Railroad Free Press brings together organizations and people interested in the historical and contemporary Underground Railroad. Since 2008, Free Press has awarded the annual Free Press Prizes for Leadership, Preservation and Advancement of Knowledge, regarded as the top honors in the contemporary international Underground Railroad community. Free Press is the home of Lynx, the central registry of contemporary underground railroad organizations, and Datebook, the community's event calendar. Visit <http://urfreepress.com> for more.

Earth TALK™ Can We Build Windfarms That Don't Harm Wildlife?

Dear EarthTalk:

Has anyone figured out how to build wind farms that don't negatively impact birds, bats and other wildlife? Does building them off-shore help?

—Mary B. Hyannis, MA

As the U.S. tackles the issues of climate change, the Biden administration is investing in wind power as a key strategy for sustainably meeting the country's energy needs. Federal officials estimate that the U.S. coastline could host 30,000 megawatts of wind energy by 2030, which would be enough energy to power as many as 10 million American homes.

Wind power is a necessary tool for fighting climate change, but it can be a threat to birds. A 2013 study by the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute found wind turbines to be responsible for killing up to 328,000 birds annually in the U.S. alone. Bats, another species playing a vital role in ecosystems, are also seeing negative impacts by wind farms. Research has shown that larger, migratory bats are at the greatest risk. In response to these problems, the federal government has allocated \$13.5 million specifically earmarked to addressing the impact of windfarms on birds, bats and marine species.

Scientists are focusing their efforts on site analysis, species monitoring and wildlife deterrents. Large birds of prey are the bird species most at risk. In response, some wind farm developments are incorporating new technology that can recognize eagles, hawks and other raptors as they approach in enough time to pause any turbines in the flight path. This tool, called Identiflight, can detect 5.62 times more bird flights than human observers alone,

and with an accuracy rate of 94 percent.

Developing the best strategies for protecting bats is a bit more of a challenge, but the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) is investigating migratory bat behavior with an interdisciplinary approach that will analyze migratory movements, mating and feeding behaviors to determine if they can find patterns that play a role in turbine collisions.

Locating wind farms offshore has been identified as a potential solution to species loss caused by on-land wind turbines. But as with any man-made structure, it is important to subject this potential solution to environmental impact assessments to have a clear understanding of the risks and possible benefits. One study in the United Kingdom found evidence that offshore wind farms could actually increase biodiversity if siting and timing of construction are chosen carefully. The study describes the structures acting as artificial reefs, mimicking natural habitat that can then be colonized by a diverse set of species.

Indeed, as we move towards utilizing more renewable energy, efforts to mitigate impacts on wildlife and surrounding ecosystems will take on increased importance to optimize the overall benefit to humanity and the environment we depend up on to sustain us.

CONTACTS: Bat Conservation International, batcon.org; "Is it possible to build wildlife-friendly windfarms?" bbc.com/future/article/20200302-how-do-wind-farms-affect-bats-birds-and-other-wildlife

"White House Announces Plans for Massive Expansion Of Off-shore Wind Farms," huffpost.com/entry/white-house-offshore



CREDIT: SOUMIT, FLICKRCC

Generating clean, renewable wind power is all well and good except for the killing of birds and bats—but new technologies to mitigate wildlife strikes are giving hope to clean power advocates.

windfarms_n_6167846fe4b0f26084f0178b;

The Habit-Creation Potential Of Offshore Windfarms, onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/we.324; "Bat Fatalities at Wind Turbines—Investigating the Causes and Consequences," usgs.gov/centers/fort-collins-science-center/science/bat-fatalities-wind-turbines-investigating-causes-and.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. See more at <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org

COMMENTARY

Marion Wright Edelman

President Emerita,
Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

The Greatest Gifts

During this holy season of celebration for many faiths, many people spent time, money, and energy searching for presents rather than reflecting on what our faith requires of us. It's wonderful to share special times and gifts with family and friends, but too many people get overwhelmed by shopping for the material

things they believe loved ones want. Children and adults alike may become afflicted with "affluenza," the poverty of having too much that means too little.

The ongoing pandemic has provided an unexpected opportunity to reset. Experts are sounding the alarm on how much the pandemic has exacerbated

feelings of loneliness and the need for social connection. After so much necessary separation we were all less likely to take for granted the simple blessing of being together with those we love. This is a new chance to refocus on the more important gifts of our time, attention, and family rituals—ourselves—that all of us, especially children, need most. Children need adults to show them the greatest gifts are not material things but what they give to others in caring, sharing, and service.

Many families already volunteer in multiple ways during the holiday season, sharing and collecting food, clothing, and toys for others and making sure to express our true values—especially caring for our neighbors who have been left behind in our nation. These wonderful acts are needed all year long. Don't be afraid to take children to serve meals to the homeless or to engage in discussions at family gatherings about those left out in the cold. Teach children Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s reminder that "Everybody

can be great, because everybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You don't have to know about Plato and Aristotle to serve. You don't have to know Einstein's theory of relativity to serve. You don't have to know the second theory of thermodynamics in physics to serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."

Each of us can also do our part to renew our congregations' and communities' commitment to service and justice as part of our resolutions for the New Year. As 2022 begins, let's commit to acting on God's call through the prophet Zechariah "to see that justice is done, to show kindness and mercy to one another, not to oppress widows, orphans, foreigners, who live among you or anyone else in need" by serving and caring and joining together to build a better nation and world for our children. That is the greatest gift we could hope to pass on. —Dec. 31, 2021

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

Senator Harry Reid Fought "The Good Fight" and Made the Country a Better Place

"You were a great leader in the Senate, and early on you were more generous to me than I had any right to expect. I wouldn't have been president had it not been for your encouragement and support, and I wouldn't have gotten most of what I got done without your skill and determination. Most of all, you've been a good friend. As different as we are, I think we both saw something of ourselves in each other—a couple of outsiders who had defied the odds and knew how to take a punch and cared about the little guy. And you know what, we made for a pretty good team."

—President Obama's final letter to former Nevada Senator Harry Reid

It's known as "Obamacare," but without Senator Harry Reid, who passed this week at the age of 82, there might never have been a President Obama, much less his signature legislative achievement, the Affordable Care Act.

In the spring of 2006, Senate Democratic Leader Reid summoned a first-term senator representing Illinois to a life-changing meeting. Reid and Chuck Schumer, who was then chair of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, urged Obama to run for President.

"I still think it's pretty far-fetched, but it's interesting that they felt as strongly as they do," Obama told political advisor David Axelrod.

As Senate Majority Leader during President Obama's first term, Reid fought tirelessly for his legislative agenda, beginning with the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act, widely credited with averting a depression.

But of all his legislative achievements, he was proudest of the Affordable Care Act—shaped in large part by the trauma of his desperately poor childhood in Depression-era Nevada. His home had no hot water, indoor toilet, or telephone, and

medical care was scarce and unaffordable.

"My brother broke his leg," he told the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Medical School in 2019. "He writhed in pain for days on his bed, never went to the doctor. His leg is still bowed. My mom got hit in the face with a softball and it badly damaged her teeth. But she didn't have access to a dentist, so she lived for many years without teeth. I remember when my dad had a really bad toothache, he would pull his own teeth with vise grips."

Reid's love of the sport of boxing and his own amateur career as a middleweight in the 1950s generated countless metaphors regarding to his tough, often combative style. But he never faced an adversary in the ring as ruthless or dangerous as those he faced as the head of the Nevada Gaming Commission in the late 1970s. The death threats were constant, and once his wife raised the hood of the family station wagon to find a crudely-constructed bomb.

"I'd learned that there were those who would stop at nothing to try to compromise a man's morals, or ruin his reputation, or even try to kill him," he wrote in his memoir, *The Good Fight*. "What my wife and children endured during my time on the Gaming Commission has stayed with me through all these years and through all the places I've lived since. Whenever I hear people talk about how rough-and-tumble things can get in Washington, I remind myself of these years in Las Vegas. I will never forget them."

It was my privilege to work often with Senator Reid. I remember him as a fearless advocate, a brilliant political strategist and a dedicated public servant who was a champion in politics and business for working families and communities of color. The National Urban League extends our heartfelt sympathy to his family and his beloved former constituents.

Maryland Delegation Announces More Than \$190 Million to Help Health Care Providers Impacted by COVID-19

WASHINGTON (Dec. 16, 2021)—Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (MD-05), Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Congressmen Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-02), John Sarbanes (MD-03), Kweisi Mfume (MD-07), Andy Harris, M.D. (MD-01), Anthony G. Brown (MD-04), Jamie Raskin (MD-08), and David Trone (MD-06) today announced \$191,711,521 in payments from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Provider Relief Fund (PRF) to help health care providers across Maryland recover from revenue losses and expenses incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This latest tranche of PRF funding is authorized through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) and comes from HHS

through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). It will be distributed across 1,723 providers in Maryland. These federal funds are part of the Biden-Harris administration's push to release \$25.5 billion to health care providers to recruit and retain staff, purchase masks and other supplies, modernize facilities, and replenish resources depleted from COVID-19.

"The pandemic has significantly strained and tested our health care providers," the lawmakers said. "We must continue to support our frontline providers as they respond to the sustained demand for their services in our communities, especially those worst hit by COVID-19. This federal relief will help ensure communities have access to the care and resources they need."

Approximately 75% of Phase 4 PRF funding is being distributed based on expenses and decreased revenues from July 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021. HRSA is reimbursing a higher percentage of losses and expenses for smaller providers — which generally entered into the COVID-19 pandemic on worse financial footing, have historically operated on slimmer financial margins, and typically care for vulnerable populations — as compared to larger providers. Consistent with the Biden-Harris administration's dedication to health equity and supporting the most vulnerable communities, HRSA is distributing 25% of Phase 4 funding as "bonus" payments based on the amount and type of services provided to Medicare, Medicaid, or CHIP patients.

Governor Hogan Announces Key Appointments

By SHAREESE CHURCHILL
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Dec. 30, 2021)—Ahead of the new year, Governor Larry Hogan today announced three key appointments:

- Former Maryland Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill has been named secretary of the Maryland Department of Commerce, succeeding Secretary Kelly Schulz.
 - Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) Executive Director James F. Ports, Jr., has been named secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), succeeding Secretary Greg Slater.
 - William Pines, MDTA's chief engineer, will succeed Ports as MDTA's executive director.
- Governor Hogan issued the following statement:

"We're excited to add new members of our Cabinet with a wealth of experience and a deep commitment to public service. Mike Gill helped lead our economic turnaround for the first four years of our administration, and it is great to have him back to finish the job. Jim Ports has served in major transportation roles at the federal, state, and local levels, and he is the right person to continue building on all of our record investments in both roads and transit.

"I also want to congratulate Will Pines, a talented engineer who has spearheaded some of our biggest projects, and is very deserving of the opportunity to lead MDTA.

"Greg Slater and Kelly Schulz have made countless contributions to change Maryland for the better. We owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude for their service, and we wish them well in their future pursuits."

Maryland Department of Commerce

Gill is chairman of Columbia-based Evergreen Advisors,

which was his role prior to serving as Maryland's secretary of commerce from 2015 to 2019. He has four decades of experience in business, which includes founding Hoyt Capital, an investment and advisory firm serving startups and growth companies. He served as a member of the University System of Maryland Board of Regents from 2004 to 2009.

"After all the work we did in the first term to turn things around, it has been rewarding to observe the continued progress Maryland has made becoming one of the nation's most business-friendly states," said Gill. "When the governor asked me to come back, I jumped at the opportunity to once again lead the talented men and women at Commerce. I want to thank Kelly for the outstanding job she's done, and we all wish her and her family well."

"I am incredibly thankful to have had the opportunity to serve the Hogan administration over these last seven years—working daily to improve the lives of Marylanders has been an honor of a lifetime," said Secretary Schulz. "While working with Governor Hogan, as the secretary of labor and secretary of commerce, we've accomplished a lot, from leading nationally recognized job training and apprenticeship programs to becoming the most improved state for business in the entire nation. I thank Governor Hogan for entrusting me with such great responsibilities and for allowing me to have the privilege to work with so many wonderful people throughout state government."

Maryland Department of Transportation

As MDTA's executive director, Ports oversees all of the state's toll facilities and the E-ZPass Maryland system. Prior

to his appointment as executive director, Ports served as MDOT's deputy secretary under two administrations. In addition, he previously served as deputy administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and chief executive officer for Harford County's transit system.

Pines has served as MDTA's chief engineer since 2019. He has contributed to significant regional endeavors such as the District Department of Transportation's selection committee for the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge Replacement and an ongoing National Cooperative Highway Research Program panel for the evaluation of suspension bridges.

"I am incredibly honored to have the trust of Governor Hogan and the opportunity to lead the dedicated professionals at the Maryland Department of Transportation," said Executive Director Ports. "We will continue to deliver on all of the services that are part of Marylanders' daily lives, and the incredible infrastructure progress that we're making everywhere across the state. I want to personally thank Greg Slater for his friendship and his leadership."

"Serving as the Maryland Secretary of Transportation has been the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life and career," said Secretary Slater. "I cannot thank Governor Hogan, the men and women of MDOT, and the people we serve enough for the faith that they had in me in this important role at such a critical time. Through challenges and progress we continued to serve day and night, seven days a week."

Secretary Slater has accepted an opportunity in the transportation industry out of state.

Each of these appointments are effective Jan. 11, 2022.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Social Security Matters

Ask Rusty:

Should I Quit Work to Preserve My Social Security Benefit?

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

Dear Rusty: I recently took a big pay cut in my job. Several older friends have advised that I not continue to work much longer in this reduced paying job because it will affect my Social Security when I get ready to start drawing it. I'm currently 62 and thought about working until around 65. Friends are advising that my SS check will be smaller due to the decrease in pay. I have tried calling my local and National Social Security office and can't get anyone to answer the phones to see if this is true. I don't want to take this pay cut only to work (maybe) 3 more years and take a lower SS benefit when I can retire now and draw a bigger SS check. Advice please! **Signed: Anxious About Social Security**

Dear Anxious: I think your well-meaning friends are causing you unnecessary anxiety, because your Social Security benefit isn't computed from your last several years of earnings. Rather it is your lifetime earnings which determines your base Social Security benefit, known as your Primary Insurance Amount (PIA). Your PIA is what you get if you claim exactly at your full retirement age (FRA) which, for you, is 66 years and 10 months. If you claim SS before your FRA, your benefit will be permanently cut (by about 29% if you claim at 62 and about 12% if you claim at 65).

Your PIA is computed using the highest earning 35 years of earnings (adjusted for inflation) over your lifetime, and your most recent earnings would affect your SS benefit only to the extent they are among the lifetime 35 years used. If you don't yet have a full 35 years of earnings, then to quit working now would actually hurt your SS benefit, because SS always uses 35 years to compute your benefit, even if you don't have a full 35 years of earnings. In that case, they would use "zero" earnings for enough years to make it 35, and those zero-earning years would mean a smaller benefit. So even if your recent earnings are lower than before, they are still more than the \$0 that SS will use if you don't have at least 35 years, so those lower earnings will help your SS benefit not hurt it.

The bottom line is this: your actual SS benefit won't be cut just because you now have lower earnings; rather your benefit will be based on your highest earning 35 years over your lifetime. But any benefit estimate you now have assumed you would continue to earn at your most recently reported level until you reach your FRA so, whether you stop working now or just take a lower salary, your actual benefit when you claim will be less than your recent estimate from Social Security. Note too that it is a common misconception that SS benefits are based on the last ten years of earnings, but that is incorrect. Your benefit amount will be computed using your average monthly earnings over your lifetime (the 35 years in which you earned the most, adjusted for inflation).

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.

Maryland Judiciary Reverts Operations to Phase III in Response to Omicron Variant Surge

Clerks' offices statewide remain open

By PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS
Maryland Judiciary

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Dec. 27, 2021)—The Maryland Judiciary announced today, effective Wednesday, December 29, 2021, it will reduce operations and revert to Phase III of its five-phased reopening plan in response to the Omicron variant surge. The interim operational plan will last until February 8, 2022, pending further order. Clerks' offices in both the District Court of Maryland and circuit courts throughout the state will remain open to the public. The Court of Appeals of Maryland and Court of Special Appeals of Maryland remain fully operational, but the chief judge may determine whether to hold proceedings in person or remotely. In Phase III, the District Court and circuit courts will hear specific case types remotely or in-person, but jury trials will not be held until the Judiciary is able to re-enter Phase V of its reopening plan. Jury trials that have already commenced will proceed to conclusion. All jury trials scheduled between December 29 and February 8 will be rescheduled. Marylanders who are currently serving as jurors are encouraged to contact the local circuit court.

"As throughout the pandemic, the health and safety of the public, judges, and judiciary staff remains our top priority," said Court of Appeals of Maryland Chief Judge Joseph M. Getty. "In an abundance of caution and through consultation with state leadership, I have made the necessary decision to revert back to Phase III operations. Al-

though reduced in operations, our courts will continue to remain open, ensure access to justice, and provide fair, efficient, and effective justice for all."

The new administrative order, Interim Administrative Order of December 27, 2021 Restricting Statewide Judiciary Operations in Light of the Omicron Variant of the COVID-19 Emergency, is posted to the Maryland Judiciary's website at mdcourts.gov/coronavirusorders.

Visit the Maryland Judiciary's website at <https://www.mdcourts.gov/coronavirusphasedreopening> to view the case types being heard in Phase III, which include in the District Court criminal, traffic, civil, domestic violence, peace orders, Extreme Risk Protective Orders, and landlord-tenant cases. In the circuit courts, civil, criminal, family, Child in Need of Assistance (CINA), and juvenile matters will continue to be heard.

Individuals who have business with the courts should check the Judiciary's website, www.mdcourts.gov, or call the clerk's office for information before arriving at a courthouse location.

All court visitors and employees are required to wear a face mask, submit to a no-contact temperature check, a verbal or written COVID-19 health screening questionnaire, and adhere to social distancing guidelines.

Find more information on COVID-19 and court operations online at

<https://www.mdcourts.gov/coronavirusinformationforpublic>.

WPC Acquires Laurel, MD Site for Future Self-Storage Facility

Bethesda-Based Developer Picks Up \$70.2M in Existing DC Metro Area Properties in December 2021

By PRESS OFFICER
Washington Property Company

BETHESDA, Md. (Jan. 3, 2022)—Washington Property Company (WPC) has acquired a 2.3-acre property in Laurel, MD for \$3.5 million. The company plans to redevelop the site as a three-story, climate-controlled self-storage facility with 891 storage units and 12 RV/boat parking spaces.

Located at 14435 Cherry Lane Court, the site is less than a quarter mile from Towne Centre at Laurel, a 392,500 square foot mixed-use shopping center anchored by a 50,000 SF Harris Teeter grocery store. The area is easily accessible from the major traffic corridors of Route 1, I-95, Baltimore-Washington Parkway, and

I-495. WPC's 108,273 SF storage facility will replace an existing 28,000 SF office building on the site.

Dan Gaffey and Bob Filley of Marcus & Millichap assisted the seller in the off-market transaction.

This is the last of three acquisitions totaling \$70.2 million that WPC closed in December 2021. The others were:

- The Mark, a 227-unit apartment tower in Alexandria, VA.
- Three low-rise apartment buildings near the University of Maryland-College Park

"These transactions represent an expansion of WPC's portfolio in two important sectors," said Quinn Rounsaville, WPC Senior Vice President of Acquisitions. "For the first time, we're acquiring existing multifamily

properties that we plan to renovate. And with our Laurel acquisition, we're building on the success of two recently completed self-storage facilities in Rockville, MD." Rounsaville added that WPC is looking to acquire additional multifamily communities and sites that are suitable for development of self-storage facilities.

Washington Property Company (www.washproperty.com) is a full-service commercial real estate company located in Bethesda, Maryland. Established by Charles K. Nulsen, III, WPC is involved in a full range of real estate investment services including acquisition, land use, development, property management, leasing, and construction management.

Amtrak from A1

The only other two sections of the Northeast Corridor that are not owned by either CSX or Amtrak are the 46-miles between New Rochelle, N.Y., and New Haven, Conn., owned by Connecticut Department of Transportation and 38 miles between the Massachusetts-Rhode Island border and Boston, which is owned by Massachusetts but operated and maintained by Amtrak, which shares the track with commuter rail service.

To alleviate delays, Amtrak could add more tracks to minimize conflict with freight, said Dr. George List, a civil engineering professor at North Carolina State University.

"For Amtrak to implement and offer new services such as adding tracks, the company will have to negotiate with the freight railroads to make provision for those services to be offered," List said.

Most of the railroads in the United States have a limited amount of track capacity and the railroads do not tend to over-invest in that, List said.

"In that sense if the passenger trains and the freight trains are trying to use those facilities at the same time, it's a somewhat intricate scheduling problem to figure out how to weave the passenger trains into the movements of the freight trains," List said. "If there is interest in having the faster services, either provided or increased by investments, more capacity is probably something that needs to happen."

The boost of funding allocated to the Northeast Corridor will help Maryland, but the state has not been in discussions with CSX about adding track, said Peter Wendolkowski, acting chair of Rail Passengers Maryland, a local affiliate of the

national Rail Passengers Association, which is focused on public transportation issues.

"No matter where the funds are coming from, challenges are always faced when it comes to the freight railroads, whether it's for freight train interference, access to the tracks, or money for certain improvements," Wendolkowski said.

According to House testimony from Edward Hamberger, president and CEO of the Association of American Railroads, "expanding passenger rail operations over the nation's freight rail network involves significant opportunities and challenges."

"The odds that these challenges can be overcome will be higher if certain principles are followed," he said. In his prepared testimony, Hamberger said: "Passenger rail use of freight rail corridors should not compromise freight railroads' ability to serve present or future customers."

In April, Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Illinois, Sen. Richard Blumenthal, D-Connecticut, and Rep. Donald Payne, Jr., D-New Jersey, introduced legislation aimed at improving Amtrak's on-time performance. The lawmakers' bill, called the Rail Passenger Fairness Act, would authorize Amtrak to file suit against freight rail companies that do not comply with the law giving passenger trains priority.

"With the Rail Passenger Fairness Act, we can finally hold freight railroads accountable when they fail to follow the law and get Amtrak's on-time performance back on track," Durbin said in a statement.

One improvement Amtrak riders won't be waiting long to see is the replacement of 45-year-old Northeast Regional Amfleet I cars with new rolling

stock: 83 Intercity train sets, deployed on routes accounting for almost half of Amtrak's annual ridership, according to the Department of Transportation.

Campbell said she is most looking forward to Amtrak's new cars.

"From what I know, most of their trains are still from the 80s, which is why it doesn't surprise me that things break down," she said.

On one occasion, Campbell said she remembers being told over the train's loudspeaker that the auxiliary engine was down. Her train had stopped in the middle of nowhere and it was dark outside, she said.

"None of us were very confident about getting to our destination," said Campbell, who said she usually finds her Amtrak delays occur because of issues with locomotives.

Amtrak's new rail sets will be powered by dual-mode diesel-electric locomotives, allowing them to operate on the electrified Northeast Corridor route and then continue to destinations beyond using conventional diesel power, eliminating the need to stop for engine changes, according to Flynn.

Amtrak spokeswoman Beth Toll told CNS that the infrastructure bill will provide federal funding to advance rail projects and initiatives in the Northeast Corridor and across the nation.

Projects set to advance include implementing a plan to make a 15-year investment in 150 projects along the Northeast Corridor, Toll said.

Included in the plan is the replacement of the Amtrak and commuter rail route through the aging Baltimore & Potomac tunnel with a four-track, two-

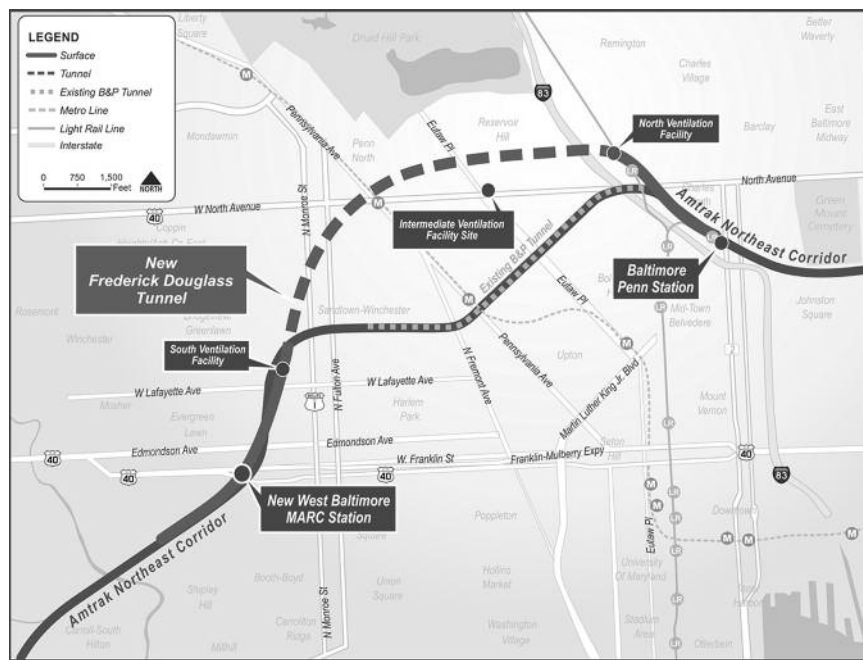


IMAGE COURTESY CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

Planned changes to the current tunnel in Baltimore and plans for a second tunnel dedicated to Amtrak and MARC trains.

mile long tunnel called the Frederick Douglass Tunnel, that will reduce trip times by permitting speeds up to 100 m.p.h. The old tunnel will be upgraded to permit speedier passage of freight trains from the port.

"The tunnel has become a major bottleneck to the port. Now, the Port of Baltimore will be getting a \$125 million grant to upgrade that tunnel so freight trains can come double-stacked through that tunnel," Biden said during his Nov. 10 visit to Baltimore.

According to Wendolkowski, the Baltimore tunnel fix and Washington's Union Station expansion will allow for increased MARC service on the Penn line, one of three service lines running

between Washington, Baltimore and other Maryland stations.

"Having Baltimore in the mix is really important for Maryland," he said.

Plans also call for replacing the Susquehanna River Bridge near Havre de Grace, Maryland, and constructing two new platforms at Baltimore's Penn Station to allow Amtrak Acela service to pass slower Northeast Regional and MARC trains in both directions.

By 2035, improvements are projected to save \$140 million annually through commuter and intercity travel time reductions as well as a 33% increase in Amtrak intercity service, according to the Northeast Corridor Commission's plan.

A Secret Ingredient for Winter Wellness

Support your immune system with 100% orange juice

FAMILY FEATURES

While winter rushes in with brisk breezes and chilly temperatures, staying indoors to avoid the weather shouldn't mean forgoing healthy habits. One step toward wellness is maintaining nutritional value in meals from morning to night, even when comfort foods call your name.

As a key source of nutrients that supports a healthy lifestyle year-round, especially during cold and flu season, one 8-ounce serving of Florida Orange Juice provides more than 100% of your daily value of vitamin C and is a good source of potassium, folate and thiamin. Fortified juice also contains 15% of the daily value of vitamin D, which plays an important role in regulating immune response and helps cells fight off bacteria and viruses that enter the body.

Additionally, 100% orange juice is virtually the only dietary source of a unique, powerful phytonutrient (naturally occurring plant compound) called hesperidin, which may also help support a healthy immune system. According to the USDA, the flavonoid hesperidin is highly concentrated in citrus and rarely found in other foods.

"Maintaining a well-balanced diet is one way to help support your immune system in the colder months," said Dr. Rosa Walsh, scientific research director at the Florida Department of Citrus. "For example, 100% orange juice contains vitamin C, vitamin D (in fortified juice) and phytonutrients like flavonoids and colorful carotenoids, making it a nutritional powerhouse."

This Orange Honey Glazed Carrots recipe offers a warming yet nutritional, naturally sweet way to incorporate orange juice into your winter menu. Orange juice is also a go-to ingredient for popular non-alcoholic drinks like this Orange Juice Mint Mocktail, a perfect pairing for winter meals.

Visit floridajjuice.com to find more recipes for winter wellness.



Orange Honey Glazed Carrots



Orange Juice Mint Mocktail

Orange Juice Mint Mocktail

- 2 cups Florida Orange Juice
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1/4 cup water
- ice cubes
- 1/2 cup carbonated water
- 2-3 mint leaves

In pitcher, stir orange juice, lemon juice and water.

Divide mocktail evenly among ice-filled glasses and top with carbonated water.

Garnish with mint leaves.

Orange Honey Glazed Carrots

- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 1/4 cup Florida Orange Juice
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- fresh parsley, for garnish

fresh chives, for garnish

Steam carrots until tender. In saucepan over medium heat, whisk orange juice, honey, cornstarch, salt and ginger.

Cover, whisking constantly until sauce thickens.

Pour sauce over steamed carrots. Top with parsley and chives.

Morning Recipes Perfect for Making Memories

FAMILY FEATURES

With the weather cooling, it's the perfect opportunity to spend some time in the kitchen to try out fun recipes and create special moments with family and friends. Pancakes and waffles provide deliciously easy ways to make mornings memorable at the breakfast table with those you love.

Regardless of what you have going on during the day, a warm stack of pancakes or waffles can bring everyone to the table. Putting together a delicious, crowd-pleasing stack doesn't have to be a big to-do with recipes like Butter Pecan Waffles and Banana Walnut Pancakes. You can make breakfast the highlight of your family's day with just a handful of ingredients in each recipe that offer a warm, comforting twist to a breakfast time favorite. These pancake and waffle creations are delicious and easy enough to become go-tos for nearly any occasion.

One of the keys to delicious pancakes and waffles is the mix you use. Consider an option like Pearl Milling Company, which has offered delicious taste and light and fluffy texture for more than 130 years. Its pancake mix varieties are easy, convenient, delicious options for memorable breakfasts. Topped with its rich and delicious syrup, its taste and quality can be passed down to future generations.

An additional benefit: Simple yet flavorful recipes like these allow the whole family to help in the kitchen, providing bonding opportunities and valuable lessons as you make them together.

For more memory-making breakfast time ideas, visit pearlmillingcompany.com.

Butter Pecan Waffles

Yield: about 6 waffles (4 inches each)

Browned Butter:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

- 1 cup Pearl Milling Company Original Pancake & Waffle Mix
- 3/4 cup milk, plus additional if necessary, divided
- 1 egg
- Pearl Milling Company Syrup, for topping
- toasted pecans, for topping (optional)

To make browned butter: In small skillet over low heat, place butter. Increase heat to medium-low, stirring butter with heat-proof spatula. Cook and stir until butter reaches desired brown color. Remove from heat and stir in pecans.

Place pancake mix in large bowl. Add 3/4 cup milk, egg and browned butter. Stir until large clumps of batter disappear. If batter seems too thick, add additional milk 1 tablespoon at a time to reach desired thickness. Let batter stand 4-5 minutes before cooking.

Pour batter into lightly greased waffle iron. Bake until steam stops or as directed by waffle iron instructions. Top with syrup and toasted pecans, if desired.

Banana Walnut Pancakes

Yield: about 20 pancakes

- 2 cups Pearl Milling Company Original Pancake Mix
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons oil
- 2 bananas, mashed

Homemade Whipped Cream:

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons sugar

Toppings:

- 1 banana, sliced, for topping
- 2 jars (5 ounces each) walnuts in syrup
- 24 ounces Pearl Milling Company Syrup

Place skillet over medium heat.

In large bowl, stir pancake mix, milk, eggs, oil and mashed bananas. Spread 1/4 cup pancake batter on skillet. When pancake begins to bubble, use spatula to flip. Cook until golden brown on each side. Repeat with remaining batter.

To make whipped cream: In small bowl, whip heavy cream and sugar until thickened.

Top pancakes with homemade whipped cream, banana slices, walnuts and syrup.



Banana Walnut Pancakes



Butter Pecan Waffles

