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Fall Lineup of Library's Hispanic Heritage Celebration for all Ages

By ANDREA CASTILLO
Prince George's County Memorial Library System

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 14, 2023)—Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) is proud to celebrate Hispanic Heritage all year round, and to coincide with National Hispanic Heritage Month from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15, PGCMLS is offering programming for all ages county-wide. This fall's lineup includes performances from musicians representing Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico; a cooking demonstration of Mexican dish frijoles charros with University of Maryland Extension; a bilingual play with Teatro La Bolsa; a conversation with the editor and a contributor for the anthology "Daughters of Latin America" co-hosted with the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights; book discussions; crafts; storytimes; STEM activities; and the Library's third annual Festival of Cultures featuring performers from all over the world, including Latin America.

"Hispanic Heritage Month is a celebration of Latinidad, showcasing the different communities from Latin America, Central America, South America, the Caribbean, those who were born and raised here, and those who were born outside of the U.S.," said Maribel Rodriguez, a bilingual program and outreach associate for PGCMLS. "This is an opportunity for families to connect to their roots or learn about another culture."

Festival of Cultures

PGCMLS will host its third annual Festival of Cultures on **Saturday, Sept. 30**, from 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m. at the Laurel



Branch Library, featuring a variety of storytime, dance, and musical performances from around the world, including Latin America. Registration is encouraged but not required.

- 10:30–11:15 am: Storytime by Sista' Ruff
- 11:15 a.m.–12 p.m.: Fritete African Drumming & Dance Group
- 12–12:45 p.m.: Dance Program by Carolina Garzon Hernandez
- 1–2 p.m.: Travel Buddies: Dancing Through Latin America Play with Teatro La Bolsa
- 11:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.: Face Painting

Events Co-presented with the Prince George's County Office of Human Rights (PGCOHR)

The Oct. 10 virtual event "Daughters of Latin America," at 7 p.m., is a conversation with "Daughters of Latin America" editor Sandra Guzmán and contributor Dahlma

Llanos-Figueroa about their anthology featuring the intergenerational voices of Latina women.

The Oct. 11 meeting of the Rock Banned Book Club at the Laurel Branch Library, scheduled for 6:30 p.m., will include a discussion about Jonathan Evison's "Lawn Boy," which follows Mike Muñoz, who is several years out of high school and trying to find his way in the world after getting fired from his landscaping job.

Featured Musical Performances

DeSanguashington, a Washington, DC-based Colombian-American band that combines traditional Colombian folk music with popular genres, performs at the Spauldings Branch Library on **Sept. 30** at 1 p.m.

In "¡Mucha Música!: An Interactive Mu-

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Prince George's County Recipient of Transportation Association of Maryland (TAM) 2023 Annual Awards

By PAULETTE L. JONES
Department of Public Works and Transportation

LARGO, Md. (Sept. 21, 2023)—On Wednesday, September 20, 2023, the Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation (DPW&T), Office of Transportation was announced as a recipient of the Transportation Association of Maryland's (TAM) Outstanding Leadership, Unsung Hero, and Driver of the Year Awards. DPW&T's Deputy Director Oluseyi Olugbenle received the Outstanding Leadership Award, Angela Counce received Driver of the Year Award, and Janelle Johnson received the Unsung Hero Award. Announcements were made during the TAM's Annual Conference held at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club & Inn, in Stevensville, Maryland. TAM is an association made up of public, private, and nonprofit organization members with the mission to strengthen community transportation in Maryland through advocacy and professional development. Prince George's County is pleased to be a participating member and eager to continue advancing and promoting our world-class transportation systems.

Outstanding Leadership Award: Deputy Director Oluseyi Olugbenle

It is with great pride to confirm that the Prince George's County Department of Public Works & Transportation has been recognized as a leader in the transit community with the recent receipt of The Outstanding Leadership Award. Deputy Director Oluseyi Olugbenle exhibits a visionary leadership

style marked by clarity and purpose. She consistently communicates her goals, ensuring everyone understands their role and the larger mission, fostering an environment of decisiveness and forward momentum. Additionally, Oluseyi is a beacon of hope and integrity in the workplace. Her actions are consistently transparent, and she leads with a strong moral compass, ensuring fairness and promoting a culture of accountability. This integrity has established a foundation of trust with her team confident in her unwavering ethical stance.

Beyond the ethics, Ms. Olugbenle is an advocate for continuous growth and improvement. She actively encourages her team to embrace learning, often providing resources and opportunities for skill enhancement. By championing an environment receptive to feedback and innovation, she ensures that her team remains adaptive and evolving. Furthermore, her ability to influence shines through her excellent persuasion, collaboration, and empathy skills.

Driver of the Year Award: Angela Counce

Angela Counce has been a transit operator since July 2000, transporting County residents for over 23 years. In every endeavor, Ms. Counce exemplifies the essence of productivity combined with the precision of timeliness. Not only does she consistently meet the established expectations, but she also ensures that every assigned task reaches its fruition within the stipulated period. What sets Ms. Counce apart is her proactive nature; she doesn't just stop at the task at hand. Instead, she constantly seeks addi-

tional tasks and learning opportunities, showcasing an insatiable thirst for growth and a commendable commitment to efficiency.

Unsung Hero: Janelle Johnson

Janelle Johnson serves a reservationist with the Office of Transportation within DPW&T. Janelle's work ethic and integrity are immediately apparent to anyone who has had the pleasure of working alongside her. Her dedication to upholding established policies and procedures isn't just about adhering to rules but stems from a deep-seated belief in the value of structure and consistency. This conscientious approach ensures that she delivers consistent quality in her work, building trust among colleagues and stakeholders.

One of Janelle's most commendable traits is her ability to work independently. She doesn't require constant oversight; instead, she takes the initiative, often foreseeing challenges and addressing them proactively. This level of responsibility and self-direction speaks volumes about her confidence and expertise in her field. Yet, what truly sets Janelle apart is her unwavering commitment to her promises. When she commits to a task or a project, her team knows it will be completed diligently and on time. This reliability has not only cemented her reputation as a dependable team member but has also fostered an environment of mutual respect and collaboration.

For additional information on the Transportation Association of Maryland (TAM) please visit Home (taminc.org). To stay up to date follow us on social media @PGCountyDPWT.

Vice Chair Blegay Presents Legislation to Establish Plan Prince George's 2035 Implementation and Infrastructure Task Force

Task Force to Focus on Land Use and Development Planning Goals for County's General Plan

By ANGELA ROUSON
Council Office of Communications

Prince George's County Council Vice Chair Wala Blegay, Esq. (District 6), during session on Tuesday, September 19, 2023, presented CR-081-2023, legislation establishing a Plan Prince George's 2035 Implementation and Infrastructure Task Force to guide the implementation of the land use/development recommendations outlined in Plan Prince George's 2035.

Vice Chair Blegay says planning goals for the General Plan have not been met, and the Plan Prince George's 2035 Implementation and Infrastructure Task Force will help address the lapses before they become a more significant problem.

"The County's General Plan was adopted to establish a long-term vision for the County, but implementing the recommendations has presented some challenges. Establishment of the Task Force will ensure that we meet our predetermined development goals, especially near designated regional transit areas. According to a recent report from the Prince Georges County Planning Department, over 50% of the new development, especially townhomes, are outside the designated areas for Plan 2035."

The current County General Plan, Plan Prince George's 2035, approved by the County Council in May 2014, set forth specific targets for development near

transit and at designated regional transit areas. Vice Chair Blegay has introduced CR-081-2023 in response to several significant barriers hindering the realization of both short and long-term benchmarks for implementing the General Plan vision that have been brought to the Council's attention.

Plan Prince George's 2035 includes comprehensive recommendations for guiding future development within Prince George's County. The plan contains recommended goals, policies, and strategies for land use; economic prosperity; transportation and mobility; natural environment; housing and neighborhoods; community heritage, culture and design; health communities; and public facilities.

The Task Force will include the following stakeholders:

- Two County Council Members
- Two staff members from the Planning Department
- Four community members
- One representative from the Chamber of Commerce
- One representative from the Department of Environment
- One representative from a smart growth organization

CR-081-2023 has been referred to the Council's Planning, Housing and Economic Development Committee (PHED) for consideration.

County Council Enacts Universal Design Legislation

Measure Proposed by District 5 Council Member Jolene Ivey Ensures Inclusive Housing Options for County's Residents

By ANGELA ROUSON / AMY FRY
Council Office of Communications / Office of Council Member Jolene Ivey

The Prince George's County Council, during session on Tuesday, September 12, unanimously voted to enact Council Bill-065-2023, universal design legislation sponsored by Council Member Jolene Ivey (District 5). The measure will make housing in the County more inclusive and accessible by providing a range of benefits for elderly residents and those with disabilities or injuries. The bill, which has been years in the making, is intended to help ensure residents can more easily function in their homes.

In addition to helping people with temporary or long-term disabilities, universal design elements in a home help people age-in-place by providing features that help older adults live independently and with autonomy. Homes built with universal design elements have proven to

be appealing to a wider range of home buyers.

Elements of universal design will now be required for at least half of new single-family attached, single-family detached, two-family, and multi-family residential dwelling units constructed in Prince George's County after January 1, 2026, with some exemptions. A waiver included in the bill will allow up to 50% of new homes in a development to be exempt from these requirements if it is not possible to comply because of the terrain. Townhouses and 2-over-2s are exempt.

Council Member Ivey, proposer of the legislation, was not present for the vote due to illness; however, Council col-

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Men Who Cook in Pink

Cope With Grief During the Holidays

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To Be Equal:

U.S. Open Champ and Phenom Coco Gauff Represents a New Era of American Tennis

She embodies hope, the promise of change, and the boundless potential of the next generation.

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Seeing Spotted Lanternfly Eggs? Scrape, Smash, Report Them

Hellish Tree of Heaven Weeds Out Native Plants

Earthtalk® Q&A: Sustainable Parenting 101

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TOWNS *and* NEIGHBORS

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

Catholic Mass in Spanish or Tagalog?

St. Philip the Apostle Church, in Camp Springs, has added a Sunday Mass in addition to the 10 a.m. English-language Mass I usually attend. There is now a Spanish-language Mass every Sunday at noon.

The pastor, Father Ryan Pineda, who grew up in the Philippines, is also celebrating a Mass in Tagalog about once a month. The next will be on Sunday, October 29, at 4 p.m.

Tagalog is an Austronesian language spoken as a first language by the ethnic Tagalog people, who make up a quarter of the population of the Philippines, and as a second language by the majority.

For more information, call St. Philip's rectory, 301-423-4244.

Town of Morningside

In a recent Town newsletter, Morningside extended condolences to their former officer, A/Sergeant Khari Grooms, now a handler with the Forest Heights Police Department K-9 Corps, on the tragic passing of his beloved "partner & companion," Kuno. Kuno died in the line of duty on July 2, from a medical emergency while assisting the County Police with a burglary call. K-9 Kuno was five years old, with four years of service.

Coming up in Morningside: Halloween events, Oct. 28; Senior Holiday Luncheon, Nov. 16; and Breakfast with Santa, Dec. 9. For information about Morningside recreation activities, call 301-735-2301.

Morningside October meetings: Work Session on Tuesday, October 10, and the Town Meeting, Tuesday, October 17. Both beginning at 7 p.m.

The Town has a meeting room available for rent, for your special event. They've had everything from birthdays to baby showers to weddings to repasts. The calendar is now open for reservations through December 31. Call 301-735-2300.

Neighbors & other good people

Christine Trent recently published a novel, "St. Clements Bluff," by Twopence Press. She has lived in St. Mary's County for 35 years and worked at Naval Air Station Patuxent River and Webster Field. She has recently learned to pick crabs and has "no idea what took

me so long." She'll be signing copies of "St. Clements Bluff" on Oct. 7 at Calvert Marine Museum's Patuxent River Appreciation Day and Oct. 21-22 at St. Mary's County Oyster Festival.

Father Philip W. Ilg, is now pastor of Holy Family Parish in Hillcrest Heights. He was formerly administrator of the parish.

Leon Levine, founder of Family Dollar, died April 5, 2023, at his home in Charlotte. The discount retail chain has had more than 5,000 locations.

Paul Michael Chilcote, 80, of Morningside, died Aug. 21. Survivors include his sons Patrick, Jeffrey and Garette, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Rebecca Ann Hintze, 80, who began her career as an English teacher at Surrattsville High School, died April 1. She had a career in business and politics and received the Woman of the Year Award from Charles County. She is survived by her mother, Elizabeth Moyle, son Scott and grandchildren.

Academia

Bishop McNamara High School, in Forestville, will have an Open House on Sunday, October 29, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Information: 301-735-8401. (By the way, my great-grandkids, Mary and Wesley McHale, are currently students there.)

Principals of our local schools: Benjamin D. Foulois Creative & Performing Arts Academy: Ms. Keshia Hogue, principal; Mr. John H. Agnew Jr. and Mr. Sherman Hunter, assistant principals.

Imagine Morningside: Sara Cypress. Andrew Jackson Academy: Warren Tweedy.

Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. High School: Mrs. Carelleta Marrow.

More accidents

It seems to me that we've had an unusual number of fatal accidents lately. Deandre Coleman, 28, was killed after a tree fell on her car on Suitland Parkway, near Meadowview Drive last Saturday. Her father, Carlos Williams, the driver and only other passenger, was not injured.

A recent early morning accident occurred on Ritchie Marlboro Road which involved six vehicles, one of which became airborne and landed on a car in another lane. Two died and two were

injured. One of the drivers was under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Places to go & things to do

The 57th annual U.S. Oyster Festival is coming up the weekend of October 21-22 at the County Fairgrounds, 42455 Fairgrounds Rd, Leonardtown. Hours are 10 a.m.-6 p.m.. Oct. 21 and 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Oct. 22. Admission, \$15 (2-day pass, \$20). Among the events: National Oyster Cook-Off, Amateur Oyster Shucking Contest, O'Grady Quinlan Academy of Irish Dance, Mystic Caravan Dance, and loads more. Info: oysterfest@gmail.com.

Changing landscape

A bill that could allow a Commanders stadium at RFK will soon get its first hearing. For anyone who doesn't know, RFK was named to honor Robert F. Kennedy after he was shot at the Ambassador Hotel where he was campaigning.

A home at 6307 Skyline Terrace, in Skyline, has sold for \$392,000.

Morningside memories: 40 years ago

Mary V. Kuntz, a charter member of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, died August 1, 1983.

Mary and her husband Alfred moved to Morningside in January 1941 and bought a home on Pine Grove Drive. About 1944, a fire at the Haney home, also on Pine Grove Drive, took the life of a mother and her two children. This tragedy led to the establishment of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department.

Al Kuntz was its first president and Mary helped form the Ladies Auxiliary. She worked for 13 years at Morton's Department Store on Pennsylvania Avenue and was among the founding parishioners of St. Philip's Parish and a member of the Sodality.

She and Al enjoyed square-dancing with the Swinging Squares. After Al retired from his job at the Navy yard, he and Mary began travel around the U.S., Mexico and Canada in their Southwind Motor Home.

Mary was survived by her husband of 45 years, Al; her daughter Nellie and

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Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301-922-5384

CASINO TRIP AND FUN

It's time for a Casino Trip and fun to Delaware Park Racetrack and Casino Slots Wilmington, Delaware Saturday, November 18, 2023. Bus leaves St. Philip's Church at 8:30 a.m. and Clinton Park-n-Ride at 9:30 a.m., returns approximately 7 p.m.

The fun package includes transportation, rebate of \$20.00 slot play with light refreshments, Oldies but Goodies, 50/50 raffle and Gratuity. The first 20 fully paid tickets will receive a FREE 50/50 RAFFLE. The cost is \$55.00. CashApp - Saretsgm absolutely no refunds. Please purchase a casino ticket by Monday, October 30, 2023, so you won't be left out.

Points of contacts Shirley Cleaves (302) 690-4260, Doretha A. Savoy (301) 233-3136, Vivian Rich (804) 301-9530. What happens on the bus stays on the bus. Sponsored by Shirley Cleaves.

REGIONAL/NATIONAL RECOGNITION

President Heidi Anderson is one of 30 people voted to the Higher Education Power List by the Daily Record. The Record wrote, "Maryland has justly earned a reputation as home to some of the finest institutions of higher education in the nation. The men and women who make up our 2023 Higher Education Power List are among the reasons why."

Dr. Anderson is Chair of the Board of Directors of American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). AASCU is a Washington, D.C. based higher education association of nearly 400 public colleges who share a historic commitment to underserved students.

BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS DEPARTMENT

The Department of Athletics at Bowie State University has announced a clear bag policy at Bulldog Stadium and A.C. Jordan Arena for athletic events. The move was made in conjunction with the Bowie State Campus Police, according to the announcement, and regulates the size and type of bag that may be carried into the facilities. The athletics department noted the policy is consistent with those in many CIAA and non-conference venues.

In addition to the clear bag policy, Bowie State Athletics Ticket Office will only be accepting card payments. There will be no cash payments for any home football games for 2023. BSU ticket office will not accept cash at the ticket box office game day, Bulldog Nation is encouraged to purchase tickets in advance and online.

A clear bag policy will be instituted at all Bowie State Football, Men's Basketball and Women's Basketball games. Bag Policy:

Fans will only be able to carry the following style and size bag into the stadium all of which are subject to search. Bags that are clear plastic, vinyl, or PVC and do not exceed 12"x6"x12". One-gallon clear plastic freezer bag (Ziploc bag or similar). Small clutch bags, measuring 4.5"x 6.5" with or without a handle or strap. All other bags will not be permitted.

All other bags will not be permitted. A list of prohibited bags includes but is not limited to purses, backpacks, drawstring bags that are not clear, briefcases, coolers, fanny pack, luggage, computer bags, binocular cases, and diaper bags. Guests are encouraged to return unauthorized items to their vehicles. Bowie State University cannot safeguard items that are not permitted into the stadium. For the most up-to-date information on Bowie State Athletics and its 13 varsity sport teams, visit BSUBulldogs.com.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Mark your calendars. Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church upcoming Harvest Festival, October 28, 2023, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. will be a day of fun. There will be moon bounce, face painting, games, and trunks for treats for the kids (and the kids at heart). Food- Chicken, Fish, Fries and more. Shop small businesses for unique gifts for family and friends. Health information and more.

Vendor/Craft Fair space is available, \$50 per space. Email Kas6987@gmail.com if you are interested. Registration forms will be sent. Kim Montgomery, Nottingham Myers United Methodist Church 15601 Brooks Church Road, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772.

COZY CONCERT SERIES

Join Vohn "Mr. Higgz" Higginbotham and Antone "Chooky" Caldwell for an intimate musical experience. These biological brothers have made their individual marks musically across the globe and are coming together in concert for The Cozy Concert Series. It is a show you don't want to miss. The location is at Party Headquarters powered by Rockstar Lifestyles October 19, 2023. General Admission \$20.00. Tickets are available on Eventbrite. Doors open at 6 p.m.. Showtime 7 p.m. Party Headquarters address is 15606 Emerald Way, Bowie, Maryland 20716.

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY EVENTS

Stay up to date on festivals, events, and fun things to do in Prince George's County. Whether you're looking for live music, cultural influence, exciting sports, or family entertainment, Prince George's offers nonstop fun for everyone. www.experienceprincegeorges.com/events/

Maryland State Police Fitness Challenge Set for October 21 at Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland State Police

PIKESVILLE, Md. (Sept. 21, 2023)—Register online now and guarantee your spot in the Maryland State Police Fitness Challenge, set for Saturday, October 21.

The free event will take place at the Prince George's Sports and Learning Complex, located at 8001 Sheriff Road, Landover, Maryland 20785. Register online and be sure to check in before 1 p.m. at the event. Check-in begins at 12:30 p.m.

The Maryland State Police Fitness Challenge includes a 1 ½ miles of running, along with a series of other exercises, including burpees, squats, push-ups and sit-ups. The Challenge was designed by MSP trainers who know what it takes to succeed in one of the finest police academies in the country.

This Challenge incorporates facets of the Maryland State Police Functional Fitness Assessment Test. It also simulates the physical demands placed on our law enforcement professionals. Online registration is required for the event and you must be at least 18 years old to participate. Those among the top finishers will be awarded a Maryland State Police T-shirt.

In addition to the challenge, representatives from various units within the Maryland State Police, including the K-9 Unit, Aviation Command, and the Forensic Sciences Division, will be on hand to answer questions for those interested in pursuing a career with the Department.

All participants must check in prior to 1 p.m. to be eligible for the race and the giveaways.

For more information on how to register for the event and/or careers with the Maryland State Police, visit the department's web page, www.mdsp.maryland.gov.

Lt. Governor Aruna Miller Joins State Highway Administration, Motor Vehicle Administration to Call on Marylanders to Help Make Maryland Work Zones Safer

Officials Gave an Update on The Work Zone Safety Work Group and Announced Public Participation in Group's Process

By PRESS OFFICER
Maryland LG News

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 21, 2023)—Lt. Governor Aruna Miller today joined the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration and State Highway Administration to provide an update on the progress of Work Zone Safety Work Group.

Lt. Gov. Miller announced the work group will be seeking public input through a public survey, giving Marylanders the opportunity to share their thoughts in the ongoing work of the group to make work zones safer.

Through October 12, Marylanders can visit ZeroDeathsMD.gov/WZSurvey to complete the survey. The Maryland Highway Safety Office staff will also be administering the survey at Motor Vehicle branch offices throughout the state.

"I am proud of progress that the Work Zone Safety Group has made thus far through ongoing collaboration and partnership between highway safety experts, members of law enforcement, and individuals with experience working on these sites" said Lt. Gov. Miller. "Yet, the astonishing number of crashes on Maryland work zones makes it clear that we need a change in culture regarding work zones—and that culture change must come from drivers themselves. That's why I'm calling on Marylanders to provide their input and be a part of the process to make our work zones safer for the people who work on them."

Across Maryland on any given day, there are on average 1,000 roadway workers improving Maryland's transportation infrastructure at more than 300 work sites, in addition to law enforcement personnel.

Announced in April 2023 by Governor Wes Moore, the work group is chaired by Lt. Gov. Miller, a former transportation engineer, and is made up of individuals with expertise in the transportation sector, members of law enforcement, labor leaders, and individuals with direct experience in work zones.

The Work Zone Safety Work Group will put forward a comprehensive set of recommended actions by the end of the year to keep roadway workers safe and decrease the number of crashes that occur in construction work sites on Maryland highways. The group is exploring updating how work zones are set up, increased enforcement, and increasing driver awareness and education through a combination of regulatory, executive, and legislative actions.

"We are actively developing ideas to drastically change driver behavior about work zone safety to keep highway workers safe and to ensure they go home at the end of the day uninjured," said State Highway Administrator William Pines. "Road workers call work zones their offices and we all need to slow down and move over—it's the law."

"Being the chair of the Roadway Operations Work Zone Safety Subcommittee, I am charged with developing concepts that change driver behavior while they navigate work zones," said State Highway Administration Deputy Administrator and Chief Engineer of Operations Teri Soos. "Our work will protect highway workers from danger."

"Our focus is changing the behaviors of drivers—to emphasize to everyone that we ALL have a personal responsibility to drive safely so lives aren't lost on our roadways," said Motor Vehicle Administrator and Gov. Moore's Highway Safety Representative Chrissy Nizer. "The current number of crashes and fatalities in Maryland is unacceptable and if drivers do not change their behavior now, we are going to experience more needless deaths as a result of motor vehicle crashes."

COMMUNITY

Hispanic Heritage from A2

sical Journey to Latin America,” Cantaré performs songs in Spanish and Portuguese, delving into the cultural heritage of the Caribbean, and Central and South America. In this performance, the whole family is invited to sing, play percussion, and dance to Latin rhythms like salsa and merengue. The show will be performed at the at the Greenbelt Branch Library on Oct. 3 at 6 p.m.

La Marvela, performing Afro-Indigenous music from the coast of Colombia and Puerto Rico, is an all-woman music band showcasing the heritage of the Colombian Caribbean region, with influences rooted in African, Indigenous, and European traditions. Their performances, taking place at the Bowie Branch Library on Oct. 7 at 1 p.m. and the New Carrollton Branch Library on Oct. 14 at 1 p.m., pay tribute to the untold stories and remarkable talent of women in music.

Dominican-American singer Liah Perez blends pop, Latin rock, and ballads to perform songs exploring themes of love, loss, the search for home, and the quest for meaning. She will play at the Laurel Branch Library on Oct. 7 at 1 p.m. and the Glenarden Branch Library on Oct. 14 at 1 p.m.

Other Events

The Encanto Dance Team hosts a salsa workshop for dancers of all skill levels at the Beltsville Branch Library at Largo-Kettering Branch Library on Oct. 4 at 6 p.m., and at the Hyattsville Branch Library on Oct. 11 at 6 p.m.

In the “Frijoles Charros Cooking Demonstration” led by the University of Maryland Extension, attendees will have the opportunity to learn how to prepare the traditional Mexican dish frijoles charros, as well as the cultural significance behind it. The demonstration takes place at the Upper Marlboro Branch Library on Oct. 10 at 6 p.m.

The National Museum of Language’s multilingual program “An Exploration of Puerto Rico!” will take attendees on a virtual cruise to Puerto Rico, discussing the island’s resources, food, and Spanish-speaking culture. Light refreshments will be provided. The event for children and teens takes place at the Upper Marlboro Branch Library on Oct. 14 at 2 p.m.

All-ages programs

- Sept. 30 from 10:30 a.m.–2 p.m.: Festival of Cultures, Laurel
- Sept. 30 at 1 p.m.: DeSanguashington Band: Colombian-American Music, Spauldings
- Oct. 4 at 6 p.m.: Latin Rhythms: Salsa Dance Workshop, Largo-Kettering
- Oct. 7 at 1 p.m.: La Marvela: Afro-Indigenous Music from the Coast of Colombia and Puerto Rico, Bowie
- Oct. 7 at 1 p.m.: Music Performance by Liah Perez, Dominican-American Singer and Songwriter, Laurel
- Oct. 10 at 6 p.m.: Frijoles Charros Cooking Demonstration with the University of Maryland Extension, Upper Marlboro
- Oct. 11 at 6 p.m.: Latin Rhythms: Salsa Dance Workshop, Hyattsville
- Oct. 14 at 1 p.m.: La Marvela: Afro-Indigenous Music from the Coast of Colombia and Puerto Rico, New Carrollton
- Oct. 14 at 1 p.m.: Music Performance by Liah Perez, Dominican-American Singer and Songwriter, Glenarden
- Oct. 14 at 2 p.m.: An Exploration of Puerto Rico! - Presented by the National Museum of Language, Upper Marlboro (children and teens)

Programs for Children

- Oct. 3 at 6 p.m.: ¡Mucha Música!: An Interactive Musical Journey to Latin America-Presented by Cantaré, Greenbelt
- Oct. 11 at 3:30 p.m.: Crafternoon: Lotería, Mount Rainier
- Oct. 11 at 4 p.m.: Crafternoon: Calaveras Masks!, Baden
- Oct. 12 at 10 a.m.: Spanish/English Ready 2 Read Storytime: Ages 3-5, Mount Rainier
- Oct. 12 at 11 a.m.: Ready 2 Read Art: Ages 3-5, Baden

Programs for Teens

- Oct. 4 at 3:30 p.m.: Latine Legends: Spooky Stories, New Carrollton

Programs for Adults

- Oct. 4 at 6 p.m.: Book Discussion: “Solito” by Javier Zamora, Beltsville
- Oct. 10 at 7 p.m.: “Daughters of Latin America” with Sandra Guzmán and Dahlma Llanos-Figueroa - Co-presented with the Prince George’s County Office of Human Rights, Virtual
- Oct. 11 at 5 p.m.: Movie Screening and Discussion: “Spencer,” Beltsville
- Oct. 11 at 6:30 p.m.: Rock Banned Book Club: “Lawn Boy” by Jonathan Evison - Co-presented with the Prince George’s County Office of Human Rights, Laurel

In addition to attending programs, library customers are encouraged to visit PGCMLS’ Hispanic Heritage Hub for information in English and Spanish about all upcoming events, online resources, information from local and national organizations, videos, and book recommendations.

Legislation from A1

leagues recognized her efforts as a longtime universal design advocate in the County who has worked tirelessly to bring this legislation to fruition and create a more genuinely inclusive Prince George’s County.

“Adopting a universal design approach when building new homes provides a range of benefits and ensures that everyone can more easily function in their home. It promotes inclusivity and visibility and allows people of all ages and abilities to live together comfortably and safely,” said Council Member Ivey in previous legislative discussions.

Universal design requirements under CB-65-2023 will apply to exterior entrances, interior routes of travel, the placement of some controls, switches, electrical sockets, and plugs, and would require a bathroom and kitchen on the first level.

Morningside from A2

son-in-law Roy Pearce, three granddaughters and many grand- and great-grandchildren.

Milestones

Happy Birthday to Jasmine Wade, Nola Thomas and my grandson Sam Mudd, Oct. 2; John Ihrig, Oct. 3; Marlene Titus, Oct. 4; Sue Gilmore and Muriel Ireson, Oct. 5; Rory Lohman, Carmen Buffington and George Nixon, Oct. 6; Dr. Alvin Thornton and Kam’Ron Blade, Oct. 7.

Happy 37th anniversary to Bill & Terry Ratliff on Oct. 4; and Happy 34th anniversary to my daughter Elaine and Luke Seidman on Oct. 7.

Department of Parks and Recreation, Prince George’s County Continues Saturday Enrichment Academy

By PRESS OFFICER
Department of Parks and Recreation

RIVERDALE, Md. (Sept. 21, 2023)—The M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County in partnership with the County Council is proud to again offer its weekend tutoring program, Saturday Enrichment Academy (SEA), to help improve grades and test scores of county youth. In this three-hour weekly program, learning coaches use creative ways to meet the needs and styles of participants in grades 1–3 to promote academic acceleration. SEA is FREE for Prince George’s County residents ages 6–9 and will take place at nine Department locations **September 20–December 9**, from 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

“The purpose of our Saturday Enrichment Academy is to provide academic support to youth who are having challenges with English Language Arts and STEAM”, states Anica O’Neil, Assistant Division Chief at the Department. “It is our goal to bridge the gap and provide our youth with resources and a comfortable, fun, engaging environment that will assist with mitigating their learning challenges.”

Students receive small group tutoring that creates a more comfortable learning environment and allows tutors to meet participants where they are. SEA will take place each Saturday at the following locations in Prince George’s County:

- Berwyn Heights Elementary School
- Columbia Park Community Center
- Deerfield Run Community Center
- Fort Washington Forest Community Center
- Glassmanor Community Center
- Lake Arbor Community Center
- Langley Park-McCormick Elementary School
- William Beanes Community Center
- William Hall Academy

Registration is open on Parks Direct. To learn more, contact anica.oneil@pgparks.com.

With over 28,000 acres of parkland, trails, athletic fields, playgrounds and more, M-NCPPC, Department of Parks and Recreation in Prince George’s County provides an award-winning park system through progressive, quality, innovative leadership and a commitment to its community and environment. The Department delivers first-class recreational activities and programs for people of all ages and ability levels. It strives to improve the quality of life for residents in Prince George’s County and the communities in which they live, work, and raise families. The Department’s facilities and programming continue to evolve and expand to keep pace with the needs of its vibrant community. For more information, visit www.pgparks.com.

Prince George’s Goes Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness: Men Who Cook in Pink

By PRESS OFFICER
CEX-Proud Events

On behalf of County Executive Angela Alsobrooks, we invite you to join us at Men Who Cook in Pink in support of breast cancer. Men Who Cook in Pink will be held on **Saturday, Oct. 28**, 12 p.m.–3 p.m. at Oxon Hill High School in Oxon Hill, MD. During the month of October, Prince George’s County will be partnering with various community organizations, champions, health care providers and corporate donors to bring awareness, educate, and engage residents, both survivors and supporters, in meaningful events throughout the

County. A portion of the proceeds will support Nueva Vida, Hope Connections and Emanuel Health Education—all County-based nonprofits who are doing great work with a focus on breast cancer for both women and men.

Facts: Breast cancer affects more than 33% of Black and brown residents in Prince George’s County, most of which are residents who are considered low-moderate income, and/or do not have the proper health insurance coverage for adequate medical attention. The Center has a cancer incidence rate that is in the green zone and comparable to Maryland counties, tending toward cause for concern with respect to the United States as

a whole. However, when we look at age adjusted death due to cancer, Prince George’s is in the lowest 25% of Maryland counties, and above the 2020 targets and way above the 2030 targets. Working together, we can do better and improve cancer outcomes as a community.

We look forward to you supporting breast cancer awareness in Prince George’s County at Men Who Cook in Pink! Tickets are going fast, so get yours today!

<https://www.instantseats.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=buy.event&eventID=3168C7DD-0CE7-A3B5-3CAB9E4F787983B9.cfm>

Workshop Can Help Adults, Children and Teens Cope With Grief During the Holidays

By ELYZABETH MARCUSSEN
Hospice of the Chesapeake

PASADENA, Md. (Sept. 21, 2023)—The holiday season can be a difficult time for those who are missing a loved one. For those people, the Chesapeake Life Center offers its Living with Loss through the Holidays workshop to help adults, children and teens find a way to cope with their grief while the rest of the world seems to be filled with festivities.

While adults who are grieving often want to avoid the holidays and wish they could skip them all together, children are not as prone to losing their excitement.

They still want to participate in the season’s traditions.

The balance for parents and caregivers can be tricky. Part of the grieving process can require backing away from the hectic nature of the holidays. At the same time, they want to try to keep a sense of normalcy for their children by honoring seasonal traditions. Finding that compromise takes some thoughtful planning and preparation, and careful, appropriate communication with the entire family.

In this workshop led by grief professionals, participants can join in group activities to help them find a way to honor the memory of their loved ones while

still granting themselves permission to grieve. For youth ages 6 to 18, the program will offer participants an opportunity to take part in holiday-themed activities that will help them learn about getting through the holidays without their special person.

This year’s holiday program will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thursday, **Dec. 7**, on the John & Cathy Belcher Campus, 90 Ritchie Highway, Pasadena, Maryland. The cost is \$10 per person. Registration is required and can be completed by calling 1-888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org.

Three-Time Grammy® Nominated TIEMPO LIBRE

By PRESS OFFICER
Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center

Dance to the scorching hot rhythms of Three-Time Grammy® Nominated TIEMPO LIBRE. Well into their third decade, Afro-Caribbean music group TIEMPO LIBRE remains one of the hottest Latin bands today. Equally at home in concert halls, jazz clubs, festival stages and dance venues, TIEMPO LIBRE is celebrated for its sophisticated tropical music featuring an irresistible, exhilarating mix of jazz harmonies, contemporary sonorities and seductive Latin rhythms. In 2023, TIEMPO LIBRE continues to uplift and inspire audiences worldwide with their scorching hot performances to eager and adoring audiences.

For tickets and information, call the Box Office at 240-567-5301, Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m. and 3–6 p.m. To order tickets online, please visit our Web site at www.montgomerycollege.edu/PAC. Group rates are available. VISA/MasterCard/ Discover accepted. The Center is wheelchair accessible and is equipped with infrared sound enhancement for the hearing impaired.

The Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center offers world-class entertainment to the greater Washington, D.C. community. Through the Center, Montgomery College supports and encourages lifelong education and appreciation for the arts. The



PHOTO COURTESY THE ROBERT E. PARILLA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
Afro-Caribbean music group TIEMPO LIBRE

College serves nearly 60,000 students each year at three campuses in Montgomery County, Maryland.

Who: Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center
2023-2024 Guest Artist Series
What: Three-Time Grammy® Nominated TIEMPO LIBRE
When: Friday, September 29, 2023, 7:30 p.m.
Where: Robert E. Parilla Performing Arts Center
Montgomery College
51 Mannakee Street • Rockville, MD 20850
Tickets: Tickets are \$25 Regular, \$23 Seniors, and \$5 Students w/ID
(Student tickets must be purchased through the box office.)
Reserved Seating • Box Office: 240-567-5301
www.montgomerycollege.edu/pac

COMMENTARY

Marc Morial

President and CEO, National Urban League



To Be Equal:

U.S. Open Champ and Phenom Coco Gauff Represents a New Era of American Tennis

"If you can think it, you can do it. If you can dream it, you can do it. Just keep working hard. It won't come easy and it will seem impossible but if you keep working hard it will definitely happen."
—Coco Gauff

Tennis is a sport that has been historically dominated by white athletes. However, the sport has since been experiencing a massive shift. Today, young Black athletes, exemplified by the prodigious Coco Gauff, are not just participating, but

also shining on the world's largest stages. Their rise not only redefines the face of American tennis but also challenges long-standing narratives around race and sports.

Remembering tennis greats like Arthur Ashe and Althea Gibson, we celebrate their unforgettable spirit and the legacy they left behind. These pioneers battled racial prejudice, both subtle and overt, to carve out their places in the archives of tennis history. Their stories are the epitome of courage, perseverance, and resilience.

Ashe and Gibson blazed new trails in sports and in social justice. Coco Gauff is who they blazed them for.

It's fitting that Gauff won the U.S. Open as the nation celebrates 50 years since it became the first of the Grand Slam tournaments to offer equal prize money to men and women. Billy Jean King, who spearheaded the boycott that led to equal pay, said "she's the reason we fought so hard 50 years ago."

Like many among the new generation of outspoken Black athletes, Gauff has used her platform to advocate for social justice—a trail that her own grandmother, Yvonne Lee, helped to blaze when she became the first Black student to attend Delray Beach's all-white Seacrest High School in 1961.

Though she was only 16 when George Floyd was murdered by Minneapolis police in 2020, Gauff delivered a powerful speech at Black Lives Matter rally outside Delray Beach City Hall, speaking just after her grandmother, saying "I think it's sad that I'm here protesting the same thing that she did 50-plus years ago."

Like her grandmother, Gauff stormed onto the scene with a maturity and expertise well beyond her years. From her run at Wimbledon in 2019 defeating seven-time Grand Slam title winner Venus Williams, to her consistent performance on

the global stage, Coco's story is a testament to the transformative power of dedication and grit. But Coco is more than just a talented tennis player. She embodies hope, the promise of change, and the boundless potential of the next generation. She's not alone though. Players like Frances Tiafoe, Sloane Stephens, and Taylor Townsend also play crucial roles in reshaping that narrative.

Together, they signify the increasing diversity in a sport once perceived as elitist and exclusive.

This rise of young Black athletes in tennis is not just about achieving individual excellence. It's about challenging the status quo, breaking barriers, and carving out spaces where historically there were none. Their successes send a powerful message to Black children everywhere that they too can challenge the status quo, and win. It is also important for institutions and stakeholders in tennis to recognize this shift and support it. From funding grassroots programs in marginalized communities to promoting diversity at all levels, there's a lot that can and should be done.

As we celebrate Coco Gauff and other Black athletes in this sport, let's remember the significance of their journey. They are not just changing the face of tennis; they are changing the fabric of American sports.
—September 21, 2023

Marian Wright Edelman

Founder and President Emerita, Children's Defense Fund



ChildWatch:

Nurturing Children With a Heart for Justice

I recently shared several passages from a sermon my dear friend Rev. Dr. Shannon Daley-Harris, who served Children's Defense Fund for 30 years, preached at Princeton University Chapel titled "Draw the Circle Wide." In it, Rev. Daley-Harris spoke about the need for all of us to draw circles wide enough to see and welcome others in, instead of creating walls that keep others out. She also asked an important question: how do we learn to act with love and justice? Rev. Daley-Harris shared that thanks to a grant from the Children's Spirituality Research and Innovation Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary, she has been engaged in a research project, "Nurturing Children with a Heart for Justice," to understand how chil-

dren from birth to age eight develop an understanding of justice.

As she explained some of her first findings: "The surprising bottom line is that children understand justice much sooner than we might assume . . . From the time they are babies, children are putting together many of the pieces that will develop into an understanding of justice. While still infants and toddlers, children prefer those who help to those who hinder, and want to help. They expect resources to be shared equally and want to share equally." She also shared research showing that even young children value equity more than strict equality following explicit conversations with adults that show them the difference in age-

appropriate ways. Absent these conversations, children often default to equality or to explanations like personal effort or personal qualities to understand why things seem unfair; but when children as young as five understand that a high-status group created, maintains, and perpetuates structures that lead to inequality, it reduces children's bias and increases their efforts to rectify inequality. Rev. Daley-Harris added: "That means we adults must not shy away from these brave and honest conversations."

Rev. Daley-Harris is studying "how children create 'moral circles,' and how they are helped to understand differences they observe. From infancy, children develop a familiarity bias; those whom they see, interact with, are cared for by, are familiar. As they observe who is around them children develop 'moral circles,' defined by researchers Chalik and Rhodes as 'boundaries within which we view others as worthy of moral concern.' Researcher Paul Bloom notes that children sort people into three large circles: 'Kin,' 'In-Group,' and 'Strangers.' As they are developing these circles, based on familiarity, of who is kin, in-group, and strangers, babies are also observing characteristics of people. They notice languages, accents, genders, ages, skin tones, and more, preferring those that are familiar. And so we see in babies that it is an inevitable part of human nature to categorize; none of us, not even babies, is 'color blind' when it comes to seeing people." But, she emphasized,

"babies and young children don't attach values to any of these observed categories automatically. Children first look to adults to discern what significance differences have."

She continued on this critical point: "If we treat people with different skin tones, languages, sexualities, genders, as bad or less than, our children will. If we wall ourselves off, hem ourselves into homogenous circles, our children will see those unlike themselves as 'other.' But, if we seek out or create diverse community, an inclusive circle of chosen family or 'kin,' that's how our children will regard them. Researcher Bloom observes that 'the categories of kin, in-group, and stranger are porous.' Getting to know those who seem 'other' personally, through stories, by joining in common cause, and focusing on individual identities, all help widen our moral circles. And the powerful metaphor of kinship affects children's perceptions, emotions, and actions as well. If we lean into our shared identity as children of God, which makes everyone 'kin,' then our children will too."

This is a call to us. Helping children see that we all share a common kinship—and should all treat others as we want to be treated—is a critical step towards nurturing and preserving their innate sense of justice. Rev. Daley-Harris summed up: "It's never too soon and it's never too late to proclaim, teach, remind, and enact the truth that each person is kin as a beloved, precious child of God." Amen!
—September 22, 2023

Maryland Lawmakers Push for Chesapeake Bay to Become National Park Unit

By SHIFRA DAYAK
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON (Sept. 21, 2023)—The Chesapeake Bay could see a boost in status under legislation introduced this summer to designate the region as a National Recreation Area.

Sponsored by Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, and Rep. John Sarbanes, D-Maryland, the Chesapeake National Recreation Area Act would allow the National Park Service to bring into its network sites in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which covers over 60,000 square miles across six states and Washington, D.C. Sites would be included either through donations or purchases, but the new designation would not affect the rights of other property owners along the watershed.

"We know that the Chesapeake Bay is a national treasure and it's a global treasure," Van Hollen said in an interview with Capital News Service. "We believe that by including this national treasure within the National Park Service system, we will ensure that it is protected in the future."

Efforts to establish a Chesapeake National Recreation Area date back to the 2000s, when a study called for the bay to become a unit of the National Park Service. This year's legislation also comes amid attempts to mitigate the declining health of the Chesapeake Bay watershed and efforts to highlight lesser-known parts of bay history, including the contributions of Native Americans and Black watermen to the ecosystem and economy.

The bill was created through a "unique process," Van Hollen said. In 2021, in a practice uncommon among most lawmakers, he and Sarbanes created a working group to solicit feedback on what the legislation should look like.

The bill is currently in committee but Van Hollen said a bipartisan coalition of lawmakers is "determined to get it over the finish line" by the end of this congressional session.

Currently, the park service administers certain sites in the watershed, including those designated as national monument units. The Chesapeake Gateways program, established through federal legislation in 1998, allows the park service to partner with and provide assistance to local and regional organizations involved in the bay.

But lawmakers are calling for the park service to play a larger and more administrative role, especially as they strive to tell previously-untold stories about the watershed's inhabitants.

"Right now, there's no entity whose mission is to help tell the stories of the Chesapeake Bay," Van Hollen said. "If you look at the Chesapeake Bay, in many ways, its history is a microcosm of our American history... so there are all sorts of stories."

For Maryland residents like Vincent Leggett, whose families have been involved in those stories for generations as avid fishermen, shipbuilders and dockworkers, the bill offers the promise of highlighting history that's previously been passed over.

Leggett is a member of Blacks of the Chesapeake—an organization that aims to highlight Black history in the watershed—which was part of the working group for the bill.

"African Americans, I feel, were the backbone to the maritime and seafood industries here in the Chesapeake Bay region, but our stories were not elevated, nor were they exposed through our own voices," Leggett said.

Leggett hopes that expanding the reach of the park service in the region will also draw these populations into bay conservation. Only 7% of the state's bay shoreline is publicly accessible, he said, causing a "sense of alienation" for people of color in the region who can't get involved in cleanup efforts.

According to the Chesapeake Bay Program, the main entity responsible for conservation and restoration of the bay, there are 1,296 public access points to the body of water across its six watershed states and Washington, D.C.

The bill, if passed, would authorize the park service to administer additional landmarks in the Chesapeake Bay watershed—a step Van Hollen said would further improve public access to the bay.

Blacks of the Chesapeake has worked with state and federal lawmakers in Maryland on several projects along the bay, Leggett said, including planning a heritage park at the historically-Black Elktonia Beach in Annapolis and ensuring that Black history is highlighted at Whitehall Manor, which was built by enslaved individuals. Some of these sites, if acquired by the park service, could become highlights of a Chesapeake National Recreation Area.

The bill's sponsors also touted the legislation as an opportunity to create jobs and enhance Maryland's economy.

"By designating a unified National Recreation Area for the Chesapeake Bay, this legislation seeks to elevate the regional stories that shaped our nation's history, promote the spirit of stewardship, improve public access and spur economic growth across

the bay region," Sarbanes said in an e-mail to CNS.

The lawmakers have projected that turning the watershed into a park service unit will boost tourism in the region, augmenting its already-major role in the bay states' economies. In Maryland, recreational boating generates an average of \$2.03 billion and 32,025 jobs each year, and wildlife-watching excursions generate over \$600 million a year, according to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

Leggett said that the bill is an opportunity to foster these industries while increasing awareness of the bay's integral role in the region.

"I think that by bringing more attention to the Chesapeake Bay... it just generates so many millions of dollars and employment opportunities and tourism," he said. "I think that as we endeavor to improve the water quality of the bay, that is going to enhance the fisheries, it is going to enhance heritage tourism and all of the related businesses that surround it."

The Prince George's Post

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ENVIRONMENT

EarthTalk® Sustainable Q&A Parenting 101

Dear EarthTalk:

How can I be a more environmentally responsible parent?

—Betsy E., Boston, MA

Sustainable parenting isn't easy given all the ways modern society has become largely a profusion of disposable products. Besides making conscious decisions about the products you buy, you also have to think about teaching your kids to do the right thing—and you can never start too early.

One way to do the right thing by the planet is opting for reusable diapers. The average American baby uses 7,000 disposable diapers over the course of a typical three-year run. Some 200,000 trees are cut down each year in the U.S. alone to provide the wood pulp found in diapers. To make matters worse, the diaper's plastic and absorbent polymers are not recyclable.

Nowadays you can purchase reusable diapers at a local Walmart or Target, or online. Popular brands include Cotton Babies, Nora's Nursery and Green Mountain. Many people are concerned about the washing process, but it is relatively simple. For liquid waste, you should pre-rinse the diaper with water. For solid waste, you should allocate a spatula or knife as a "scraper" and dispose of the waste in the toilet. You can purchase a dry pail to hold the diapers until laundry day. Keep in mind, reusable diapers must be washed with water that is at least 140 degrees Fahrenheit (60 degrees Celsius) to kill bacteria.

Another environmental hazard of parenthood is baby wet wipes. Almost all, even the "flushable" ones, contain microplastics which do not biodegrade. This causes buildup in pipes because grease tends to accumulate on the plastic. Also, these microplastics can get into local water bodies and be ingested by marine wildlife. A solution is to create your own reusable wet wipes. Buy cotton or bamboo baby washcloths and cut them into eight-inch by eight-inch squares. For the wipe solution, oft-used ingredients include aloe vera, gentle baby wash or Castile soap, natural oils, and water. Other recipes can be found online. You can keep this solution in a spray bottle to use when needed. Store not-yet-used wipes in a clean airtight container. Spray them thoroughly with the solution before use. Store soiled wipes in a dry pail until you do laundry. As with reusable diapers, you should scrape off solid waste before washing.

Another major source of waste from kids is toys, most of which are made of cheap plastic and end up in landfills. According to the Yale Environmental Review, toys constitute six percent of landfill plastics worldwide. Today, there are many online services where you can order a monthly subscription for rentable plastic and wooden toys. If your child gets bored, you can send the old toys in and receive new ones in the mail in the matter of days. The toys that you send in are sanitized and sent to other families.

Aside from these options, you could also make homemade food to reduce packaging waste. Buying second-hand clothes is also a simple and cheaper way to reduce your landfill footprint. But arguably, the most important thing you can do is to educate your children about environmental issues and encourage sustainable practices.

CONTACTS: How to be a sustainable parent, bbc.com/future/article/20221123-how-to-be-a-sustainable-parent; Most materials are recyclable, so why can't children's toys be sustainable? environment-review.yale.edu/most-materials-are-recyclable-so-why-cant-childrens-toys-be-sustainable; Should We Ditch Wet Wipes? envirotech-online.com/news/water-wastewater/9/breaking-news/should-we-ditch-wet-wipes/46063.

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WSSC Water Recognized for Wastewater Excellence

All Six Water Resource Recovery Facilities Receive Peak Performance Awards

From National Association of Clean Water Agencies

By PRESS OFFICER
WSSC Water

LAUREL, Md. (Sept. 20, 2023)—A leading water industry organization today recognized all six of WSSC Water's water resource recovery facilities (WRRFs—formerly known as wastewater treatment plants) for outstanding performance in complying with federal permit limits and Clean Water Act standards. The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) presented its Peak Performance Awards to the high-performing facilities at WSSC Water's monthly Commission meeting.

There are three categories of awards:

- Platinum for facilities that have consistently achieved perfect compliance for five or more years;
- Gold for facilities that achieve 100 percent compliance for an entire calendar year; and
- Silver for facilities that received no more than five permit violations in a calendar year.

WSSC Water's facilities earned Peak Performance Awards as follows:

- Platinum**
 - Damascus, 23rd consecutive year
 - Parkway, 17th consecutive year
 - Seneca, 17th consecutive year
- Gold**
 - Piscataway, 1st year
 - Western Branch, 2nd consecutive year
- Silver**
 - Hyattstown 1st year

"As champions of clean water, these awards reflect our commitment to protecting the Chesapeake Bay by returning clean water to Maryland rivers and streams," said WSSC Water General Manager and CEO Kishia L. Powell. "I thank NACWA for recognizing our facilities, and I especially want to thank our employees—Team H2O—for their dedication to excellence and their innovative mindset to deploy new technologies to effectively remove nitrogen and phosphorus while reducing energy and chemical costs."

Seeing Spotted Lanternfly Eggs? Scrape, Smash, Report Them

By CECELIA SHILLING
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 19, 2023)—The spotted lanternfly, an invasive, crop-damaging insect, has finished mating season and is preparing to lay egg masses around Maryland, threatening farms and local plants, particularly on the Eastern Shore and in northern Maryland.

If you see these egg masses or the bugs, officials say to scrape, smash and report eggs to the Department of Agriculture.

Spotted lanternflies have spread quickly across 14 states, including Delaware, Virginia and Maryland since their arrival in the country from China in 2014, according to the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Though the flies don't sting or bite, they have threatened plants in Maryland since their discovery in 2018 in Cecil County.

The bugs' preferred foods are fruit, like grapes, and trees, including maples, and especially the common, invasive, weedy tree of heaven.

"The spotted lanternfly causes serious damage, including oozing sap, wilting, leaf curling and dieback in trees, vines, crops and many other types of plants," said the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's website. "In addition to plant damage, when spotted lanternflies feed, they excrete a sugary substance, called honeydew, that encourages the growth of black, sooty mold."

The pests can be identified by their distinctive gray, black and red wings with black spots, while the younger bugs in their "nymph phase" are black or red with white spots. These bugs can be found across the state, but infestations are worst in northern Maryland and along the Eastern Shore, according to the University of Maryland Extension.

Though Sudlersville produce grower Jennie Schmidt finds the flies in her vineyard, she's found hundreds in her buffer area between farm acres, she said.

"When we were mowing one of our buffers a couple of weeks ago, my husband must have hit one of the Tree of Heaven and all these lanternflies came flying out. So we started looking more closely and in those groves of the tree of heaven, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of them," Schmidt said.

Her main concern is transporting the lanternflies from her farm to other vineyards, she said.

"I don't want to travel with my grapes and my spotted lanternflies to places that don't already have them because I don't know how they got here, like, in the middle of nowhere," Schmidt continued.

Owen Bailey, director of land use and policy for the Eastern Shore Land Conservancy, remembers seeing juvenile lanternflies



PHOTO MONOCLETOPHAT123/CREATIVE COMMONS

A spotted lanternfly is caught in a spiderweb. Spotted lanternflies can be identified by their distinctive grey, red and black wings with black spots.

in his Chestertown yard this spring.

"They were in my backyard along my fence line where I have a lot of wild grape vines growing, and I noticed dozens and dozens of them along that vine. I tried to squish them or kill them with my hands but they actually proved pretty fast and elusive," he said.

The insects are most active during summer, but begin laying egg masses along any hard surfaces in September and ending in about November or until the first freeze, according to the Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

"They {the egg masses} are about one inch long, and they have a gray mud-like covering. That covering will crack and dry over time," said Rachel Rhodes, University of Maryland Extension master gardener. "So it kind of looks like a raised piece of putty. The covering will eventually flake off and it will reveal 30 to about 50 brown eggs."

Lanternflies thrive here because they aren't preyed upon by the state's insects or animals, she continued.

"We do have praying mantis, and assassin bugs, and predatory stink bugs and birds. But because they are an invasive insect, we don't necessarily have natural predators in our areas that will go after them as a snack," Rhodes continued.

Anyone can help curb the pest population: Officials recommend using a plastic card or putty knife to scrape then crush any lanternfly egg masses, as well as eliminating any trees of heaven to avoid attracting the insect.

Hellish Tree of Heaven Weeds Out Native Plants

By CECELIA SHILLING
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS, Md. (Sept. 19, 2023)—As the invasive spotted lanternfly continues to spread nationwide, its proliferation has highlighted an even more worrisome invasive species: the prolific "stinking sumac," or tree of heaven.

National Geographic referred to the tree of heaven as the "hellish invasive species" in 2021. It is a fast-growing deciduous tree that provides food for the spotted lanternfly, kills native plants and can cause severe damage to infrastructure.

Since its introduction in Pennsylvania in the 1700s, the tree has been reported as invasive in at least 30 states, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The tree, native to China and Taiwan, was commonly sold in nurseries by the 1840s, the CDFW said. Across the country, Chinese immigrants brought the tree to California during the gold rush in the mid-1800s, The U.S. Forest Service said.

"We have invasive plants from all over," said Mikaela Boley, University of Maryland Extension principal agent associate. "They come to the United States or they come to an area they don't belong necessarily, and because they don't have any natural predators or competition, some of their growing habits make them able to proliferate very easily."

The tree of heaven is often mistaken for native trees like the black walnut, but can be identified by its leaves and strange odor.

"The best way to identify it is by the foliage. It has very large compound leaves," said Christa Carignan, coordinator of digital horticulture education for the University of Maryland Extension. "They basically look like a giant feather. There's this central stalk in the leaf, and then it has leaflets coming off of that central stalk. So it might have anywhere from 11 to 25 leaflets on a single leaf."

Flowers or damaged foliage may smell like "peanut butter that has gone bad," she said, and can be an effective way of identifying the trees.

The biggest issue caused by the plant is how fast and aggressively it grows, threatening the habitat of native trees and wildlife, Carignan continued.

The tree of heaven is allelopathic, which means it introduces deadly chemicals into the soil to effectively kill competing plants, but is also a high seed-producer that can withstand harsh growing conditions. The tree can also cause severe damage to sidewalks and building foundations, according to the Purdue Landscape Report.

"This particular species is really good in urban environments," Boley said. "They'll grow in a crack in the concrete. So they're very strategic about how they grow and unfortunately, they also



PHOTO CREDIT CECELIA SHILLING/CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE

A tree of heaven sprouts from a sidewalk in downtown Annapolis. Trees of heaven can be identified by the feather-like arrangement of leaves and their nutty smell.

happen to be the one of the preferred hosts for spotted lanternflies, which is another invasive species," Boley continued.

Spanning 14 states since the insect was first found in the U.S. in 2014, including Maryland, the spotted lanternfly poses a threat to native plants and fruit crops like grapes. The Maryland Department of Agriculture says to squash and report the fly.

Sudlersville farmer Jennie Schmidt has seen hundreds of spotted lanternflies in her buffer area between acres, where multiple trees of heaven grow, she said.

"What I'm looking at right now are actually two really small sapling trees of heaven that I sprayed with herbicides to kill," Schmidt explained, walking through her buffer area. "And so I came up here just to see how they look and, even though they're dead, they're absolutely covered in lanternflies."

The best way to kill adult trees of heaven is to use the "hack and squirt" method, Boley advised.

"You literally chop into the bark of the tree near the base, and then you squirt a herbicide that's rated for trees into those wounds and that should effectively kill without having to chop them down," she explained.

Herbicides are needed to effectively kill the tree's root system and can be applied directly to smaller sprouts, Carignan said. Chopping down adult trees without this treatment could cause the root system to expand.

The University of Maryland Extension recommends removing any trees of heaven to help control the spotted lanternfly population, but emphasizes the importance of correct identification.

Save the Date for the 2023 Green Summit—Sat., Oct. 21

This free, one-day event will have green vendors, sustainable tips, food trucks, music, kid-friendly activities and more for all ages! Registration is preferred, though not required to attend. Saturday, Oct. 21, 2023 from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. (Rain date is Saturday, Nov. 4, 2023) at David C. Driskell Community Park, 3911 Hamilton Street, Hyattsville, 20781. For more info, including registration and exhibit opportunities, visit mypgc.us/greensummit.

—The DoE Sprout, Sept. 14, 2023

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