

The Prince George's Post



A COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY *Since 1932*

Vol. 79, No. 46 November 17 — November 23, 2011 Prince George's County, Maryland Newspaper of Record Phone: 301-627-0900 25 cents



PHOTO BY THE STUDENT PIRGS

The increase in student debt comes as salaries for new graduates have stagnated, making it difficult for them to pay back loans, said Mark Kantrowitz, the publisher of FinAid and FastWeb, which tracks the student loan industry.

Sharp Spike in Maryland Student Loan Debt

By BRANDON HOOPER
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK - College students in Maryland left school last year with more debt than ever before, according to a new report released Thursday.

The average college graduate in Maryland had \$21,750 in student loan debt in 2010, according to the report by the Institute for College Access & Success' Project on Student Debt, a nine percent increase from the year before.

The increase in student debt comes as salaries for new graduates have stagnated, making it difficult for them to pay back loans, said Mark Kantrowitz,

the publisher of FinAid and FastWeb, which tracks the student loan industry.

"Students are being asked to pay back more debt on the same salaries," he said.

Though student loan debt in Maryland increased sharply, graduates in the state are better off than students in most other states, the report found. Maryland had the 18th lowest average student debt in the country.

But the student debt load in is increasing much faster in Maryland than in the United States as a whole. Nationally, the average debt was \$25,250 in 2010, a five percent bump from the year before.

The actual average student

loan debt in Maryland could be higher, as some schools do not submit complete data on graduate debt to the institute, Kantrowitz said.

Kantrowitz said he believes the average nationwide student debt will continue to increase for the next two years. Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics, he projected that graduates in 2012 will average \$28,720 in debt.

Eric Kozlik, a graduate student at the University of Maryland who graduated with a bachelor's degree in May 2011, said he did not know why debt does not bother more students. He said he wants to make sure he leaves school prepared to reduce his debt.

"I'm going to keep playing this game until I have enough education to have a comfortable job where I can pay my loans off," he said.

The Project on Student Debt began publishing its annual report on student borrowing in 2005. The institute sends out surveys to non-profit, four-year private and public schools.

Lauren Asher, the president of the Institute for College Access & Success, said the increasing debt levels should not discourage someone from pursuing a degree.

"If you borrow in federal loans, even this average debt number can remain manageable," she said.

Occupy Baltimore One Month Later

Activist are Planning to Erect Larger, Winterized Tents for Camping Out

By EMAUN KASHFIPOUR
Capital News Service

BALTIMORE - It has been a month since the Occupy Baltimore movement took over space at Baltimore's Inner Harbor on Oct. 4, and winter is fast approaching.

The group is planning to erect larger, winterized tents for the activists who are camping out on McKeldin Square.

"The aesthetic will improve, the safety will improve, the accountability will improve," said Damien Nichols, an Occupy Baltimore activist.

Ashley Bridges, another Occupy Baltimore activist, isn't worried about the cold.

"I feel, if you're dedicated enough, you can make it work," she said. "You'll figure out something you can do to try and adjust to the temperature."

Bridges has camped out at McKeldin Square since the start of the occupy movement in Baltimore.

The group has developed a system of about 20 committees to regulate the group's affairs.

See OCCUPY, Page A7

After Grim Diagnosis, Parents Seek Help on Internet, Social Networks

By ASHLEY M. LATTA
Capital News Service

ANNAPOLIS - Julie Leach knew something was amiss during a routine check-up.

"At my 20-week sonogram the technician took an awful long time trying to get a shot of her jaw," Leach said.

Later, when she and her husband Matt Leach learned the rare diagnosis of their newborn daughter, a condition that puzzled doctors, they turned in desperation to the Internet.

The Internet often provides families like the Leach's unfettered health information and access to specialists. It also has increasingly become the place

where people connect with others who share similar diagnoses, through blogging, Facebook and other social media.

"Twenty to 30 years ago when we didn't have the Internet our parents probably had to go to the library," said Jae Eun Chung, an assistant professor at Kent State University who researches health communication in new media. "Now we are just one click away from medical information."

A study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project

See DIAGNOSIS, Page A5

With Food Donations Needed, Scouts Step Up

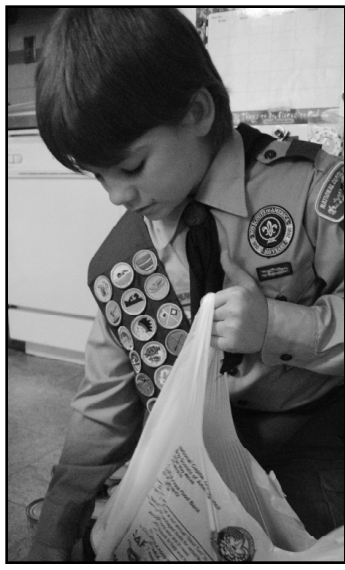
Local Troops Collecting Non-perishable Foods Which Help Feed Area Residents

By JEFFREY BENZING
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON - Potomac Boy Scouts Peter Fairbanks and David Bjorklund of Troop 706 are looking to bag some 340 tons of food.

The two will be among 20,000 area Scouts collecting canned goods, rice, peanut butter, oatmeal and other non-perishable foods on Nov. 12 in the annual Scouting for Food drive, which helps feed the 600,000 Washington-area residents that Capital Area Food Bank says could go hungry this year.

"It's one of the single-most-



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY JEFFREY BENZING

Boy Scout Patrick O'Hanlon packs a donation bag full of canned goods for "Scouting for Food".

See SCOUT, Page A3

Government Officials, Community Members Celebrate Grand Opening of New Bike Trail

By EMILY HOOPER
Capital News Service

BLADENSBURG - Local, state and federal officials donned helmets, mounted bicycles and sped off Friday morning on the new bike path at Bladensburg Waterfront Park, part of a trail network project underway to help restore the polluted Anacostia River watershed.

The planned Anacostia Riverwalk Trail Network will stretch across nearly 60 miles of Prince George's County and Washington, D.C. The section dedicated Friday runs 1.5 miles in Maryland and 12 miles in the District.

The officials came to the park Friday to tout its benefits -- increasing revenue at local businesses, promoting active lifestyles and restoring the watershed.

"Once this is finished, you'll be able to

See BIKE, Page A7



Clockwise from left, Washington, D.C., Mayor Vincent Gray; U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood; Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley; U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md.; U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar; Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe; and National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis cut the red tape to officially open a new section of the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail. Capital News Service photo by Sarah Meehan. Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley and his 9-year-old son Jack (left) — who was trying out a bike he received for his birthday — set out on the trail. Capital News Service photo by Sarah Meehan. The new portion of the path — 1.5 miles in Maryland and 12 miles in Washington, D.C. — will be part of a nearly 60-mile trail network scheduled to be completed in four years. Capital News Service photo by Sarah Meehan.



INSIDE

Fire/EMS Hold Graduation
County Fire/EMS Department held a graduation ceremony for a class of recruit firefighters. On Thursday evening, Thirty-five members of Career Recruit School (CRS) #44 received their Graduation Certificates certifying their successful completion of classroom and physical training at the Fire/EMS Training Academy.
Community, Page A3

Minority Business Development
The National Urban League Policy Institute released the State of Urban Business 2011: Metro Areas that Lead the Way. The report focusing on minority business development contains a ranking of the top metro areas conducive to black-owned businesses and makes recommendations for expanding this success nationwide.
Opinion, Page A4

AARP and Experience Corps
AARP announced it is joining forces with Experience Corps, one of the nation's most highly-regarded service programs, which engages older adult volunteers to help improve K-3 literacy in underserved schools. Experience Corps' will bolster AARP's commitment to reaching more multicultural communities.
Business, Page A5

Movie Review
"A Very Harold & Kumar 3D Christmas"
Like the holiday season "A Very Harold & Kumar 3D Christmas" takes a while to kick in, but once it does it's cheerful, merry, and ultimately rather exhausting. And once a year feels like plenty for this absurdly raucous stoner franchise.
Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk
Dear EarthTalk:
What is shark finning and why have several U.S. states outlawed it?
-- Betsy Englund, Tampa, FL
Shark finning is the practice of catching sharks, hacking off their fins, and returning them to the ocean where they die.
Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

The romance began with a motorcycle ride

Kevin Reilly and Kellie Smyers were married Oct. 8 at St. John's Church in Clinton, and as I write this, they are on what might be called a group honeymoon cruise—they're at sea with friends, sailing from Boston to Bermuda, through the Caribbean to Tampa.

They met a few years ago in Annapolis when Kevin was attending the dedication of the Maryland Fire-Rescue Services Memorial. A friend set him up with a blind date, and he showed up on a motorcycle. A good sport, Kellie climbed aboard and they headed for a party. The rest is history.

Father Thomas Pollard married the couple. Jim Reilly was his brother's best man and Tanna Conover, daughter of the bride, was maid-of-honor. Other attendants were the bride's sisters, Jean Hupke and Laura Brown; ushers Paul Hube, Billy Hinton, Sam Cappetta, and Craig Black; ring-bearer, Jake Brown; and flower-girls, Kaylie and Marissa Hupke. The reception was at Renner Hall in Waldorf.

Kellie is the daughter of Cyndy Sabia, of Greensboro, Del. She works with the Anne Arundel County Fire Department and is attending Anne Arundel Community College.

Kevin is the son of Mary Reilly of Skyline and the late Thomas L. Reilly. He graduated from Bishop McNamara High School, and attended the University of Maryland and Prince George's Community College, before becoming a fireman. He is a retired battalion

chief of the Prince George's County Fire Department and is now a paramedic at the Bryans Road Station in Charles County.

The newly-weds are residing in Clinton.

Service held for local anthrax victims

Thomas Morris Jr. of Clinton, and Joseph Curseon Jr. of Suitland were the only metro area people who died ten years ago when anthrax-tainted letters went through the U.S. mail. They were postal workers at the Brentwood postal facility, which is now named for them. They were remembered in a memorial service Oct. 21 at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Seniors do "The Mall"

Last year's premiere of "The Mall" was a great hit. If you missed it, you have another chance to see these seniors exhibit such talents as acting, dancing, mime, modeling and singing. And all of them 60 years and older!

The Senior Project presents the Volunteer Senior Performing Arts Troupe at the Camp Springs Senior Activity Center, 6420 Allentown Road in two performances on Wed., Nov. 30, at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Admission is free but call 301-449-0490 by Nov. 15 to reserve your seat(s). Tickets go fast.

Bells celebrates 230th

Bells U.M. Church is celebrating its 206th anniversary on Nov. 20 with a worship experience, followed by a delicious Thanksgiving dinner. Former Bells members and friends of Bells Church can email the pastor, Rev. Johnnie W. Cogman, at JCogman1221@gmail.com, or call the church, 899-7521, for more

information.

Changing landscape

Andrews North Gate reopened Nov. 1. It is open for inbound vehicles only from 6 to 9 a.m. and for outbound vehicles only from 3 to 6 p.m.

Habitat for Humanity of Prince George's County is hosting a Grand Opening for its new thrift store in Upper Marlboro, at 14940 Main Street. Stock includes furniture, lighting, appliances, building supplies, doors, windows and household goods.

Live Harness Racing is back at Rosecroft every Friday and Saturday through Dec. 17. Info: Rosecroft.com.

May they rest in peace

Jeannie Dickinson, who would have turned 92 on Nov. 20, longtime resident of Hillcrest Heights, died Nov. 20 in Baltimore. She was born in Colonial Beach, Va. She was the wife of the late Lemoine V. "Jack" Dickinson Sr., mother of Nita Darmstead, Lee V. Dickinson and Dottie Warrington; grandmother of six and great-grandmother of many. Services were at Providence-Ft. Washington United Methodist Church with burial at Cheltenham.

Andy Rooney, 92, died Nov. 4 in New York. As he would say, "You know what bothers me..." Well, what bothers me is that I'll never again see him the last three minutes of "60 Minutes."

Milestones

Happy birthday to Mary Burch, on Nov. 11; Cindy Lewis, Nov. 12; Robin Brown, Nov. 13; Tyrell Boxley, Nov. 14; Ty Poe, Bob Davis and Carolyn Holland Bennett, Nov. 15.

Congressman Chris Van Hollen's Legislative Update

Van Hollen on PBS: Republican deficit proposal is 'A tax break for folks at the very top'

Washington, DC — Maryland Congressman Chris Van Hollen, Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee and member of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, appeared last night on PBS' Nightly Business Report to discuss the deficit committee's work. Video of the interview is available here and the transcript is below.

SUSIE GHARIB, NBR: The clock is ticking for the so-called supercommittee on Capitol Hill. There are exactly two weeks to go for the supercommittee to come up with a plan to cut the Federal deficit by more than \$1 trillion. And for the first time, Republicans have offered tax increases -- some \$300 billion worth. For more on that offer and a progress report on the supercommittee's deficit cuts, Washington bureau chief Darren Gersh spoke to Representative Chris Van Hollen. He's a Democratic member of the supercommittee. Darren began by asking Van Hollen what Democrats think about those tax hikes that the Republicans have offered.

REP. VAN HOLLEN: I can't get into all the details, but if you look at the public reports, what they're proposing is actually a tax break for folks at the very top, compared to current law. That means if Congress did nothing, the folks at the very high end of the income scale would actually be paying significantly more in taxes than they are under their proposal. So, you got to take a look at it in that context.

DARREN GERSH, NBR: But Republicans have offered

tax increases. Isn't that progress?

VAN HOLLEN: Our view is that you should achieve at least as much with respect to high-income individuals as current law as if Congress did nothing, as if there were no joint committee. So I don't think that's progress.

GERSH: The big problem seems to be that Republicans won't move on revenue. Democrats won't move on entitlements and every budget expert says that you have to do both. So how do we solve this problem if you're not going to move on both issues and is it possible to be solved?

VAN HOLLEN: It's not true that the Democrats haven't moved on entitlements. We recognize that we have to modernize the Medicare system. We need to reform it in a way that puts an emphasis on the value of care and the quality of care rather than the volume of care. And there are a lot of misaligned incentives that need to be fixed. What we will not agree to is end the Medicare guarantee, which was the House Republicans budget proposal and said to seniors, you're forced into the private insurance market and you're on your own to eat additional costs.

GERSH: But Nancy Pelosi said no Medicare cuts.

VAN HOLLEN: No, what she said is no cuts in benefits. And we do not want to reduce the benefits that seniors get under Medicare. But there are ways to improve the system that make sure that the incentives are aligned. For example, right now there are a lot of incentives in the Medicare system for overuse.

GERSH: Do you still see any prospect for a large agreement in

the supercommittee because all the Washington analysts are bringing down their expectations for anything getting done.

VAN HOLLEN: Look, I think every member of the committee recognizes that we have a tremendous responsibility and that it would send a very good signal to the country if we were able to get something done. And so that remains our goal. I understand the skepticism, looking at the history up to today. We're hoping to prove the skeptics wrong, but as we sit here today, I cannot tell you what the final outcome will be.

GERSH: If the supercommittee doesn't come up with a package of cuts, the rules require that there will be automatic cuts in defense and entitlements called a sequester. But now the supercommittee is having problems, we're hearing some members say these -- this sequester, these automatic cuts -- they're too deep. They're going to hurt too much in defense. We should do away with them. So if the supercommittee doesn't come up with a package of deficit reduction, is Congress just going to rewrite the rules and say, well, you know, there just shouldn't be any consequences?

VAN HOLLEN: That would be a huge mistake. And it would demonstrate a clear lack of seriousness about the deficit. If you undo the sequester, automatically, according to the accounting, the U.S. deficit will jump by \$1.2 trillion. That would be a huge mistake. So people who are talking about undoing the sequester are not serious about tackling the deficit.

GERSH: Congressman Chris Van Hollen, thank you for your time.

VAN HOLLEN: Thank you.

Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards' Legislative Update

Congresswoman Edwards Hosts Town Hall on Accessing Veterans' Health Care after BRAC

Washington, D.C. — Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards (MD-4) hosted a town hall meeting last night to ensure that service members, veterans and their families in the 4th Congressional District are apprised on how and where to access their health care benefits now that Base Closure and Realignment Commission (BRAC) actions are complete. Congresswoman Edwards was joined by federal, state, local, and military officials, including representatives from the federal and state departments of Veterans Affairs.

"As Veterans Day approaches, we must work every day to ensure that America's servicemembers and veterans receive the care they have earned," said Congresswoman Donna F. Edwards. "The town hall meeting was an opportunity to

provide important information to our veterans, servicemembers and their families about the heightened level of care available and where to access it as a result of BRAC. Those who serve today and yesterday and their families deserve nothing but the best for their sacrifices in service to our country. I hope this town hall meeting was useful in helping veterans access the care they deserve, and I thank all the officials, including Lieutenant Governor Brown, for their leadership and sharing this information with our veteran community."

"Base Realignment and Closure has provided an opportunity to enhance the level of health care for our brave men and women in uniform who have answered the call to serve their country," said Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, Chair of the Governor's BRAC Subcabinet and the nation's highest ranking elected official to have served a tour of duty in Iraq. "With the BRAC moves now



complete, it is important that those who need these health services know how to best access their care, and I thank Congresswoman Edwards for holding this town hall to provide the most up-to-date information to our community."

For more information about Veterans' Services, contact your local Veterans' Representative or visit the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation at <http://dlr.maryland.gov>

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Ruth Turner 301 888 2153

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL PARISH

It is again time for the Annual St. Paul's Parish Citrus Fruit and Nut Sale. H & S Citrus will supply the same excellent quality fruit as usual. Annie's House of Nuts, Fruits and Candies will provide delicious goodies for baking and eating. All are fresh products and on sale at reasonable prices. We will also have Rada Knives and Utensils on sale. St. Paul's will have a Bake Sale each month on the day scheduled for fruit pick up. St. Paul's Parish is located at 13500 Baden Westwood Road Brandywine, MD 20613. Telephone 301-888-9217.

Citrus Fruit Sale hours are from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Order deadline November 11 and pick-up date November 19. Order deadline December 9 and pick-up date December 17. Order deadline January 13 and pick-up date January 21. Order deadline February 17 and pick-up date February 25.

Pink Grapefruits are avail-

able in November-March. Honey Bell/Tangelo available in January only. Navels are available in November. December (January subject to availability). Temples are available in February and March only. Prices and varieties are subject to change. Unclaimed fruit will be sold; first come, first served. Thank you for your continued support.

For information or to place an order please call Jack & Julia 301-579-6877, Wanda G. 301-888-9217 or Mary Jane 301-579-2230.

HOLIDAY BREAK CAMP

Upper Marlboro Community Center located at 5400 Marlboro Race Track Road in Upper Marlboro, Maryland offers a Holiday Break Camp. The Camp will be available Tuesday, December 27, 2011 - Friday December 30, 2011. The Camp will be open from 9:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The fee is \$20 (R) / \$24(NR). Call 301-627-2828 for more information.

MONTPELIER FARMS

Visit the main barn at Montpelier Farms to see how tobacco was dried. You can buy fresh vegetables and fruits grown on the farm. Seasonal activities include livestock barn, Goat Walk, hay rides and the largest themed corn maze in Prince George's County. You can also enjoy a campfire package. The farm is a place where you can host your corporate events and private parties.

The farm is located at 1720 Crain Highway North Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone number is 410-320-0464. Visit www.montpelier-farms.com for more information.

NEW HOPE FELLOWSHIP CHURCH

We will celebrate our Thanksgiving Eve Service at the Christ Campus in Aquasco, Maryland on November 23 at 7:30 PM. We will have music by both North and South campus choirs as well as ministry in dance. Come out and join us for a wonderful time of praise, worship and thanksgiving.

James Madison MS, Frederick Douglass HS Join Prestigious IB Network

UPPER MARLBORO — James Madison Middle School and Frederick Douglass High School are now officially part of the network of campuses that offer the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme.

An extension of the rigorous IB Diploma program, the Middle Years Programme's guiding philosophy is to develop an academically-proficient, globally-minded learner. Frederick Douglass and James Madison had been working collaboratively towards becoming IB World Schools since 2008. The schools received notification on Oct. 17 that they were formally authorized to offer the Middle Years Programme, making them the only IB World Schools in Prince George's County Public Schools.

"The entire school community is extremely pleased about our becoming an IB World School," said Rudolph Saunders, principal of Frederick Douglass High School. "Students are growing in their self-confidence as IB learners, parents are supporting their students in going above and beyond in terms of academic work and community service, and teachers are embracing the concepts of an international education."

"James Madison Middle School is committed to ensuring our students are well-equipped, empowered and encouraged to excel and succeed in a global, competitive world," principal Courtney King said. "The utilization of the Middle Years International Baccalaureate program enhances our ability to establish standards that emphasize high levels of critical thinking

and reasoning, accompanied by application of learning to real-world situations."

The Middle Years Programme, aimed at students in sixth through tenth grades, encourages them to make the real-world connections with classroom subjects and become critical and reflective thinkers. Students focus on eight subject groups -- humanities, mathematics, two languages, science, the arts, physical education and technology -- and view these subjects through multiple lenses, including health and social education, community service and the environment.

Tenth-graders complete the Personal Project, a capstone project that allows them to demonstrate the skills and aptitude developed over the years. "The Personal Project is a tremendous opportunity for our students to explore an area of their interest, create a product that benefits their world and pushes them to research, write and reflect, all as sophomore students. We're really looking forward to seeing how students demonstrate their knowledge and thinking through this inquiry-based project," Saunders said.

Five PGcps high schools offer the IB Diploma Program -- Central, Crossland, Laurel, Parkdale and Suitland. Frederick Douglass is beginning the process to become authorized to offer the Diploma Program.

More information on the Middle Years Programme is available online at www.ibo.org/myp. Details about the IB Diploma Program in PGcps can be found at <http://www1.pgcps.org/IB>.

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Life Insurance 101

Life insurance has no one-size-fits-all option. Singles with no dependents often need little or no coverage. But it can be an important purchase for people whose families depend on their income to cover daily living costs, mortgage repayment, college, retirement or other major expenses.

According to Larry Davidman, owner of online insurance brokerage



TermWorks.com, life insurance needs often change as family circumstances evolve. "Once you start a family, you'll probably want to beef up coverage," he said. "But after the kids are on their own, your house is paid-off and your retirement is well-funded, you may feel comfortable amending your coverage."

In my family's case, we bought term life insurance shortly after our son was born and added supplementary policies when our daughter arrived. Our goal was twofold: Provide my wife at least 10 times my income if I should die; and help me cover childcare expenses should she go first.

Because our initial 10-year policies expire soon, we've been reexamining our needs with Davidman's help. If you're also looking, here's a brief overview of common life insurance options:

There are two broad categories of life insurance: term and cash value (permanent). Costs are based on such factors as your age, gender, overall health, family history, driving record, hazardous activities (like skydiving) and foreign travel habits.

Term life is the simplest and least expensive type, since it pays your beneficiaries only if you die while the policy is in force. Term periods usually range from 5 to 30 years. Premiums increase according to your age and overall health, but several other features can also affect the cost and benefits received.

Cash value products let you build cash value that grows tax-free and that you can potentially borrow against (also tax free), subject to certain limitations and based on product and design. The cost is significantly higher than a term policy with the same death benefits. Common varieties include:

Whole Life, which provides lifetime protection with locked-in, guaranteed premiums, death benefit and cash values. It's usually the most expensive type.

Universal life offers the same fixed investment performance as whole life but greater flexibility in terms of premium payment schedules, duration of guaranteed death benefit and accumulation of cash value.

Variable universal life (adjustable life) lets you invest the cash-value portion in securities (stock funds, bond funds, money market, etc.), which have greater growth potential but also carry greater investment risk than fixed accounts. Poor fund performance can reduce the cash value and/or death benefit.

A few additional considerations:

If your term insurance is expiring and you're in poor health, ask about converting to permanent life. Premiums will be higher, but you won't have to pass a medical exam.

Interview several insurance agents to gauge their experience and ability to explain complex products. Then compare recommendations they give for your particular circumstances.

Ask your broker for a breakdown of commissions and administrative fees and ask your tax advisor about any tax implications.

Don't buy life insurance solely as an investment tool.

Be completely truthful on your application. Lying about an underlying condition could cause the insurance company to alter your death benefit or rescind the entire policy.

To learn more about the different types of life insurance available, read the Buyer's Guide posted on the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' website, www.naic.org.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs.

To Follow Jason Alderman on Twitter:

www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney

Career Recruit School Graduation Held



PHOTO BY MARK BRADY

The graduating class of Career Recruit School #44

RICARDO ALBERTO ALFARO, FREDERICK WEAVER BREWER IV, CADIR DIERRE CHISLEY, DUSTIN BOWMAN COOKSEY, JASON DAVID CRUZ, EVANDER MARQUETTE DAVIS, JONATHAN MICHAEL DI IORIO, MICHAEL JOSEPH DOMMEL, BRIAN DRUMMOND, KEVIN ANTHONY EARLEY, MATTHEW JOHN FISHER, LAUREN ELEISE FOREMAN, MATTHEW DOUGLAS GARBOW, KEVIN JOSEPH GREEN JR., ALEXANDER LAWRENCE HAMBURGER, MICHAEL MAURICE HANTON, DANIEL ALAN HORICHS, LANCE ERNEST JOLLY, MICHAEL JAMESON KIEFER, STEFFON ANTIONE LEE, JOSEPH OSCAR MAYS, MICHAEL WAYNE McALLISTER, ANDREW GEORGE MORROW, ERIC DONALD NELLIS, JOHN FREDERICK PADUKIEWICZ, JAMES JOSEPH PORTER, DAMON ALEXANDER SINCLAIR, SEAN MICHAEL SMITH, RAHEEM EMERALD STEWART, PATRICIA ANNE STRUNCK, BROOKE LESLIE THOMPSON, CHRISTOPHER LARRY TOM, RICHARD DONALD WARD III, WILLIAM JEFFERY WELLS JR., BRYAN RICHARD WILSON.

By MARK BRADY

PGC/EMS Press Information

Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department recently held a graduation ceremony for a class of recruit firefighters. On Thursday evening, November 3, 2011, thirty-five members of Career Recruit School (CRS) #44 received their Graduation Certificates certifying their successful completion of classroom and physical training at the Fire/EMS Training Academy. The graduation ceremony, held at the Charles Flowers High School in Springdale, was well attended by the Fire/EMS Department Command Staff, honored guests, family, friends and co-workers. Speakers included the Mr. Barry Stanton; Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Public Safety, Fire Chief Marc S. Bashoor and a Keynote address by Cathy Hedrick of the National Fallen Fire Fighters Foundation (NFFF).

Special Achievement Awards were presented to students that excelled in portions of the training academy.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL

Scout from A1

important things Boy Scouts do," said Mario Wawrzusin, assistant Scoutmaster for Troop 706 and site coordinator for the Scouts' food collection at the U.S. Postal Training Center, Bolger Center. "They really do stock the shelves of these food banks."

Overall, food pantries are struggling to feed more people with less food, and the Scouts' contribution fills only a fraction of the shelf space.

Scouts in the National Capital Area Council have seen their area-wide Scouting for Food totals increase -- up to 675,000 pounds of food last year from 520,000 in 2009 -- but need still outpaces donations.

"It's frightening for us to see how low donation levels have been," said Kim Damion, executive director of Manna Food Center in Gaithersburg, which has 200 to 300 families lining up for food every day. "It's really important that folks understand that our lines are longer than ever."

Manna fed 172,627 people in Montgomery County last year, more than double the volume from 2008 when the recession's impact was first felt, Damion said.

TECHNICIAN SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Emergency Medical Technician Scholastic Achievement Award is presented to an individual who achieved the highest academic average on the emergency medical technician written examinations and practical evolutions.

Fire Fighter Michael Kiefer

FIRE SUPPRESSION SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Fire Suppression Scholastic Achievement Award is presented to an individual in each Career Recruit School who achieved the highest academic average on the fire suppression written examinations and practical evolutions.

Fire Fighter Jonathan Di Iorio

INSTRUCTOR'S AWARD

The Instructor's Award is presented to an individual in each Career Recruit School who has shown the highest level of personal improvement, development, and dedication during the class. In short, we identify the recruit who has contributed significantly to the success of the class overall either by help-

ing others or through self-improvement. The individual earning this award can be one with no previous experience in emergency services and progresses to an outstanding level of proficiency; or an experienced person who dedicates him or herself to assisting other class members be successful throughout Recruit School.

Fire Fighter Michael Dommel MEMORIAL AWARD

The Memorial Award is a very special recognition presented to an outstanding recruit from each Career Recruit School who has displayed that rarest combination of professionalism, courage, and "esprit de corps." Such traits serve to honor their fallen comrades, and uphold the highest traditions of the Prince George's County Fire/Emergency Medical Services Department.

Fire Fighter Jason Cruz

FIRE CHIEF'S AWARD

The Fire Chief's Award is the highest recognition for Career Recruit Schools. This award is bestowed on an individual in recognition of achievements that have made significant con-

tributions to the graduating class. Selection criteria emphasize leadership, professional development, integrity, performance, and personal growth. This award is given to the recruit who best exemplifies the conduct required of the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department.

Fire Fighter Damon Sinclair

The members of Career Recruit School #44 made a special presentation during the ceremony to Cathy Hedrick and the NFFF. Throughout the training academy the members of CRS #44 raised funds through various activities such as the run across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. The recruit's efforts generated over \$5,000 for the NFFF. Immediately following the check presentation Fire Chief Bashoor presented CRS #44 with a Unit Citation in recognition of their benevolence and philanthropy for fellow firefighters. A Unit Citation is the highest award the Fire/EMS Department bestows to a group or unit in recognition of their exemplary actions. CRS #44 is the first CRS to be bestowed with this honor and distinction.

Scouting for Food is Manna's single-largest food drive but accounts for just 2 percent of the 3.5 million pounds served overall and about 16 percent of their yearly food drive totals.

This is a small, but vital contribution, she said, and with government aid down by nearly 90,000 pounds from last year, the center is looking for replacement food sources.

At 10.8 percent, the poverty rate in Maryland is the highest it's been in nearly 20 years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's recent statistics from 2010. In Washington, the rate is 19.9 percent, and food pantries say they're only able to feed a portion of the families who go hungry.

"It's the hardest time I've ever seen in my career," said Wawrzusin, who has been a social worker for Montgomery County since 1988.

Totals at the Potomac collection site -- one of 34 sites Scouts in the council will use Nov. 12 -- are usually between 17,000 and 19,000 pounds, he said. The objective is always 10 tons.

Washington and Northern Virginia, received 32,258 pounds directly from Scouting for Food last year, a fraction of the 27 million pounds of food they served in 2010, though some troops give directly to smaller organizations stocked by the food bank.

And these smaller pantries have felt the crunch of the recession.

Joan Conway, coordinator of emergency pantries in Silver Spring and Langley Park, which receive food from Capital Area Food Bank, said she expects to feed 7,000 families this year through the sites run by Saint Camillus Catholic Church, up 40 percent from normal.

"We prayed about this, and we think that it's going to be bleak," she said.

Fairbanks, who is an Eagle Scout, said the recession first hit home for him two years ago when a resident near his Potomac neighborhood told him their household wanted to contribute but couldn't afford to fill a bag.

"Anyone is subject to these hard times," he said. "It really helps the kids from our troop see what life is like outside of their sort-of cushy lifestyles."

Bjorklund, a Life Scout, said participants are being pushed to

collect more food.

This year, some 20,000 Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts will collect items from customers at Safeway stores and pass out empty bags around their neighborhoods in the week leading up Nov. 12. Residents are asked to fill their bags with non-perishable foods and leave them on their doorsteps that Saturday morning.

Scout leaders are confident that the council's collection will be comparable to past years, but with the economy still foundering, they acknowledge that previous donors might be unable to give this year.

"Things are tight," said Mike Holder, committee chairman for Troop 1071 in Rockville. "Some years, my pickup truck has been filled up to the top -- sometimes I have half as much."

Patrick O'Hanlon, a Star Scout with Troop 1071, said he visited 52 houses last year. Some residents were able to give four or five bags worth, he said. Others could only give a few items -- or nothing at all.

He said he's seen a steady number of donations in recent years, in part because the Scouts have covered more ground.

"I think I'm going to go for more houses this year," he said. "I hope we'll get more."



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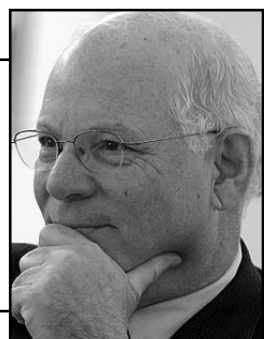
COMMENTARY

THE PRINCE GEORGE'S POST

A Community Newspaper for Prince George's County

Benjamin L. Cardin

United States Senator for Maryland



Commemorating Veterans Day

November 11th is Veterans Day -- a time in which we as a nation pause to give thanks to the brave men and women of our military, and their families, for all they have sacrificed for our nation. Our military families face enormous challenges, not just emotionally, but financially, and I want to lessen that burden.

To accomplish that goal, I recently teamed up with Maryland Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger to make it easier for military families to be with their loved ones as they recover from injuries or illnesses sustained defending our nation.

In the Senate, I recently introduced S. 1776 to expand the popular "Hero Miles" program, which was originally created in 2003 by Congressman Ruppersberger. The "Hero Miles" program authorizes the U.S. Department of Defense to accept donated frequent traveler miles to provide free, round-trip airfare to family members of service members recovering at military or Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical centers from injuries sustained in overseas conflicts.

The Fisher House Foundation, which administers the Hero Miles program, recently celebrated issuing its 25,000th airline ticket. The Foundation is a non-profit best known for its network of comfort homes built on the

grounds of major military and VA medical centers.

Building on the success of the "Hero Miles," S. 1776 would expand the program to allow the Department of Defense to accept donated hotel points in addition to airline miles. Congressman Ruppersberger has introduced a companion bill in the House of Representatives. I am pleased that the measure has received bipartisan support and that Senate co-sponsors include Senators Roger Wicker (R-MS) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA). The Fisher House Foundation, the USO, and the Military Child Education Coalition have all come out in support of the legislation.

The creation of the "Hotels for Heroes" program is the next step in providing military families with the support they need when their loved ones are wounded or injured. Americans are known for their generosity of spirit and love of country and this new program will allow them to show how much they appreciate the sacrifices made by our military by providing their families with additional support during a very difficult time. It's really about Americans helping other Americans who have given so much to our nation. On this Veterans Day, I can think of no greater present for the members of our military.

To Be Equal

Marc Morial, President and CEO

National Urban League



Urban League Report Finds D.C. Area Tops for Black-Owned Business

"Not only are entrepreneurs credited with creating more than two-thirds of net new jobs, but smaller firms, especially African-American and other minority businesses, are especially important for their support and hiring of underserved populations."

National Urban League's 2011 State of Urban Business

This week, the National Urban League Policy Institute released the State of Urban Business 2011: Metro Areas that Lead the Way. The report, the first in a series focusing on minority business development, contains a ranking of the top metro areas conducive to black-owned businesses and makes recommendations for expanding this success nationwide. Prepared by Urban League Council of Economic Advisors member, Lucy J. Reuben, PhD and our Vice President of Research, Valerie Rawlston Wilson, PhD., the report found that the top areas for black-owned businesses are:

Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV. Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA. Tie between Chicago-Joliet-Naperville, IL-IN-WI and Detroit-Warren-Livonia, MI. Tie between Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta, GA and Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC. St. Louis, MO-IL. Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX. Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH. New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island, NY-NJ-PA. Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD

he list is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis or comparison of all U.S. metro areas. Rather, it identifies areas where black-owned businesses have a solid record of success, and highlights some of the reasons. The goal of the report is to offer guidance on how these success stories might be duplicated across the country.

We found that cities with strong diversity supplier policies and which allow easy access to business-to-business and government contracts

were the best environments for black-owned businesses. Not surprisingly, we also found that of the top areas for black-owned businesses, five included cities where the National Urban League operates Entrepreneurship Centers. In addition, the New Market Tax credit strategic alliance between Stonehenge Community Development and the National Urban League formed in 2004 to stimulate the flow of investment capital in underserved communities, has led to the creation of more than 8,000 jobs through the deployment of \$325.5 million in allocations.

The report revealed that the greatest weakness in African American entrepreneurship is not in starting a business, but rather in growing these businesses enough to create sustained and significant revenue. According to Valerie Rawlston Wilson, "Inability to obtain credit remains more of an obstacle for African American business owners than for any other group."

Recommendations for growing and strengthening black-owned businesses include increasing the funding available for small business loans, raising the set-aside cap for government small business contracts, establishing robust procurement goals at all levels of government and encouraging support for private sector supplier diversity programs. The National Urban League will soon introduce a new Urban Empowerment Fund that, through its lending activity, will further strengthen black businesses and our communities.

We know that the growth of urban businesses can help alleviate the extraordinarily high levels of African-American unemployment which plague our communities. Despite the well-documented lack of access to capital that continues to inhibit them, these companies are a major source of jobs. Without those jobs, it is estimated that the ranks of unemployed African Americans may have risen by almost two-thirds.

The full report can be found online at <http://www.iamempowered.com/soub/2011>.



Horses and Pony Mule in Pasture

"Come on down, we'll put you to work"

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Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



"Corporate Loopholes: The tip of the Iceberg"

Picture an iceberg. Many children know the danger from the "Titanic Song" they learn in school or summer camp. One verse goes like this: "It was off the coast of England not very far from shore, when the rich refused to associate with the poor. So they sent them down below, where they were the first to go. It was sad when that great ship went down. Oh it was sad, so sad. It was sad, too bad. It was sad when the great ship went down . . . husbands and wives, little children lost their lives—it was sad when the great ship went down."

Some days it feels like America may be speeding towards that iceberg. Every day there is more disturbing evidence of the growing income and wealth gaps between rich and poor. Recent poverty data shows the number of people in extreme poverty, defined as a family of four living on less than \$30 a day—one in 15 Americans—has reached a 35-year high. At the same time the gap between CEO and average worker pay rose dramatically from 263-to-1 to 325-to-1 last year. Twenty-five of the 100 highest paid CEOs last year took home more in pay than their company paid in 2010 federal income taxes.

A new study by Citizens for Tax Justice reported that 30 companies paid no federal income taxes at all for the last three years and that the 280 biggest publicly traded American corporations on average paid federal income tax equal to 18.5 percent of their profits during the last three years—about half of the full corporate tax rate of 35 percent. This tax payment rate was lower than in many industrialized countries. In fact, the report found two-thirds of American companies with significant profits overseas actually paid more in taxes to foreign governments than to the U.S. government.

As the Supercommittee struggles to make difficult decisions in the coming weeks to reduce the budget deficit, one of the proposals they are considering is reducing the corporate tax rate. Corporations are pushing for a cut in their official rate, claiming they are at a disadvantage in the global marketplace. Their evidence is not so clear. We should all be looking close-

ly at the important choices the Supercommittee could and should be making to ensure everyone—including the rich and powerful—contributes their fair share. It would be deeply disturbing if all or any of the Republicans on the Supercommittee continue to refuse to put revenue on the table and insist on a cut-only approach to deficit reduction at the expense of children and the poor who did not create our fiscal crisis.

By the end of last year, American corporations reaped profits of more than \$1.5 trillion. Each minute, \$195,967 are lost to corporate tax loopholes. Every hour, corporate tax breaks cost the U.S. government about \$11.8 million. If Congress were to balance corporate profits against critical child needs, just one hour of revenue generated by closing corporate tax loopholes could pay for:

Medicaid health benefits for 4,800 poor children for a year, or

Women, Infants, and Children [WIC] nutritional benefits for 23,600 women and children for a year, or

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program [SNAP] benefits providing food for 9,700 children and adults for a year at a time when hunger affects 1 in 6 Americans, or

Pell Grants for 3,100 low-income students to attend college.

Corporate excess looks a lot like General Electric's balance sheet at the end of 2010. Huge pretax profits of \$5.1 billion filtered through corporate tax loopholes meant GE paid no federal income taxes. To add insult to injury, had GE paid the full 35 percent corporate tax rate, it would have paid \$1.8 billion in federal income taxes. Add this to GE's reported \$3.3 billion in tax benefits and you get a grand total of more than \$5 billion of federal tax breaks for the year. This lost revenue could have been used to fund Head Start for an additional 670,000 preschoolers, creating at least 67,000 new jobs in the process.

Budget cuts already enacted on the federal, state, and local levels have harmed children and their families, especially low-income families hit hardest by the recession. Education cuts have led to at least 292 school districts to cut back to a four day school week for children when more than 60 percent of our children in all racial and income groups cannot read or do math at grade level in the 4th, 8th, and 12th grades. According to the Washington Post the number of school districts using a four

See WATCH, Page A8

The Prince George's Post

The Prince George's Post
P.O. Box 1001 15207 Marlboro Pike
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-3151
Phone 301-627-0900 Legal Fax • 301-627-6260
Editorial Fax • 301-627-8147
Contents © 2011, The Prince George's Post

Publisher Legusta Floyd	Subscriptions Anna Curry
General Manager/ Legal Advertising Manager Brenda Boice	Editor Legusta Floyd
Legal Advertising Assistant Robin Boerckel	Web Manager Kylar Quesenberry

Prince George's County, Md. Member National Newspaper Publishers Association, and the Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia Press Association.

The Prince George's Post (ISSN 10532226) is published every Thursday by the New Prince George's Post Inc., 15207 Marlboro Pike, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

Subscription rate: 25 cents per single copy; \$15 per year; \$7.50 senior citizens and students; out of county add \$1; out of state add \$2. Periodical postage paid at Southern Md. 20790.

Postmaster, send address changes to Prince George's Post, P.O. Box 1001, Upper Marlboro, Md. 20772-3151.

BUSINESS

Business Exchange

by William Reed



AARP Joins Forces with Experience Corps

By HILLARY JOHN
AARP

A national leader in pairing adult tutors with K-3 students, Experience Corps builds on AARP's legacy of service and offers AARP members a new way to give back

Washington, DC-AARP recently announced it is joining forces with Experience Corps, one of the nation's most highly-regarded service programs, which engages older adult volunteers to help improve K-3 literacy in underserved schools.

Experience Corps' proven success in African-American neighborhoods and its engagement of diverse volunteers will bolster AARP's commitment to reaching more multicultural communities across the country.

The new relationship supports the priorities of both organizations: AARP Experience Corps will be able to increase its ability to tap into the experience and dedication of older Americans who want to give

back to their communities, and it will offer AARP members a new way to engage in one of their top service priorities - volunteering to tutor or mentor youth.

"AARP Experience Corps fits very naturally into the AARP family, by building upon the principles of service that our founder, Dr. Ethel Percy Andrus, set out for the organization," said Barb Quaintance, senior vice president for volunteer and civic engagement at AARP. "The group also has built an incredibly successful model, where kids and older adults thrive in a dynamic intergenerational exchange."

"Reading levels of young children in America are in crisis," said Lester Strong, CEO of Experience Corps. "Almost 70 percent of our nation's children reach the 4th grade unable to read at a proficient level. By joining forces with AARP, Experience Corps will be able to make an even bigger difference for our children, and at the same time, leverage the experience



PHOTO BY FAITH GONG, EXPERIENCE CORPS BAY AREA VOLUNTEER MATCH. FLICKR

Experience Corps Reading Tutor: Experience Corps connects senior tutors and mentors with disadvantaged youth in the community.

and dedication of AARP's millions of members."

Experience Corps has a track record of improving literacy among American youth: according to research from Washington University in St. Louis, students working with Experience Corps tutors gain more than a 60 percent boost in two critical literacy skills-sounding out new words and reading comprehension-over similar students not being

served by Experience Corps.

Additionally, 84 percent of its volunteers reported the participation has changed their lives for the better - including increased motivation, knowledge, confidence and skills. Currently, 2,000

Experience Corps volunteers serve 20,000 K-3 students in disadvantaged schools across the country.

For more information, go to www.aarp.org/experiencecorps.

Diagnosis from A1

found that one in five Americans uses the Internet to find people with similar health concerns. For people with chronic illnesses, it's one in four.

When doctors asked Julie Leach, of Calvert County, to return for another sonogram to get a better measure of her baby's jaw, she scoured the Internet for "small jaw" and prepared for the worst.

"By the time we went in there, I knew pretty much all there was to know, because I needed to," Leach said. "I need to at least have some idea, to know the terminology, and to be able to carry on an educated conversation."

But the Internet provides more than basic medical information. For Leach, it offered a forum for sharing her story when it was too difficult to share face-to-face. Social networks, like Leach's blog, help families cope with the difficulties of chronic illness.

"Now we have social networking tools that allow people to connect with each other for emotional and informational support," said Dr. Gunther Eysenbach, of the Centre for Global eHealth Innovation. "For the patient, it is greatly empowering."

Leach was admitted to the University of Maryland Medical Center at just 29 weeks. Doctors spent the next five weeks monitoring her and the baby.

On October 22, 2010, shortly after midnight, Abigail "Abby" Leach was born at 4 pounds and 17 inches.

Two hours later, the Leach's went down to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), where a doctor showed them Abby's X-rays.

"The majority of her ribs were in pieces," Julie Leach said.

Abby has Cerebrocostomandibular Syndrome (CCMS), a rare condition most often resulting in

infant death.

"In the beginning, they did not have a lot of hope for her," said Julie Leach. "They were just on eggshells."

Doctors gave the Leach's all the information they could.

"The geneticist gave us one piece of paper that she Xeroxed from a medical book from the 70s," Leach said. "It was basically a death sentence."

CCMS is characterized by deficiencies in cerebral development, cleft palate, and malformation of the ribs and jaw, according to the National Library of Medicine.

It is unclear how many confirmed cases have been reported worldwide. Most sources say the number is between 50 and 75.

"Once we found out her real diagnosis, we went right to the Internet again," Julie Leach said.

They found one researcher in Boston, but he couldn't provide much information.

Feeling helpless, Matt and Julie Leach found support in family, friends and prayer. After six weeks, Abby was transferred to Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, where she spent another six weeks in the NICU, and her parents began training to care for her at home.

Learning that their daughter would need many surgeries to repair her ribs, jaw, cleft palate and spine, Matt and Julie Leach immediately began finding the best spinal surgeon, thoracic surgeon and pulmonologist in the area.

Abby, who is intubated and has a gastrostomy tube (g-tube) that allows her to get nutrition without requiring a tube in her nose, needs constant care.

"We learned how to do trach care, trach replacement, and to clear and change the g-tube," Julie Leach said. "We did take performance and written tests before we could even talk about going home."

Even with painstaking preparation and constant caregiving, Abby's odds were not

good. Many infants with CCMS die from respiratory complications during the first few months of life. Many more are lost within the first year.

"Our geneticist who diagnosed it only knew what it was because she saw one case in residency 30 years ago," Julie Leach said. "We had to go to the Internet. We pored through online medical journals. I just kept researching."

Now, families touched by CCMS are reaching out to Leach through her blog (<http://lifesaleach.blogspot.com/p/abigail-journey.html>), which she began shortly after Abby's diagnosis.

"One family in Chicago Googled and found me," she said. "And another family in New Jersey has a daughter who is 12. Her issues are a little different than Abby's, but she's been a real encouragement to me."

At Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital, the nursing staff gives the Leach's information to parents who need a little hope.

"I've been able to tell them, yes there is life after a ventilator and there is life after a trach," she said. "The more we see, the more we feel like God has given us Abby so we could share her story."

Leach said she still occasionally searches the Internet for CCMS.

"I want to see what comes up," she said. "I also want to search it to see if anyone else is blogging about CCMS."

Despite the benefit of social networking, doctors and other health professionals remain the primary source for personal health information and diagnoses.

"It's very difficult for parents to get an idea of what the future holds for these kids," said Dr. Manbir Singh, Abby's pediatrician. "It gets frustrating for a lot of parents when there is not a cut and dry answer."

This is particularly true with rare diagnoses because patients are inundated with complex,

sometimes conflicting information. While the Internet can help parents sort through it all, Singh believes it can lead to worry and doubt.

"The Internet can be a very detrimental tool," Singh said. "It all depends on the parent."

But despite these concerns, communication scholars see the benefit of expanded access to health information.

"Those patients who are motivated have the tools to educate themselves," Chung said. "Doctors need to adjust to their patients who are now more empowered and educated."

Julie Leach said educating herself was the best way to prepare and push through the grim reality of CCMS.

"I strongly believe in the power of researching and tell every family that is facing a difficult diagnosis to research everything they can," said Julie Leach, 29. "You'll find the worst-case scenarios, and it won't be any worse than that."

But the young couple says they couldn't have made it on research alone, raving about the support they received from the NICU staff, the hospital chaplain, family, friends and especially from God.

"I'm convinced that prayer works, more than ever now," said Matt Leach, 33.

The Leach family recently celebrated Abby's 1st birthday, yet another milestone for this little girl who has far surpassed initial expectations.

"She has so much personality," Julie Leach said. "When we first got her diagnosis we were told she wouldn't be much more than a vegetable."

Not so for Abby, who plays, laughs and stands. Leach updates her blog regularly and her posts automatically appear on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=771346616>) to reach more people.

"We don't want people to have to walk this road alone," Julie Leach said. "And it's a very dark and scary road."

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OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

"A Very Harold & Kumar 3D Christmas"

"A VERY HAROLD & KUMAR 3D CHRISTMAS"
C+

Rated R for abundant harsh profanity, a lot of nonsexual nudity, vulgar language and sexual dialogue, some violent images.
1 hr., 30 min.

Like the holiday season or a pot brownie, "A Very Harold & Kumar 3D Christmas" takes a while to kick in, but once it does it's cheerful, merry, and ultimately rather exhausting. And once a year feels like plenty.

The third entry in this absurdly raucous stoner franchise, again written by Jon Hurwitz and Hayden Schlossberg, finds once-inseparable pals Harold (John Cho) and Kumar (Kal Penn) separated. Harold has given up weed, taken a job on Wall Street, and moved into a comfortable suburban home with his wife, Maria (Paula Garcés). Harold is happily domesticated now, with no place in his life for Kumar, who remains perpetually stoned, unambitious, and a magnet for trouble. When his ex-girlfriend, Vanessa (Danneel Harris), stops by with urgent news, it's all Kumar can do to talk to her AND watch TV at the same time.

Circumstances reunite Harold and Kumar on Christmas Eve, and once again they are thrust into an improbable adventure that veers between hilarious and tiring; more tiring in the first half, hilarious in the second. They're

accompanied by the guys they've chosen as replacement friends. Harold has Todd (Tom Lennon), a dweeby house-husband with a man-crush on Harold, and Kumar has Adrian (Amir Blumenfeld), a horn dog trying to score with a girl he met online. The four of them -- plus Todd's 2-year-old daughter -- get involved in a quest to find a Christmas tree, which naturally leads to a run-in with a Russian mob boss (Elias Koteas), which inevitably leads to being mistaken for chorus members in a Christmas show at Radio City Music Hall, which predictably leads to a tripped-out hallucination sequence where everything is in Claymation. You know the routine!

It is something of a "routine" by now. This entry (directed by first-timer Todd Strauss-Schulson) improves on the road-trip shenanigans of "Harold & Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay" and is probably comparable with the original "Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle" -- which is to say it's sporadically hilarious but not consistently so. They've gone all out to incorporate Christmas into the story, adding sex 'n' drugs to holidays traditions both religious and secular -- everything from "A Christmas Story" to Jesus -- all as part of the series' ongoing mission to be offensive to everyone and therefore not really offensive to anyone. The characters are still casually racist, so absurdly and in so many directions that there's no reason not to laugh.



PHOTO COURTESY ROTTENTOMATOES

Following years of growing apart, Harold Lee (Cho) and Kumar Patel (Penn) have replaced each other with new friends and are preparing for their respective Yuletide celebrations. But when a mysterious package mistakenly arrives at Kumar's door on Christmas Eve, his attempt to redirect it to Harold's house ends with the "high grade" contents and Harold's father-in-law's prize Christmas tree going up in smoke.

As usual, the high point is the arrival of Neil Patrick Harris, reprising his role as an obscene, drug-addled version of himself. There's now an extra layer of comedy subtext when he riffs on his public image as a lovable, self-aware, multi-talented showman, because it's his appearance in the first "Harold & Kumar" that helped establish that cultural cachet in the first place. Then he was joking about his descent into post-adolescent-fame oblivion; now he's joking about how popular he is. One hesitates to say that NPH can do no wrong ... but if he can, I haven't seen him do it. In terms of delivery and timing, his work in this movie constitutes one of the sharpest comic performances of the year.

The rest of the supporting

cast isn't nearly as useful. Adding a secondary pair of hapless boobs merely takes time away from Harold and Kumar -- who, truth be told, aren't as much fun to be around this time. (Maybe it was a mistake to have them giving each other the cold shoulder for such a significant portion of the movie.) Everything involving Harold's protective father-in-law (Danny Trejo) is disappointingly bland and sitcom-y, like it wandered in from a Tim Allen movie. On the other hand, there are inspiringly whacked-out ideas like the WaffleBot, a hot holiday gift item that factors bizarrely into the story. I remember the good parts of the movie more than the bad parts -- which might be something else it has in common with the Christmas season.

The Edge of Sports

by DAVE ZIRIN

Joe Paterno and the Sick Logic of College Football

After 46 seasons coaching at Penn State University, Coach Joe Paterno now faces a crisis that could burn the storied football program to the ground. And if recent charges are true, his legacy deserves to burn to along with it. For those who haven't heard, longtime assistant Jerry Sandusky, 67, who coached the vaunted Nittany Lions defense for 23 years, has been charged with 40 sex crimes against boys dating from 1994 to 2005. All of the minors were under the care of Sandusky's charity for impoverished youth, "The Second Mile Foundation", which Sandusky founded in 1977. As the grand jury presentment stated: "Through The Second Mile, Sandusky had access to hundreds of boys, many of whom were vulnerable due to their social situations." Sandusky is denying all charges through his attorney, but the grand jury report is a damning and detailed account of a man exercising his power and authority to rape young boys.

On one level, it's a horror story we've heard before: vulnerable children become targets for the very people trusted with their care. But this case is far, far worse, because it could have been stopped in time to spare future victims. It could have been stopped, but it wasn't because the image of Joe Paterno Nittany Lion Football was deemed more important than the children at risk.

The grand jury summation describes one scene where Sandusky was caught raping 10-year-old "Victim Number 2" in the Penn State football team shower. The graduate student who witnessed it was "distracted" and "traumatized". Did he go to the police? No, he went directly to Joe Paterno's home. Paterno immediately turned the matter over to Athletic Director Tim Curley, and for reasons I don't understand, Gary Schultz, the senior vice president of finance and business. Curley and Schultz conferred and acted. According to the grand jury report, they sat Sandusky down and said that he could no longer use Penn State football facilities while accompanied by Second Mile children. That's it. Pennsylvania state law requires Curley, Schultz and Paterno to have reported the charges to the police. They didn't. [Curley and Schultz are being charged with perjury and obstruction. Paterno is not.]

Curley even admitted to the grand jury that he "advised Sandusky that he was prohibited from bringing youth onto the Penn State campus from that point forward." Yet as Deadspin.com reported, even this "punishment" was fictional. As late as 2009, Sandusky was on campus running a sleep-away camp for boys as young as nine years old. One alleged victim told the grand jury that Sandusky brought him to a Penn State preseason practice in 2007—a full five years after Paterno was made aware of the shower rape. This is why it's hard to take seriously Paterno's statement on Sunday, where he said, "If this is true we were all fooled, along with scores of professionals trained in such things, and we grieve for the victims and their families. They are in our prayers."

We are past prayer and into the realm of criminal negligence -- [and the major players are circling the wagons. Sunday night, after an emergency meeting of the Penn State Board of Trustees, Curley requested to be placed on administrative leave so he could devote himself full-time to his defense. Schultz also announced he would be retiring, effective immediately.] I agree with the Washington Post's Mike Wise, who wrote, "They would all be party to a worse crime than any crooked, pay-for-play booster at Miami, Ohio State or even SMU ever committed: guilty of protecting a program before a child." But at the same time I would argue that the connective tissue between benign booster scandals and this monstrous state of affairs are more substantial than people want to admit. It's connected to the Bowl Championship Series, "conference realignment" and all the ways in which college football has morphed over the last generation into a multi-billion dollar big business. This isn't about Sandusky. This is about a culture that says the football team must be defended at all costs: a culture where the sexual assault of a 10 year old is reported to Paterno before the police.

This is what happens when a football program becomes the economic and spiritual heartbeat of an entire section of a state. The Nittany Lions football regularly draws 100,000 fans to Happy Valley. They also produce \$50 million in pure profit for the University every year and has been listed as the most valuable team in the Big 10 conference. Another economic report held that every Penn State game pumps \$59 million into the local economy: from hotels to kids selling homemade cookies by the side of the road. It's no wonder that Paterno is revered. He took a football team and turned it into an economic life raft for a university and a region. When something becomes that valuable, a certain mindset kicks in. Protect the team above all over concerns. Protect Joe Pa. Protect Nittany Lions football. Protect the brand. In a company town, your first responsibility is to protect the company.

Penn State has never been an "outlaw program". It's what every school aspires to become. Think about that. Every school aspires to be the kind of place where football is so valuable that children can become collateral damage. If the allegations are true, if the school in fact knew this was going on, then the program should be shut down. If the allegations are true, Joe Paterno should be instructed to take his 46 years and 409 wins, and leave in disgrace. It's tragic that it's come to this for a legend like Paterno. But it's even more tragic that protecting his legend mattered more than stopping a child rapist in their midst. Damn Sandusky. Damn Paterno. Damn Penn State. But above all, damn the fact that the billion-dollar logic of big-time college football leads to decisions as venal as those made in Happy Valley.

Waldorf Man Claims Powerball Win with Just 19 Days to Spare

Winning Ticket from May 28th Drawing

(Baltimore) — Michael Halmon is a hard-working man. So hard working in fact, that he didn't take time to check the Powerball tickets he had accumulated for the past five months. After finally deciding to check his tickets, the 49-year-old soon discovered that he had just over two weeks remaining to claim his Lottery win. According to Maryland Lottery rules, tickets must be claimed within 182 days of the drawing date.

The married father-of-six was told months by the clerk at his Lottery retailer that he was a winner. "He told me I won," said Michael. "I said, 'No way. You made a mistake.'" The busy UPS driver continued working, not really giving much thought to the prospect of being \$200,000 richer.

When Michael's brother, Tony, who accompanied him to Lottery Headquarters, heard his sibling could possibly be a winner, he said "Man, let's go look for this ticket." Michael remained unfazed, responding, "I'm not worried about it. If it's meant to be. It will happen."

Finally, just last week, Michael chose to check his Lottery purchases and took them to the store to scan. When the scanner read, "Cash at Lottery" the clerk was unable to tell him how much he had won. He then went to another retailer who checked the numbers with him. "He told me, 'You won \$200,000!'" Michael quickly



PHOTO BY MARYLAND LOTTERY.

Michael Halmon is a hard-working man. So hard working in fact, that he didn't take time to check the Powerball tickets he had accumulated for the past five months. After finally deciding to check his tickets, the 49-year-old soon discovered that he had just over two weeks remaining to claim his Lottery win.

The retired military man immediately shared his good news with family and friends and intends to share his newfound wealth with them as well.

signed the ticket. "I was so nervous and shaking so much I could hardly write."

The retired military man immediately shared his good news with family and friends and intends to share his newfound wealth with them as well. He also intends to pay off bills and help with his daughter's college education. "I'm going to start out

2012 right," said the jubilant winner. "This is going to be an awesome Christmas." Warning to the subject, Michael shouted, "I'm going to Disney World!"

The winning ticket was purchased at 7-11 #27411, located at 6570 Coventry Way in Clinton.

Since its inception in 1973, the Maryland Lottery has awarded more than \$17.7 billion in

prizes to players and \$12.2 billion in revenue to the State of Maryland. One of Maryland's largest revenue sources, the Lottery supports important state programs and services including education, public safety and health, human resources and the environment.

For more information, go to mdlottery.com.

Calendar of Events

November 17 - November 23, 2011

Platinum Live: PHILADANCO

Date and Time: Friday, November 18, 11 am
Event Description: The wonderful, athletic and high-energy Philadelphia Dance Company presents a special one-hour program for seniors of selections from their repertory of modern, jazz and spiritual dance.
Ages: 60 and up
Fee: \$7/person, \$6/person in groups of 15 or more
Location: Publick Playhouse
 5445 Landover Road, Cheverly 20784
Information: 301-277-1710; TTY: 301-277-1312

Blankets of Love: Coloring Our Dreams

Date and Time: Monday, October 3-Monday, December 5
Description: Oakcrest Community Center is sponsoring a blanket drive to benefit two assisted living facilities: Forestville Health & Rehabilitation Center and Heartfield Assisted Living Center in Bowie.
 The facility is also collecting coloring books, crayons, and soothing sounds CD's to benefit the Prince Georges County Pediatric Unit and the Sub Unit of Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital.
Ages: All ages
Location: Oakcrest Community Center
 1300 Capitol Heights Blvd., Capitol Heights 20743
Contact: (301) 736-5355; TTY 301-218-6768

Line Dancing at Seat Pleasant

Date & Time: Beginning November 5, Saturdays, 11:30 am-1 pm
Description: Here's a way to lose weight, release stress, build stamina and start a healthy life style -- all of this while having fun with Ms. Hattie Frazier. Wear comfortable shoes, bring a hand towel and get ready to dance your stress away.
Cost: Resident \$20; Non-Resident \$28; \$6/drop-in fee
Ages: 18 & up
Location: Seat Pleasant Activity Center
 5720 Addison Road, Seat Pleasant 20743
Contact: 301-773-6685; TTY 301-218-6768
 SMARTlink # 692464

12th Annual Gingerbread House Contest and Show

Date and Time: Friday-Sunday, November 25-27, 12-5 pm
Description: For a sweet treat, come and view an amazing display of edible gingerbread houses. No nibbling allowed! Visitors have the opportunity to vote in the Viewer's Choice Award Competition. No reservations necessary.
Cost: \$1/person
Ages: All ages
Location: Darnall's Chance House Museum
 14800 Governor Oden Bowie Drive, Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
Contact: 301-952-8010; TTY 301-699-2544

PUBLICLK PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES 2011-2012 DANCE SEASON

CHEVERLY, MD—The Publick Playhouse 2011-2012 season includes national and international dance performances, beginning with The Philadelphia Dance Company's PHILADANCO on Friday, November 18 at 8 pm, in a leggy jet-propelled performance with soul that celebrates the company's 40th anniversary. On Friday, January 6, at 8 pm, the Playhouse hosts the international tour of the Russian National Ballet Theatre in a classical full-length presentation of "Cinderella" that is full of humor and features a large Russian company trained in the Bolshoi and Kirov traditions.
 Saturday, February 4 at 8 pm, Nimbaya! Women Master Drummers and Dancers of Guinea make the Playhouse the only Washington area stop on their first American tour in several years. Formerly called "Amazones", these exciting, energetic artists are celebrated throughout Africa for breaking social barriers to women's independence by performing the dances and playing the instruments that for centuries were restricted to men.
 In April, Dallas Black Dance Theatre returns for their annual Playhouse residency with a new program of feisty, fearless and fiery modern dance performances on Friday and Saturday, April 27 and 28 at 8 pm and Sunday, April 29 at 4 pm.
 Tickets to each of the four dance companies in this series are \$20, or \$15/seniors, students, DancePass, and groups of 15 or more. There's also an advance ticket savings of half price for one dance company when buying all four prior to November 18.
 Area dancers are also part of the season. On Sunday, February 26, at 4 pm, the annual liturgical dance festival PRAISE! features gospel singer Cora Harvey Armstrong of Richmond and exceptional dance troupes from area churches. Saturday, March 17 at 8 pm, the 10th annual World Dance Showcase highlights the broad cultural richness and talent found in our nation's capitol. Tickets for each of these programs are \$12; \$10/seniors and students.
 Young dancers are on stage at Bust a Move with Café Groove on Friday, March 2 from 7-10pm, when teens battle for cash prizes and the title of "Prince George's Best Dance Crew", with teen-only admission for \$3. And Sunday, March 4, at 4 pm, the Love 2 Dance Teen Showcase presents hot talent from area schools and studios. Tickets: \$12; \$10/seniors and students
 Dance Classes with visiting artists include Nimbaya! workshops on Saturday, February 4, with a Drum Workshop at 10 am and an African Dance Workshop at 12 noon for drummers and dancers age 13 and up; fee: \$15/class. On April 25 and 26 from 7:30-9 pm Dallas Black Dance Theatre offers their annual Master Classes in Modern Dance for advanced dancers on Wednesday, and Liturgical Dance Workshop for intermediate and advanced dancers on Thursday; fee \$15/class or observer. Also, Big Girls Dance Workshops are being held during National Fitness Month, with an African dance workshop on Tuesday, May 8 from 6:30-8 pm, and a Belly Dance Workshop on Thursday, May 10 from 6:30-8 pm; free/one workshop per person, with advance registration required.

The Playhouse is a facility of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Department of Recreation, Arts and Cultural Heritage Division. For more information, call 301-277-1710 or visit arts.pgparcs.com

EARTH TALK ... The nasty business of shark finning.

Dear EarthTalk:

What is shark finning and why have several U.S. states outlawed it?

-- Betsy Englund,
Tampa, FL

Shark finning is the practice of catching sharks, hacking off their fins, and returning them to the ocean (maimed and unable to swim or circulate oxygen through their systems) where they starve to death, suffocate or get eaten by other predators. Fishermen sell the fins, typically on the black market, for use in shark fin soup, a delicacy throughout Asia and increasingly in other areas of the world with large Asian populations. Analysts value the worldwide market for shark fins at upwards of \$1.2 billion annually.

"As a result of China's expanding economy and rising affluence, an increasing number of people can now afford the soup, priced at up to \$100 per bowl, and demand has risen dramatically," reports the non-profit WildAid. "Though shark fin soup represents status in Asian culture, the fin itself adds no flavor, nutritional or medicinal value." The group adds that the consumption of shark fin poses a serious threat to human health since they contain an extremely high concentration of mercury and other toxins now omnipresent in our oceans.

Besides being inhumane, shark finning is taking a heavy toll on shark populations. According to the non-profit Animal Welfare Institute, upwards of 73 million sharks



CREDIT: NICHOLAS WANG, COURTESY FLICKR

The practice of shark finning to make shark fin soup, a delicacy mostly in Asian cultures, has taken a serious toll on shark populations worldwide. Besides being inhumane to sharks, consumption of shark fin poses a serious threat to human health since they contain an extremely high concentration of mercury and other toxins now omnipresent in our oceans.

are killed each year for their fins alone. Another 50 million die annually as "bycatch" when they become entwined in fishing nets targeting other seafood (some fishermen do make use of this bycatch by selling off what fins, cartilage, liver oil and meat they can). As a result of these multiple threats, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) estimates that a third of all shark species are nearing extinction, with some species declining by more than 80 percent in recent decades.

In October 2011, California became the fourth U.S. state (after Hawaii, Oregon and Washington) to ban shark finning and the importation of shark fins. Also in October, Toronto, Ontario, Canada's largest shark fin market, became the fourth Canadian city to ban shark fins, joining Brantford, Oakville and

Mississauga, all also in Ontario, that had bans in place already. Campaigns are underway in both the U.S. and Canada to ban shark fins and shark finning outright coast-to-coast. Mexico has had such a nationwide ban in place since 2007, although enforcement there has been weak. The European Union banned shark finning in 2003 and recently beefed up significantly its own enforcement.

Concerned consumers can be part of the solution by not eating shark fin soup, and by encouraging restaurants not to offer it. The Animal Welfare Institute regularly updates a list of restaurants in major metropolitan areas of the U.S. that still serve shark fin soup, and encourages consumers to contact them if they encounter a restaurant serving shark fin soup that is not yet on their list—and to stop dining there.

Whether or not such personal actions, added to the various bans in place, will make a dent in the international shark fin trade remains to be seen, especially given the delicacy's increasing popularity and affordability.

CONTACTS: Animal Welfare Institute, www.awionline.org; WildAid, www.wildaid.org; IUCN, www.iucn.org.

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U-Md. video game orchestra to treat media with concert 'sneak-peek'

COLLEGE PARK, Md. -- On Nov. 20, 2011, the University of Maryland's Gamer Symphony Orchestra (GSO), which performs music from classic video games like Final Fantasy and new hits like Super Mario Galaxy, will treat members of the media to a preview of its annual fall concert.

The media preview begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Wakefield Band Room No. 2540 of the university's Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. GSO will play a portion of the program it has planned for the fall concert, which takes place on December 3 at 2 p.m. in the Smith Center's Dekelboum Concert Hall.

The performance is free, family-friendly and open to the



PHOTO OF GSO SPRING 2010 PERFORMANCE © NICK PIEGARI

The semester is flying by and GSO's Fall Concert is fast approaching! Performing in the 1,170 seat Dekelboum Concert Hall in the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center on December 3rd at 2:00 pm, come hear pieces from Metal Gear Solid, Shadow of the Colossus, Pokemon, and more.

public.

For three semesters in a row GSO has filled Dekelboum, the largest performing arts venue on the College Park campus, to capacity.

Highlights from this concert's repertoire include themes

from Pokémon, Shadow of the Colossus and Civilization V.

GSO musicians arrange all the pieces in the ensemble's repertoire, adapting songs for the specific instrumentation and size of the orchestra. The Civilization piece also repre-

sents a first for GSO, an arrangement written in cooperation with its original composer.

GSO's 120-plus members include a 30-person chorus, which sings both on its own and together with the instrumentalists.

Occupy from A1

There are committees in charge of food, shelter, media, medicine, the group's goals and purposes, and other issues.

Though the group does not yet have a single goal, the Occupy Baltimore activists are working to come up with solutions to the problems they see with society.

The group holds a "general

assembly" meeting every night where it determines its next move.

"That's the main venue for the democratic process that goes on here," said Jerry Raitzyk, the director of the Chesapeake Juggling Institute and an Occupy Baltimore activist. "Everybody has a chance to have their say. Sometimes we try to make decisions ... some are put off until

another time because there are a lot of suggestions."

Bridges thinks that the lack of a single direction makes the movement great.

"I like it because we're not just protesting one thing. It's multiple categories of issues we have in society," she said.

Nichols thinks that ultimately the movement will lead the activists back to their communities and away from McKeldin

Square.

"I think we're going to start moving out from our specific occupation locations into our communities to start doing the work ourselves that we think our governments should be doing, providing what we think the corporations should be providing," said Nichols. "We need to do these things for each other because the corporations will only do it for profit."

Bike from A1

bike all the way to the District, but more importantly, they'll be able to bike all the way here,"

Prince George's County Executive Rushern Baker said.

Gov. Martin O'Malley said he saw the trail as a way to empower local residents to restore the Anacostia River by connecting with each other and with the natural world.

"It's a great cause and a great source of strength for the community to be able to restore her health and restore the outdoor environment," O'Malley said in an interview. "The magic of these bike trails is that they bring the community together."

Building the trail is part of President Obama's America's

Great Outdoors initiative, which aims to connect Americans with the environment through local, state and federal partnerships.

The project also aligns with local programs to promote bicycle use, Bladensburg Mayor Walter James said.

Officials agreed the trail will promote economic growth and environmental awareness throughout the region.

"It is in everyone's best interest to be able to do what we can to restore this river, to create trails," D.C. Mayor Vincent Gray said. "It is such an inherent part of making the District of Columbia sustainable."

Construction to complete the entire trail is slated to begin next year, O'Malley said.

The project is expected to

cost \$50 million to design and construct over the next four years. Federal air quality funding and presidential appropriations are expected to pay the bulk of the cost.

Several bikers who attended the ceremony, such as 2005 single-speed, mountain-biking, world champion Marla Streb, said the trail will help Marylanders of all ages see the positives of cycling over driving.

"It really enriches your day if you're not just sitting in a car," said Streb, the bike safety coordinator for Bike Maryland. "I feel really strongly about getting other kids out of their cars, out of gridlock and walking and riding to the parks."

Others said the new trail is

one more chance to experience natural wonders in the state.

"It's lovely -- there are so many pockets of interesting biking in this area that I'm just starting to discover," said Jim Bole, a member of the Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts.

And getting people outside of their homes and onto the path will ultimately benefit the communities through which the trail passes, U.S. Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Md., said.

"I think it's huge. It shows that people can really get connected to other communities and get connected to the outdoors," Cardin said. "This is all a plus for the community and it will create jobs. ... It will help both P.G. County and the surrounding community."

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"GIVE HOPE, GIVE BLOOD"

Red Cross Blood Donors Can Honor the Fight Against Breast Cancer

The American Red Cross, Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Region is honoring those who have struggled with this disease with "Walls of Hope" at all blood drives and donor centers throughout the month of October. Participants may write a small card in honor of a cancer patient to post on the Wall Of Hope. Call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to schedule a life-saving donation appointment. Platelet donors can call 1-800-272-2123 to schedule an appointment.

Blood is often used to treat those undergoing treatment for all types of cancer, including breast cancer. Cancer treatments such as chemotherapy can kill red blood cells and platelets, and these patients rely on blood transfusions throughout their treatment to remain strong and recover.

According to the American Cancer Society, over 1.5 million people are expected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2010 in the United States. Many of those patients will require transfusions of blood and platelets.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to give life to local patients in need with a blood donation and show your support of the fight against Breast Cancer" said Gary J. Ouellette, Chief Executive Officer for the GC&P Region. "Many of us know someone who has been touched by this disease, or by another form of cancer, and this give our donors the opportunity to share their experience with others while giving hope to patients who may currently be fighting the battle."

The "Wall of Hope" will be available at all American Red Cross Donor Centers and participating blood drives throughout October. In addition, all participants will receive a commemorative "I Gave Hope" lapel pin (while supplies last). Blood donations are needed to treat patients throughout the Greater Chesapeake and Potomac Region undergoing treatment for cancer, premature babies, trauma victims, transplant surgeries, those with chronic blood disorders, and many others. Over 1000 units of blood are needed daily to meet the needs of local patients.

Child Watch from A4

day school week has more than doubled in two years. Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Texas and other states have cut funding—including critical early childhood education programs that help children get ready for school—to help close their budget shortfalls and adversely affecting hundreds of thousands of at-risk children.

What other choices could citizens demand our political leaders make? If they closed tax loopholes for the oil and gas industry it would generate at least \$45 billion over ten years. About one year of that money could fund slots for over half a million infants and toddlers in Early Head Start, a program that currently reaches only four

percent of eligible children during their period of crucial brain development. Expanding Early Head Start would create almost 150,000 new teaching positions.

The tip of the iceberg is the budget deficit; the failure to invest in our human capital deficit—our children who are the poorest age group in America—is the rest of the iceberg that will sink America's ship of state. This is the critical time to raise our collective voices and tell members of the Supercommittee, Congress, and the White House we want them to cut and not increase corporate tax breaks and make sure rich corporations and rich CEOs pay their fair share. We must not balance the budget on the backs of our babies who need health care and nutrition,

quality early childhood development and education, an affordable college education, and good jobs to build a strong America and rescue America's vanishing dream. Children did not cause the budget deficit and they must not be sacrificed to help solve it.

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

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