

# COMMENTARY

**Barbara A. Mikulski**  
*United States Senator for Maryland*



## Sens. Mikulski, Cardin, Coalition Urge Senate to Extend Commuter Benefits

WASHINGTON - U.S. Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Ben Cardin (Both D-Md.) joined a bipartisan coalition of twenty additional Senators in urging the Senate Finance Committee to include an extension of the widely used mass-transit commuter tax credit in any relevant legislation taken up by the Senate before it expires at the end of the year. The tax credit has an immediate impact on the region's federal workforce and middle-class commuters across the nation. At a savings of over \$1,000 per year, it eases the burden of high travel costs on families, allowing them to invest it in the local economy.

"Extending the mass-transit commuter tax credit has an immediate impact, easing the burden on middle-class families and Maryland's federal workforce," Senator Mikulski said. "It also provides much needed relief for everyone who uses the region's strained highway system. As we work to put people back to work, we should do all we can to help them get to their job."

"Congress should not keep chipping away at essential benefits that help Federal employees do the work of the American people. Eliminating the mass-transit credit would take a cut out of the paychecks of hardworking middle-class families trying to get by in an already tough economy," said Senator Cardin. "Promoting the use of mass transit helps our workers but it also helps reduce traffic congestion on our region's highways and improve air quality by taking thousands of cars off the road."

In 2009, Congress raised the tax-free benefit that workers could apply toward monthly commuting costs from \$120 per month up to \$230 per month, putting mass-transit benefits

on the same level as parking benefits. Nationally, more than 2.5 million commuters utilize the transit credit, with more than 250,000 spending more than \$125 per month. If this tax credit, which is set to expire December 31, is not renewed, the cost of commuting will rise by up to 22 percent for these commuters with high monthly costs.

Earlier this year, Senators Mikulski and Cardin cosponsored the Commuter Benefits Equity Act of 2011, legislation by Senator Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.) that would make the mass-transit tax credit permanent, and on the same level as parking benefits.

In their letter to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Ranking Member Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the Senators wrote, "Commuter benefits are one of the core benefits offered by employers, after health, retirement and disability benefits. This important benefit eases the burden of commuting costs on families, relieves congestion, reduces the stress on our highway system and decreases our reliance on foreign oil."

In addition to Senators Mikulski and Cardin, the letter is signed by Senators Robert Menendez (D-N.J.), John Kerry (D-Mass.), Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.), Jeff Merkley (D-Ore.), Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), Tom Carper (D-Del.), Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), Richard Durbin (D-Ill.), Chuck Schumer (D-N.Y.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), Chris Coons (D-Del.), Tom Udall (D-N.M.), Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Scott Brown (R-Mass.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), Mark Warner (D-Va.) and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.).

*To Be Equal*  
**Marc Morial, President and CEO**  
*National Urban League*



## New Generation of African American Women Political Leaders Emerging

*"Fearlessness is what it takes for a woman to run for elective office, especially a black woman."*

*Dayo Olopade, journalist, writing in The Root*

Only 30 African American women have served in the United States Congress since Shirley Chisholm became the first in 1969. Today, of the 100 largest cities in America, only one has an African American woman mayor. But the impact that African American women have had as political leaders has far exceeded their numbers. In addition to New York Congresswoman Chisholm, our nation has been greatly improved by the service of women like Representative Barbara Jordan of Texas, Senator Carol Moseley-Braun of Illinois, and Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones of Ohio. Today, a new generation of Black women leaders is picking up the gauntlet and making their voices heard. Let me introduce you to just three of them.

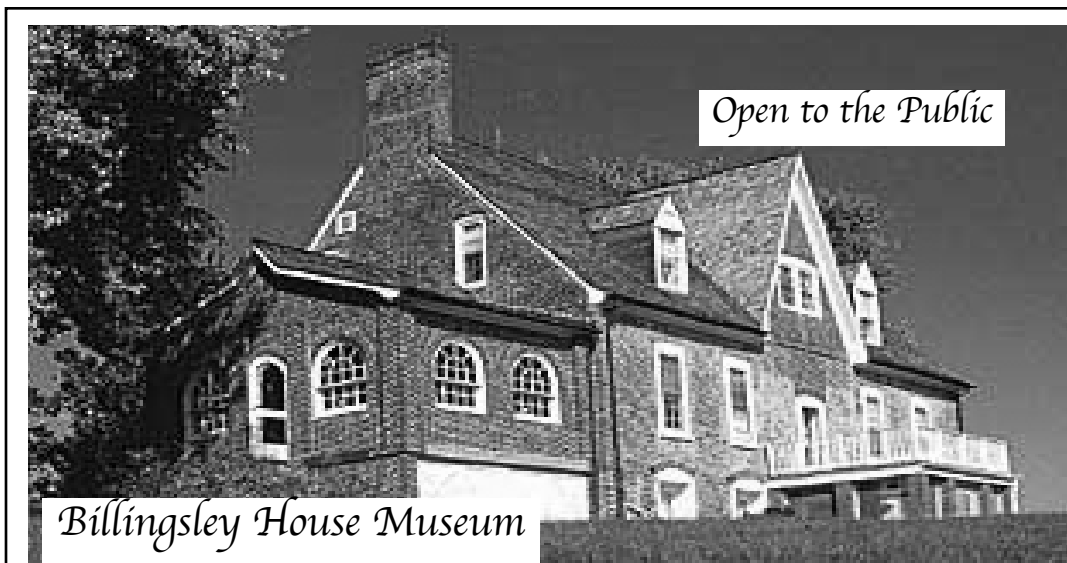
On December 6th, Stephanie Rawlings-Blake was sworn-in for a full-term as Baltimore's 49th Mayor, becoming only the second African American woman mayor in the City's history. Rawlings-Blake had served as City Council President since 2007, before her appointment in February, 2010 to finish the uncompleted term of the previous mayor. In 1995, at the age of 25, she became the youngest person ever elected to the City Council. Recently, the National Congress of Black Women named Rawlings-Blake a Shirley Chisholm Memorial Award Trailblazer. In her inauguration speech she outlined an ambitious agenda for a city that is struggling to attract both jobs and citizens in these tough economic times. She said, "Our number-one goal in the next ten

years must be to grow Baltimore—strengthen our neighborhoods, create new jobs, and attract new people"

In November of 2010, Kamala Harris won a hotly contested state-wide election to become the first woman and the first African American Attorney General in California history. Prior to the election, she spent virtually her entire career as a courtroom prosecutor. In 2003 she became the first woman District Attorney in San Francisco. She is a recognized expert in criminal justice reform and is currently a leading voice in the national fight to require mortgage lenders to restructure underwater loans for homeowners facing foreclosure.

Donna Edwards became the first African American woman to represent Maryland in the U.S. Congress in 2009. She represents Maryland's 4th District which includes portions of Prince Georges and Montgomery Counties. A lawyer and long-time community activist, Edwards previously served as executive director of the Arca Foundation and co-founder and executive director of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. It was there that she led the fight for the passage of the Violence Against Women Act which was signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1994.

Andrea Dew Steele, founder of Emerge America, a non-profit devoted to training more women for elective office says, "We don't feel as qualified as men; we're not recruited in the same numbers; we feel turned off by the mechanics; we have persistent family barriers; and we don't have the same networks as men." Despite these obstacles, women like Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, Kamala Harris and Donna Edwards are fearlessly breaking through.



Open to the Public

Billingsley House Museum

Billingsley House Museum is a brick Tidewater Colonial plantation house that sits on 430 acres overlooking the confluence of the Patuxent River and the Western Branch. The present house was built around 1740 by the prominent Weems family on or very near the site of an older 1695 house built by Colonel James Hollyday, first Chief Justice of the Prince George's County Court. Billingsley has been substantially altered and modernized both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, however, it is still one of the oldest structures remaining in the County.

**Child Watch**  
 by Marion Wright Edelman



## More Faces of Child Poverty

Would you recognize a poor child when you saw one? Nine-year-old Carolyn Latimore and her sister Aalijah, eight, are beautiful little girls with big smiles on their faces. But Carolyn, Aalijah, and their older brother, Robert, 17, of Middletown, Ohio, fell into poverty when their parents divorced. They've lived in four places in the past four years including a chaotic housing project where their bikes and toys were stolen. Their mother, Christine Allen, works nights and goes to a junior college but escaping poverty is mighty hard in a recession.

Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter Julia Cass, on assignment for the Children's Defense Fund, met Christine and her family earlier this year. Three-quarters of poor children have a working parent. Christine began her adult life at a disadvantage: no high school diploma. She got married and worked. For ten years, she was a nursing assistant, earning \$10 to \$15 an hour. "I was doing personal care for the elderly and I worked in a lot of Alzheimer's units," she said. Her husband was "making pretty good money" with overtime as a cook in a Bob Evans restaurant. "We had a little house. We didn't have to worry about bills being paid and food in the refrigerator." But things changed after their divorce.

Christine's experiences over the past four years are typical of some of the realities of the working poor. One is the nature of the work itself—frequently physically demanding, sometimes unpleasant, often not fulfilling, and always poorly paid. Bathing and changing elderly people day after day, year after year, she said, "takes its toll"—but after that job, she found herself stuck in a series of other jobs that paid even less: at a gas station, bowling alley, fast food restaurant. It took her a month, she said, to save \$100 for the deposit on an apartment in a housing project and two more years to get out of subsidized housing and into her current house—a well-kept place in a somewhat rundown neighborhood. At one low point she slipped on ice, broke her wrist, and lost her job at a nursing home. As a consequence she lost the car she was still paying on. When her wrist healed she rode a bicycle uphill across town to a part-time job at a Burger King. Christine decided at that point she had to go back to school in hopes of doing better for her children.

Christine completed her GED and got a Pell Grant and

student loan to study administrative medical assisting at the local junior college. Through a temporary agency she got a job at a nearby factory where she earns \$8.15 an hour. Although her hours have been irregular, they made it possible for her to go to classes in the morning. But now the irregular job she can't afford to give up is getting in the way of the education which could lead to a better one: she's down to her last semester of classes but the courses she needs run until five o'clock and she starts work at 2:30. She said the school told her she could do the courses online "but I don't have a computer, and I can't afford the Internet. That's another bill!"

On the morning Julia Cass met them, the girls were up at 7:30, getting dressed and collecting their school supplies. Their brother had already left. None of them ate breakfast. "There's no milk in the refrigerator right now," Christine said. "It's horrible to say that. No milk for cereal. But they get breakfast and lunch at school so I don't have to worry about them being hungry." "Sometimes we have granola bars, and every day we have chocolate milk and orange juice," Aalijah said. "Sometimes we don't get orange juice; we get peaches. And sometimes we get those little boxes of cereal."

They aren't the only family struggling in Middletown, which has steadily lost factories and population. Through a U.S. Department of Agriculture program, Family Services of Middletown distributed 26,500 lunches in parks this summer so Middletown children wouldn't

go hungry while school was out. Millions of children are not so lucky in the summer. While almost 32 million children have lunch provided to them during the school year, only 2.3 million children benefit from summer feeding programs. Federal summer feeding programs have been plagued by state bureaucracy and need to be simplified right now. Not only can child hunger during long summer months be stanchied, high quality summer learning programs can staunch summer learning loss which widens the achievement gap between poor and nonpoor children. Our nation needs to attend to the summer feeding needs of children because hunger does not stop when school is out. And summer feeding programs can create jobs for cooks and bus drivers and others.

"One of my main goals is to show my kids that you can get out there and make it," Christine said. "Without an education, you can get nothing. I tell my kids that every day. I want them to be better than Mom." But for now, Christine and her family remain among the nation's working poor. As her children know, school breakfast and lunch programs work. Summer feeding programs work. We have good safety net programs that work when people need them, and we have to make sure every child who could benefit from these programs gets them as hard-working parents like Christine continue struggling to get back on their feet during the slow recovery. Help for poor parents and children should be protected before tax breaks for wealthy corporations and millionaires.

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# BUSINESS

## Merger from A1

innovative organizational approach to 21st century opportunities and challenges," Kirwan said.

UMCP President Wallace D. Loh thanked the regents and Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr., D-Calvert, for their work, and said, "it's an important step forward for the two institutions and the state. It's a step long overdue."

Saying he's been opposed to the merger since the study began, Loh said Friday he was satisfied with the regents' choice of a strategic alliance. He said the concept is similar to what he advocated for with one distinct difference.

Loh said he argued for marketing the campuses under the single University of Maryland name, but keeping the campuses as they are now with each president responsible for his institution. Then the two could come together on occasion for discussion and collaboration.

The proposed alliance would leave UMCP and UMB as two separate entities, taking the best of each institution and creating a highly collaborative academic environment.

"We already branded ourselves," as the University of Maryland, Loh said, "so it's not a revolutionary idea."

UMB President Jay A. Perman, who chose not to take a position on the merger during the study, said he supports the strategic alliance.

"It's about taking the best of each campus," he said, and the alliance would create "enhanced opportunities for undergraduates" to connect with the professional school, and "enhance opportunities for faculty" to collaborate on

research projects.

According to the regents' report, the strategic alliance may include activities like "articulated degree pathways" for students who enter UMCP and have an interest in a professional degree from the Baltimore campus.

Joint programs could also be developed between the campuses in public health, law and public policy, sociology and social services.

"We do what's in the best interest of Maryland citizens," Chairman Orlan M. Johnson said, "and an alliance will allow us to push forward to make the system and the state great."

The USM Chancellor and two campus presidents have until March 2012 to develop specific initiatives of the alliance for the regents to review and approve.

During the meeting, the regents also proposed a policy on reporting suspected child abuse and neglect, emphasizing Maryland's family law that mandates reporting of all suspected abuse.

The policy comes amid the public outcry over the indictment of former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky on charges of abusing children and the firing of head coach and college football icon Joe Paterno for not doing enough to prevent the alleged abuse.

The Maryland regents' proposal outlined the requirements and process USM employees and others should take, including reporting hierarchy, instances requiring reporting, types of communication to be used in reporting and training for employees and students who regularly work with children.

## Business Exchange by William Reed

### Build Black Wealth: Celebrate Kwanzaa Together

The most challenging issue facing Black Americans today is our lack of unity. The lack of unity that exists among African Americans undermines our ability to progress politically, socially and economically. The Black Americans that "blew up the most" over past decades typify the fact that the mass of high-income Blacks mostly "went south to the suburbs" to buy into their concept of the American Dream: materialism and individualism. To most of the African Americans who make up the middle-class and are so caught up in their own personal quest for stuff and self, "Black Unity" is a totally foreign concept.

As we approach the 2011 Holiday Season, it's evident Black Americans don't stick together and that results in millions of Black Americans remaining on unemployment and foreclosure rolls. Blacks' wealth is diminishing, as is much of the Black middle-class. Across America, Black neighborhoods are in states of deterioration. As African Americans approach 2012 the economic rims seem to be coming off for a high percentage of us. As the Black middle-class declines, we find that first Black President Barack Obama has too shied away from "Black Unity" and has little identification with our pain and no more with our plight than any of his predecessors.

Most of us know the answer to our situation, but refuse to acknowledge or act on our lack of unity. The majority of Blacks seem unwilling to exercise the discipline and take steps necessary to improve their conditions. All too many Black Americans, particularly those who have

achieved "middle-class status", take pride in declaring "we are not monolithic." This is in direct contrast to the concepts that keep families intact and financially prosperous - good neighborhoods, property ownership, saving habits, marriage, health care, strong school expectations and inherited wealth. It's due to a lack of these factors, the majority of African-American families are either borderline or at high risk of falling out of the middle-class altogether.

For African Americans to become "players" in the financial system, we recommend the celebration of Kwanzaa programs. To be successful in American enterprises, Black Americans need a model such as Marcus Garvey who led the first mass Black movement of the 20th century. Garvey called upon Africans everywhere to "reclaim Africa, struggle to reclaim their better selves, and strive to restore their history and humanity." Garvey believed in the primacy of race as the starting point for the liberation of all African people and believed that the oppressed African people throughout the world should have as their primary objective the emancipation of themselves as a race. Central to Garvey's "race first" philosophy was the doctrine of self-reliance and self-determination. All subsequent Black Power organizations and Black Nationalist leaders drew from Garvey's "race first" focus and owe a debt to his example and philosophy.

Everybody practices collective economics, except us. It's time to start a movement in which Black Americans can invest their time wisely. This

## Maryland Housing Market to Slog Through 2012

### Low Interest Rates, Slight Job Growth Indicate Home Market is Improving

By JEFFREY BENZING  
Capital News Service

WOODLAWN - Maryland home builders expect a sluggish 2012 as joblessness and low consumer confidence have delayed a housing market recovery until at least 2013, according to experts at a forecast event held by the Home Builders Association of Maryland Thursday.

"We've had to shove out our recovery almost an entire year," said David Crowe, chief economist for the National Association of Home Builders. "There's a constant stream of these worrying concerns out there that has wrecked consumer confidence."

Shocks caused by the federal debt crisis this summer, along with an economic crisis in Europe and continually high unemployment, have sidelined potential homeowners, even as home prices continue to stabilize.

## Jobs from A1

Resources and the requirement that nursing home developers obtain pre-approval for construction from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

The Competitive Edge Report, produced from a 10-month study by the Greater Baltimore Committee, echoes the sentiment that, despite the state's strengths as a place to do business, changes in policy and regulations are needed to become a more competitive business location.

Some areas of concern to business leaders are high corpo-

## Auction from A1

have concluded. The problem is that too few people understand this.

When the housing bubble burst in 2007, Prince George's County was particularly hard hit. From April 2008 to September 2011, nearly 103,000 notices of intent to foreclose -- the precursor to a foreclosure court filing -- were issued for properties in the county, according to state records.

Second-highest Baltimore City had about 56,000 notices over that period. Not all the homes were foreclosed on, but even now, nearly a third of all the state's foreclosure cases are for property in Prince George's County. From July to September, the county had close to 900 foreclosures, and about 1,500 foreclosures from April to June, though some properties are counted in both groups.

The state does not yet have numbers for this year, but reported 12,000 unique foreclosures for the county in 2010. Even as foreclosure cases have dropped, notice-of-intent-to-foreclose filings have spiked this year, according to monthly reports from the state.

Trends like that in Prince George's prompted American University graduate Bradford Voegeli to found Take Back Your Home as a student last year. He said he thinks the country is still square in the middle of a housing crisis.

The foreclosure process can be even more confusing for renters. By law, they may stay in the property under the new owner, who must honor their lease. With no lease, most renters can stay at least 90 days after foreclosure proceedings

movement toward Kwanzaa is based on Garvey's concept that "wealth" is strength, power, influence, justice, liberty and real human rights. Instead of concentrating on mainstream participation and acceptance; in this movement more Blacks will seek to reinforce their Black identity and roots.

Maryland's economic recovery has been slow, said Anirban Basu, chairman and CEO of Sage Policy Group, in part because the state fared better in the recession compared to hard-hit states like Nevada and California. Because the local housing market has always been more stable, the impact has been softer, even as many Marylanders have had to forgo homeownership as they struggle for work.

"The downturn was not as profound, but the upturn was similarly squishy," Basu said.

Mortgage rates are at historic lows, meaning prospective homeowners can get good value for their money if they can afford to buy. Luckily for Maryland home builders, resale inventory is also low, meaning that the state has relatively few unoccupied homes, perhaps foreshadowing demand for new construction in coming years.

But the market's not there

yet. Since 2006, Crowe said, new American households have almost exclusively been renters -- not homeowners. Many want to own homes but can't yet -- and perhaps won't be able to until at least 2014.

Using census and housing trend data, Crowe noted that the country should have about 2 million more households than its current 112 million total. Because of the recession, families have banded together under one roof. But these arrangements are temporary and could lead to a boom in household growth as the job market recovers.

"The real overall rabbit in the hat for the home building industry is demographics," Crowe said.

Low interest rates and slight job growth indicate that the home market is improving, said Ken Wenhold, regional director for Metrostudy Corporation. Even so, the only true boost to the economy will

rate and individual tax rates and high operating costs.

"Business is tough, and we need the government's help," said Daniel White, executive vice president of Whiting-Turner Contracting Company and one of several speakers at the symposium. "I think we'd all agree that excessive regulations can strangle the free flow of business."

The symposium is timely, given the recent failure of Congress' super committee, which could lead to automatic cuts in federal spending. These cuts will result in job losses in

"One foreclosure happens, and that's a very unfortunate thing, but it's very matter of fact," said Voegeli, who earned his law degree in May. "When millions of foreclosures are happening at the same time, something is incredibly wrong."

His outreach started in The District last summer during an internship with Bread for the City and took root on campus last fall when he found classmates who shared his interest. Once foreclosure mediation was made mandatory in the District of Columbia, foreclosure filings abruptly dropped. Good for homeowners, bad for the fledgling project.

Foreclosures remained high in Prince George's County and the group shifted its focus.

Mediation was already available in Maryland, but too few homeowners pursue it, or even know it's an option, said Susan Bennett, an AU law professor who has taught classes focusing on the housing crisis.

That's why Take Back Your Home continues to be important to Dean and Rodriguez-Rico, who with their driver Brianna Ford, note how difficult it can be to reach residents, even if they're still in their homes.

On this Saturday, they pulled up to a modest house with bright blue shutters and white poinsettias on the porch. Leaves had been bagged and neatly piled on the front yard, and they thought they were in luck when

come from consumer spending.

Basu noted that gross domestic product growth for 2011 is expected to be around 1.6 percent, far below forecasts by some leading economists. Growth for 2012 should be roughly equal, or perhaps a bit better, economists have said, as markets slowly gain strength and stability.

For home builders, this means that the worst is over, though full recovery may be years away.

"Will next year be another year of grudging progress toward equilibrium?" asked Basu rhetorically. "Yes it will."



PHOTO BY NAHB RESEARCH CENTER  
**This home affordable and attractive.**

Maryland because so many jobs are connected to the federal government.

But critics argue that Friday's symposium falsely gives the impression that something will be done to create jobs for Marylanders who need them now.

"There is no magic bullet," said Todd Eberly, a professor of political science at St. Mary's College. "If it were truly that simple, just government and businesses working together, we wouldn't be in this situation. We would have jobs."

they saw a man walk from the backyard to a side door. But when they knocked -- no response.

"Aw, we're trying to help -- we see you keep your house up nicely," said Ford, peeking in through the door.

"This is sad," said Rodriguez-Rico. "We should hide in the corner and try to come out again."

The group left their information packet on the door handle.

Then, while returning to their car, the man appeared in the window. They exchanged waves, and Rodriguez-Rico ran back to greet the man and attempt to explain his rights.

They had a brief conversation in Spanish, but back at the car, he gave the group bad news -- the man had already started packing.

In nearby Mount Rainier, the group's next home had a sign tacked to the door: "Life's Too Short -- Dream Big -- Reach for the Stars."

The residents weren't there -- and were perhaps gone already -- so the group left another bag, moving on to the next string of addresses -- some boarded up, some vacant, and some with families inside unaware they might be forced from homes they thought were their own.

"It's kind of like you fight for the American dream," Ford said, "and it turns out that people just take it away from you."

developing an African-centric view of ourselves - Kwanzaa Principle of Self-determination.

- Recognition of reciprocal obligations - Kwanzaa Collective Work and Responsibility Principle.

- Giving and receiving is the foundation for the Kwanzaa Cooperative Economics Principle.

- Understating that our best self comes from our own

people - Kwanzaa Purpose Principle.

- Realization that the result of Kwanzaa Creativity Principle is continuous excellence and productivity.

- Development of mutual trust and belief in ourselves and our people.

C o n t a c t Busxchg@His.com for local references.

# OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S  
IN THE DARK

## Movie Review

### "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy"

"TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY"

(limited release) C+

Rated R for some harsh profanity, a little nudity and sexuality, some strong violence.  
2 hrs., 7 min.

About two-thirds of the way through "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy," I jotted in my notes: I don't know what's going on. I'd been struggling to keep my head above water the whole time, and it was here that I resigned myself to drowning. I didn't miss a second of the film, yet when it was over I felt disoriented, as if I'd dozed off for several minutes in the middle and was never able to catch up again.

It's not easy to admit that you just flat-out didn't understand a movie, especially when it's your job to understand movies. But here we are. I take some solace in knowing that "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy" is based on a famously dense John le Carré novel that was previously adapted into a seven-hour BBC miniseries -- there's a lot of ground to cover, in other words. What's more, it takes place in the halls of British Intelligence in the early 1970s, and I have little familiarity with that world and that time. A person could be smart and attentive and still be hopelessly lost in this thick labyrinth of espionage. Right? I mean, it's not

like I failed to grasp "Mr. Popper's Penguins."

There's a character in here named Control. He's played by John Hurt. The movie was half over before I realized that when people referred to "Control," they were talking about a man, not an organization. My notes even had it in all-caps -- CONTROL -- because I assumed it was an acronym. But nope, it was a guy. A guy named Control.

I don't cite that as a fault of the film, only as an example of a seemingly basic piece of information -- a character's name -- that instead added to the confusion. But never mind the people's names: the really tricky part is keeping track of what they're doing, and why.

The essence of it is that a recently retired intelligence agent, George Smiley (Gary Oldman), is called back into duty when another operative, Ricki Tarr (Tom Hardy), alleges that someone high up in the operation is acting as a mole for the Soviets. The mission is to determine whether this is true, and if it is, who the double agent is.

This sort of story lends itself to a certain amount of confusion, of course. Often we're supposed to be as much in the dark as the characters are. But this particular tale, directed by Tomas Alfredson ("Let the



Based on the classic novel of the same name, the international thriller is set at the height of the Cold War years of the mid-20th Century. George Smiley (Gary Oldman), a disgraced British spy, is rehired in secret by his government - which fears that the British Secret Intelligence Service, a.k.a. MI-6, has been compromised by a double agent working for the Soviets. -- (C) Focus Features

Right One In"), is made all the more dizzying by frequent flashbacks, many of which are not readily identifiable as such, and by the characters all existing in a closed-off world where they can use professional jargon freely without having to explain themselves. This is realistic, no doubt, but hard for an outsider to follow. The story itself moves slowly, fueled by suspicions more than adrenaline.

I wish I'd understood what was happening better, because I really liked most of the performances. Gary Oldman's weary, reserved old spy is captivating,

and there are terrific appearances by the likes of Colin Firth, Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Hardy, Simon McBurney, and Toby Jones as other agents and operatives.

The question is this: Would additional viewings of the film bring the pieces together? Or is the information simply not there? My hunch is it's the former, and I may indeed watch it again at some point. So do we blame the movie for being impenetrable, or do we blame the viewer for being unable to penetrate it? Let's split the difference and call it a C+.

## CIAA Names Interim Commissioner

Peggy Davis to Lead Historic Conference Through 100th Anniversary Tournament Celebration

HAMPTON, Va. (December, 2011) — The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) and its Chairman — Dr. Mickey Burnim announced the appointment of Peggy Davis as Interim Commissioner for the Conference.

Davis, whose role is effective December 10, has been a part of the CIAA family since 1997 where she held the titles of Head Women's Basketball Coach, Associate Athletic Director and Senior Woman Administrator at Virginia State University (VSU) in Petersburg, Va.

In July of 2003, Davis was named Athletic Director at VSU.

"The CIAA Board of Directors is very pleased that Ms. Davis has agreed to accept this assignment and serve this great Conference in that capacity," stated Chairman of the CIAA, Dr. Mickey Burnim. "Her accomplishments are exemplary and well respected across the Conference and beyond." Davis plays a vital role as a member of the CIAA 100th Anniversary Planning Committee.

are vast.

She is a two-time Hall of Fame recipient (at VSU and Howard Payne University), Davis has been named Athletic Director of the Year of the CIAA four of the last five years 2006-07, 2007-08, 2009-10 and again in 2010-11.

Davis was also recognized this year by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) as the 2010-11 Under Armour SE Region for Division II Athletics Director of the Year.

She was also honored with the Jannette A. Lee Administration Achievement Award in 2005 and 2010.

Davis is past President of the CIAA Executive Committee, as well as the CIAA Athletic Director's Association. She is also a member of the CIAA Tournament Committee. She holds memberships in the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletic Administrators (NACWAA), National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA), and the Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA). Davis also sits on the NCAA

Division II Men's and Women's Tennis Committee representing the Atlantic Region.

In June 2010, Davis was elected to the Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA), Board of Directors.

"I would like to thank the CIAA Board of Directors for this opportunity to serve as the Interim Commissioner of the CIAA. I've been a part of the CIAA family for over 14 years and nothing brings me more honor," stated Peggy Davis, Interim Commissioner of the CIAA. "This Conference has a strong tradition and rich legacy and I'm excited to lead the CIAA into the biggest year of its history; celebrating 100 years is a great accomplishment."

Associate Commissioner and Senior Woman Administrator Monique Smith will serve on a short-term base during the transition in leadership and will remain on board to assist through this adjustment period.

A national search has begun for a permanent Commissioner for the CIAA. The Board of Directors is expected to complete the search by July 1, 2012.



PHOTO COURTESY CIAA  
**Peggy Davis appointed Interim Commissioner for the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA).**

#### ABOUT THE CIAA

The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) was founded in 1912 and is based in Hampton, Virginia.

The CIAA is America's oldest historically black college and university conference and is made up of 12 colleges and universities situated along the Eastern Seaboard.

For more information about the CIAA Basketball Tournament, visit [www.ciaa-tournament.org](http://www.ciaa-tournament.org).

For more information about the CIAA Conference, visit [www.theciaa.com](http://www.theciaa.com).

## CIAA Unveils Fresh Website Design and Mobile App

Hampton, VA...The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association has revealed a new look to its main athletic website, [www.TheCIAA.com](http://www.TheCIAA.com). The new design provides access to more features including live streaming of games on the homepage and will provide an easier means to locate new information.

In addition to the CIAA's revamp of the main website, the

conference has launched a mobile app through Radio One via Toura, a mobile app technology company that provides platforms for both phones and tablets. The CIAA app is the first to be developed by the Radio One/Toura partnership and will feature information about the CIAA Basketball Tournament, member institutions, history and schedule of events.



*The CIAA app developed by the Radio One/Toura partnership and will feature information about the CIAA Basketball Tournament, member institutions, history and schedule of events.*

## Calendar of Events December 22 - December 28, 2011

### 25th Annual Winter Festival of Lights

Dates & Times: Friday, November 25, 2011 through Sunday, January 1, 2012 5-9:30 pm (daily)

Description: You won't want to miss this season's spectacular drive-through displays! Featuring more than a million twinkling lights, the 25th Annual Winter Festival of Light is a joyful event for everyone. Please bring a canned good with you for donation to local food banks.

Cost: \$5/cars and vans; \$15/mini-buses and limos; \$25/buses; \$10/multi-visit passes for cars and vans. The festival is FREE on December 25. Ages: All ages

Location: Watkins Regional Park  
301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro 20774

Contact: 301-699-2456; TTY 301-699-2544

### Annual Festival of Trees Celebration

Date and Time: Through Monday, January 2

Gallery hours: Monday-Thursday 9 am-9 pm; Friday 9 am-7 pm; Saturday 9 am-5 pm; CLOSED Sundays

Description: Once again, Huntington takes the time to honor the environment through creative recycling. This winter exhibition showcases handmade trees and recycled arts by various community artists.

Cost: FREE Ages: All ages

Location: Huntington Community Center  
13022 8th Street, Bowie 20720

Contact: 301-464-3725; TTY 301-218-6768

### Kwanzaa Festival

Date & Time: Wednesday, December 28, 6-9 pm

Description: Come join us in celebration of Kwanzaa -- a time of culture, gathering, community and reflection. This family event features African dance, poetry, and other Kwanzaa-related festivities. Local vendors welcome.

Cost: FREE Ages: All ages

Location: Tucker Road Community Center  
1771 Tucker Road, Fort Washington 20744

Contact: 301-248-4404; TTY 301-203-6030

### The Calverts By Candlelight

Date & Time: Friday, December 30, 6 pm

Description: Pay an evening call on the Calverts and enjoy refreshments, live music, and children's activities.

Cost: \$5/adult; FREE children 12 & under accompanied by an adult

Ages: All ages

Location: Riversdale House Museum  
4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale Park 20737

Contact: 301-864-0420; TTY 301-699-2544

### First Tuesdays at Abraham Hall

Occurs The First Tuesday of every month(s) effective 5/3/2011 until 5/1/2012 at 12:53 PM.

Date & Time: Monthly, First Tuesdays, 12 noon-2 pm

Description: Attend monthly meetings on the first Tuesday of each month at Abraham Hall. Participants interested in Black History programs and exhibits in Prince George's County engage in lively discussions about African American topics while enjoying a brown bag lunch. Space is limited. RSVP required by the 25th of the preceding month.

Cost: FREE

Ages: All ages

Location: Abraham Hall  
7612 Muirkirk Road, Beltsville 20705

Contact: 240-264-3415; TTY 301-699-2544

### PUBLICK PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES 2011-2012 DANCE SEASON

CHEVERLY, MD—The Publick Playhouse 2011-2012 season: 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

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.pgpark.com](http://arts.pgpark.com)

## Baker from A1

visit a school weekly as well as senior centers, community groups, municipalities, and churches. Additionally, he has engaged people through social networking, enabling them to become more informed and educated about what is going on in the County.

The following is a list of the top 30 accomplishments of the Baker Administration during its first year in office.

1. Hospital Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The multi-party agreement marks a major step forward in the long-standing efforts to stabilize the health care system in Prince George's County. Over the coming months, the County, the University of Maryland Medical System, and the University System of Maryland will work with Dimensions and State health officials to establish an analysis of the County's health facility needs to determine the scale, cost and feasibility of constructing a new regional medical center and health sciences campus. The partnership will also address plans for improving existing health services, increasing access to primary care, enhancing the County's overall health infrastructure, and ensuring a stable and reliable health care system for Prince George's County and Southern Maryland.

2. \$50 million Economic Development Incentive (EDI) Fund

This bill establishes an Economic Development Incentive Fund, specifies the purpose and uses of the Fund, and provides for the financing and administration of the Fund. An appropriation of \$50 million over the next five fiscal years has been designated for the EDI Fund. The EDI Fund is intended to elevate the county's economic development profile and signal to the development community that Prince George's has turned a significant corner. The EDI Fund's potential return on investment will not be measured solely by financial returns to the fund itself – rather, it will be measured primarily by tangible measures like job creation, increased commercial tax revenue, and the achievement of key development goals.

3. Installing experienced and strong leadership

The Baker Administration began replacing County leadership immediately after being sworn in, appointing eight department heads and making wholesale changes within the Office of the County Executive. Throughout the year, the Baker Administration continued to recruit, hire, and appoint an experienced and talented team of former Prince George's County officials as well as leaders from around the state and region to work for the Administration as well as to represent the County on commissions and boards.

4. Visiting a School Per Week

During County Executive Baker's campaign he pledged to put education first, starting by visiting one school a week to get better acquainted with students, teachers and administrators. As County Executive, he has achieved this goal and has used his visits to enrich his education about the schools as well as bring personal and public attention to this priority area of the Baker Administration.

5. Overall Crime Reduction

As of December 5, 2011, Prince George's County has had a 12.7% reduction in violent crime and 10.3% reduction in overall crime compared to last year. This year, Chief Magaw authorized the creation of the Special Enforcement Division. The focus of the Division is offender-based policing. The Division, which includes the Violent Crime Recidivist Unit, Washington Area Vehicle Enforcement Team, Organized Retail Crime Unit, the

Pawn/Scrap Unit, Gang Unit and Joint Agency Group (JAG), adopted an innovative method of policing aimed at the offender rather than the crime.

6. Public Safety Coordination/Collaboration

During a wave of homicides in January, County Executive Baker called for and established a collaboration of public safety agencies that included the County Executive's office, the Prince George's County Police Department, the State's Attorney Office and the Prince George's County Sheriff's Department. This group of public safety professionals met weekly during January and February to stem the tide of violence and continues to meet monthly to coordinate public safety efforts. This collaboration and cooperation has been noted by all offices as being unprecedented in the County's recent history.

7. Addressing \$77 million budget deficit with no layoffs/furloughs

The FY 2012 Operating Budget of \$3 billion contained numerous key investments despite these challenging economic and financial times, including \$1.6 billion for K-12 education, \$533 million to ensure safe communities, and \$150 million for various environmental programs (e.g. stormwater and solid waste activities). The Baker Administration presented a budget that addressed a \$77 million dollar deficit without any layoffs and furloughs for County Employees.

8. Obtaining/Retaining AAA Bond Rating from all 3 ratings houses

Throughout the first year of the Baker Administration, the County has consistently engaged the three major ratings agencies in advising them of the new direction of the Baker Administration, updating them on the County's economic and financial condition, briefing them on the hospital memorandum of understanding, updating them on the potential impact of Federal budget actions, hosting an economic development tour of the County, etc. As a result of these efforts, the County maintained a AAA bond rating from the major bond rating agencies.

9. Re-Aligning Economic Development Agencies/Creating more efficiency in the Economic Development process

Upon taking office, the Baker Administration re-aligned departments involved in Economic Development, including the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Environmental Resource, and the Department of Public Works and Transportation, under one Deputy Chief Administrative Officer for Economic Development and Public Infrastructure. Furthermore, the Administration has begun the process of streamlining permitting.

10. Creating CountyStat

Prince George's CountyStat is a program launched by County Executive Baker to deliver results through accountability and innovation, with a strong emphasis on research and reform. The program is an adaptation of "stat" programs from other jurisdictions, such as Governor Martin O'Malley's pioneering work in Baltimore City and the State and Maryland. CountyStat combines statistical analysis with a thorough investigation of the operations and policies of government, conducting research on the best practices on a given subject by working with think tanks, advocacy organizations and other jurisdictions from around the country. Based on this work, CountyStat holds work sessions with agencies and key decision-makers to share information, give recommendations, and formulate appropriate next steps.

11. ACI Task Force/Ethics Legislation

The County Executive pro-

vided legislation that helped to provide greater transparency in the development review process. The County Executive also impaneled the Accountability Compliance and Integrity Advisory Board to review what should be done with regards to the operations of County Government to provide a more ethical and transparent County government.

12. Restored State Funding for Major Priorities

During the 2011 Maryland General Assembly, the Administration was successful in bringing home \$1 billion in State aid to the County, including \$870 million in operating funds and \$40 million in capital funds for K-12 education. These efforts allowed for the continuation of core services for our residents.

13. Summer Crime Initiative

The Summer Crime Initiative was started in May 2011 and concluded in September 2011. The point of this initiative was to take a proactive approach to combat crime by concentrating patrol resources in areas with the greatest potential for violent crime. This approach provided an opportunity to be more visible in the community, to deter crime, and provide an instant response if a crime occurred. The initiative resulted in numerous immediate apprehensions. Using the Department's crime analysis tools to examine events during a particular time period, the Department was able to determine five high crime areas that were designated for enhanced enforcement. These areas of concentration were Langley Park, Riverdale, Suitland, Hillcrest Heights and Glassmanor. This initiative resulted in a drastic decrease in violent crime in those areas. Additionally, the Department partnered with all agencies of County government as well as with State and Federal agencies. The Department met every week with our partners to track progress and develop strategies.

14. Implementing Cost Savings Measures

The Baker Administration implemented cost savings measures by reducing the number of "take-home" vehicles and automobile allowance payments for senior management. This allowed the Administration to clearly identify the future financial challenges for various stakeholders, including the Maryland General Assembly. It also confirmed that, despite the challenges ahead, Prince George's County was in a solid financial position.

15. Trade Mission to India with Governor O'Malley

County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III traveled to India as part of the delegation led by Governor Martin O'Malley in late November/early December, 2011. He met with Indian business and government officials, answered questions about the County from potential business partners and investors, and witnessed a number of agreements that will bring businesses and jobs to Maryland. Prince George's County was the beneficiary of five major business deals on this mission.

16. Green Streets

In conjunction with more demanding environmental regulations, the design standards for County-maintained roadways requires that all future projects are constructed as environmentally and community friendly roadways addressing all environmental regulations, while at the same time addressing all the needs of the users and communities. The County has developed a Green Street Program to implement County standards for new and rehabilitated roadways that will address "green street and complete street" requirements. A pilot project utilizing Ager Road will be analyzed for "green street and complete street" improvements to include: vehicular and pedestrian safety improvements, transit facilities, landscaping and installation of street trees, stormwater management and

drainage improvements, roadway pavement rehabilitation, bicycle facilities, energy efficient street lighting upgrades, intersection and other improvements to ensure the roadway is rehabilitated so as to be acceptable to the community, meet environmental requirements and be sustainable from a maintenance perspective.

17. Initiated a Stronger Grants Management Unit/Obtained \$14.6 million in competitive grants

Expanded the County's ability to attract additional grant funds by dedicating staffing resources solely to identifying new grant opportunities for agencies and departments, and working with non-profit organizations to ensure greater accountability in the spending of discretionary grants. This process has obtained additional grants for agencies and departments. The Baker Administration has obtained \$14.6 million in new and additional grants since December 6, 2010 to fund a variety of programs and services.

18. Breaking Ground on the Inter-County Broadband Network (ICBN)

In August, County Executive Baker helped break ground for a construction project that will lay broadband fiber across Prince George's County and other partners in the inter-County Broadband Network (ICBN). The network will connect 119 new sites within the County to one another and to other jurisdictions and is set to provide high speed internet access to 86 schools and 23 firehouses, as well as libraries and municipalities in the County. The project, part of the One Maryland Broadband Network (OMBN), is the result of partnership between public and private agencies across the state, including the Prince George's County Office of Information Technology and Communications (OITC), and is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce. The entire project is expected to create 2,000 jobs over the next three years.

19. Outreach efforts in the Minority Business Enterprise Community/ Registered MBE Certified firms reaches the 900 mark.

Driven in part by procurement opportunities in Professional Services, such as Architectural and Engineering Services, as well as Information Technology, the number of participants currently certified as MBE has reached 900 firms, the highest number of minority owned firms that have been certified in more than 25 years of existence of the Minority Business Program. In addition to expanding competition in the procurement process due to the higher number of potential participants, the minority business community is moving from the traditional "General Services" area to the more advanced "Professional Services" area, with higher technological and managerial skills.

20. Development of the Prince George's County's Health Improvement Plan (CHIP)

Between July and November 2011, Prince George's County Health Department took the lead in writing the County's first comprehensive health improvement plan since 2001. This Plan was developed in accordance with the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's requirement that all local health departments have a "blueprint" for improving the health of their respective county residents that is in alignment with the State's Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Numerous key stakeholders participated in the development of the CHIP, including the Office of the County Executive and the Prince George's County Board of Health, and County Government health and human service agencies, local hospitals, federally qualified health centers, the public school system, Maryland-National Capital Park and

Planning Commission, private and non-profit health care providers, health consumers and County residents.

21. Roadway Condition Improvement Strategic Plan

The Roadway Condition Improvement Strategic Plan was created to save money, time and increase the quality of County roads. This plan included strengthening the screening of roadway maintenance contract bids to ensure contractors are qualified and able to implement projects based upon past performance data and reintroduced use of an electronic roadway conditions assessment system to prioritize repairs to the most distressed roads. In addition, the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) initiated development of a centralized system to ensure qualified contractor awards based upon shared contract and contractor information, which includes past contract performance.

22. Installing Prince George's County Police Department (PGCPD) as School Resource Officers in Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS)

As part of the FY12 budget, the Baker Administration placed the Prince George's County Police Department as School Resource Officers (SRO) in the Prince George's County Public School System. This change allowed the Prince George's County Sheriff's Office, who previously held the SRO responsibility, to focus more sheriff personnel on the backlog of warrants that they have been able to successfully address in the past year. Additionally, this move increased the safety of PGCPS students, faculty, and staff by connecting the PGCPS to the increased resources of the PGPD as well as allowed the PGPD to connect public safety issues in the community to issues that arise in the schools.

23. Stormwater Management Bill/Implementation

The legislation proposed by County Executive Baker balances the need to maintain and strengthen our natural environment and the need to promote redevelopment and revitalization. The innovative stormwater management ordinance creates incentives for developers to exceed regulations governing the quality of runoff. In addition, this bill gives the County the flexibility to tackle the growing issue of downstream erosion and flooding; an issue that plagues our established communities. Prince George's County was out of compliance with the state's requirement that every jurisdiction adopt a new stormwater management ordinance. Through the leadership of the Baker Administration, the County is now in compliance and is able to issue stormwater permits.

24. Social Media Implementation/Interaction

In order to develop a more transparent and interactive relationship with constituents, the County Executive has established an active social media presence. Through Twitter, YouTube and two Facebook accounts, the County Executive and staff have reached out to residents with news and information about the County and have fielded questions and inquiries from citizens. The County Executive, in conjunction with the Office of Information Technology and Communications (OITC), has also worked to establish an updated social media policy for the County and has encouraged agencies and departments to create pages and accounts in order to better serve constituents. In addition to Facebook and Twitter, on which the County Executive has thousands of "followers" and "friends," the Administration has also begun work on a blog, a Google+ page, and a Flickr account.

25. Establishment of the My HOME homeownership assistance program.

The My HOME program was launched in March 2011 to create homeownership opportunities for Prince George's County residents by providing down payment and closing costs assistance to low and moderate income first time homebuyers. The program encourages renters to take advantage of historically low interest rates and home values, and transition into homeownership.

26. Children's Hospital Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

In an effort to improve access to pediatric healthcare in underserved areas, Children's National Medical Center, Dimensions Healthcare System, and the County Executive signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) this November to provide mobile health services for children in the County. The MOU called for a detailed plan to roll out a pediatric mobile health program in areas of the County that lack necessary services. The service will be an expansion of a successful program in the District of Columbia and will be tailored to best fit the needs of communities throughout Prince George's County.

27. Transition/Opening of new 911 Center

On May 3, 2011, the Office of Public Safety Communications Division successfully moved its operations to the County's new 9-1-1 Public Safety Communications Center. The new state of the art facility was specifically designed as a 9-1-1 and public safety dispatch center, containing the crucial infrastructure associated with taking and processing emergency calls for service. The new facility will house Public Safety Communications management and administrative staff; 9-1-1 and dispatch personnel; a 9-1-1 and dispatch training academy along with training and education staff; and the new radio system infrastructure. The cost for this facility, to include state of the art 9-1-1, dispatch, and radio system technology, was approximately \$36 million dollars.

28. Konterra Settlement/ICC Interchanges

The County negotiated a \$30 million dollar grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation that will allow for the construction of the major access road serving the proposed Konterra Development, a major economic development project in the northern portion of the County that is set to create jobs and strengthen the County's commercial tax base. The access road will connect Konterra to the new Contee Road Interchange at I-95, as well as to the new ICC (MD Route 200 Interchange at Virginia Manor Road). The realignment and reconstruction of the roadway will provide excellent access to undeveloped and currently inaccessible areas in northern Prince George's County, which help to spur economic development.

29. Solar Panel Implementation

Funded by grants from the Department of Energy, the Baker Administration has begun installing environmentally friendly roofs, windows, and solar panels on the County Administration Building, the South County Multi-Purpose Center, the Central Fleet Garage, and the Jefferson Avenue Warehouse.

30. Speed Camera Implementation

Use of automated speed enforcement cameras in school zones will reduce speed-related crashes, injuries and fatalities. In 2010, twenty-three (23) pedestrians were killed in Prince George's County. This was more than any other County in Maryland. In 2010, seventy (70) children, 15 years old or under, were struck by vehicles. During the first (40) days of our program, speeding was reduced 49.57% in school zones where cameras were located.

# COUNTY CHURCH DIRECTORY

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## MISCELLANEOUS

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## EARTH TALK ... Slow money.

Dear EarthTalk:

I heard that the less meat one eats, the better it is for the environment. How so?

-- Jason K., Sarasota, FL

Our meat consumption habits take a serious toll on the environment. According to the Environmental Working Group (EWG), the production, processing and distribution of meat requires huge outlays of pesticides, fertilizer, fuel, feed and water while releasing greenhouse gases, manure and a range of toxic chemicals into our air and water. A lifecycle analysis conducted by EWG that took into account the production and distribution of 20 common agricultural products found that red meat such as beef and lamb is responsible for 10 to 40 times as many greenhouse gas emissions as common vegetables and grains.

Livestock are typically fed corn, soybean meal and other grains which have to first be grown using large amounts of fertilizer, fuel, pesticides, water and land. EWG estimates that growing livestock feed in the U.S. alone requires 167 million pounds of pesticides and 17 billion pounds of nitrogen fertilizer each year across some 149 million acres of cropland. The process generates copious amounts of nitrous oxide, a greenhouse gas 300 times more potent than carbon dioxide, while the output of methane—another potent greenhouse gas—from cattle is estimated to generate some 20 percent of overall U.S. methane emissions.

"If all the grain currently fed to livestock in the United States were consumed directly by people, the number of people who could be fed would be nearly 800 million," reports ecologist David Pimentel of Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. He adds that the seven billion livestock in the U.S. consume five times as much grain as is consumed directly by the entire



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David Pimentel of Cornell University's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences says that the grain currently fed to some seven billion livestock in the United States could feed nearly 800 million people directly.

U.S. population.

Our meat consumption habits also cause other environmental problems. A 2009 study found that four-fifths of the deforestation across the Amazon rainforest could be linked to cattle ranching. And the water pollution from factory farms (also called concentrated animal feeding operations or CAFOs)—whereby pigs and other livestock are contained in tight quarters—can produce as much sewage waste as a small city, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). Further, the widespread use of antibiotics to keep livestock healthy on those overcrowded CAFOs has led to the development of antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria that threaten human health and the environment in their own right.

Eating too much meat is no good for our health, with overindulgence linked to increasing rates of heart disease, cancer and obesity. Worldwide, between 1971 and 2010, production of meat tripled to around 600 billion pounds while global population grew by 81 percent, meaning that we are eating a lot more meat than our grandparents. Researchers extrapolate that

global meat production will double by 2050 to about 1.2 trillion pounds a year, putting further pressure on the environment and human health.

For those who can't give up meat fully, cutting back goes a long way toward helping the environment, as does choosing meat and dairy products from organic, pasture-raised, grass-fed animals. "Ultimately, we need better policies and stronger regulations to reduce the environmental impacts of livestock production," says EWG's Kari Hammerschlag. "But personal shifting of diets is an important step."

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www.vivo.cornell.edu/entirety?home=1&id=5774; NRDC, www.nrdc.org.

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