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CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY CHRIS LEYDEN

National Harbor is decked out for the holidays on an early December afternoon. The complex offers a variety of restaurants and shops, as well as six hotels.

Officials Call National Harbor a Success, But Some Ask Where the Life Is

By CHRIS LEYDEN
Capital News Service

NATIONAL HARBOR — What struck Boston resident Karen Manikowski on her first trip to National Harbor recently was the mint condition the complex was in. Everything from the buildings to the sidewalks were clean and kempt. While this may be due to the diligent efforts of the staff, it may also have something to do with the lack of foot traffic.

"It was a little bit like '(The) Truman Show,'" said the 29-year-old Manikowski, "because it's very pristine, it's very nice, but there's really no sense of realness. It's just kind of like you're living in a pre-fabbed world."

Like many of the visitors to National Harbor on a weekday, Manikowski was there for a conference at one of the six hotels on location. While the weekends bring families from the surrounding area to

the 300-acre National Harbor, weekday traffic is largely dominated by how many conferences are being held.

"There's no one here and there's really nice shops but there is no one in the shops," said Manikowski on an unseasonably warm December afternoon.

National Harbor opened in 2008, and contains boutique-style shops, restaurants to meet anyone's appetite and multiple hotels: the Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, the largest hotel on the East Coast, along with Aloft, a Hampton Inn and Suites, a Residence Inn By Marriott, a Westin and a Wyndham. Between the six hotels, there are over 2,800 rooms for guests to stay in.

A casino, built by MGM Resorts International, is also likely to come to the complex after Maryland voters approved Question 7 in November. It is expected to cost \$800 million and would drive more traffic to National Harbor restaurants and

stores.

"National Harbor has been a real game-changer for Maryland and Prince George's County in terms of destinations and attractions for people to visit," said Camila Clark, public relations and promotions manager for the Maryland Office of Tourism.

Since 2008, Prince George's County has averaged an 8 percent tax-revenue growth each year, said Clark, which can be directly attributed to more shops and restaurants opening up in National Harbor. According to The Washington Post, the complex has cost upwards of \$4 billion to build.

Located just down the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., Clark said that as opposed to competing with the nation's capital, National Harbor "gives visitors to D.C. an option outside of the city."

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New Federal School Lunch Program Leaves Students Hungry

By CHELSEA BOONE
Capital News Service

WASHINGTON — Some public school students across the country have been vocal about their disapproval of the new federal school lunch program, but the problem may go beyond taste with many Maryland students reporting that they leave the cafeteria still hungry, a Capital News Service survey found.

Nearly 90 percent of Maryland public school students responding to a CNS survey said they are sometimes or always left unfulfilled by their school lunch. This follows a national trend that has become publicized since the

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act was implemented nationwide this year.

The federal act required public schools to have certain nutritional guidelines in place, such as calorie restrictions, at the start of the 2012-2013 school year in order to receive additional lunch aid.

Capital News Service created a non-scientific survey using Google forms and distributed it to about 450 schools throughout the state by posting it on Facebook pages associated with the schools. The survey received

See LUNCH, Page A5

Nursing Homes Eating Local, Saving Money

By HANNAH MORGAN
Capital News Service

REISTERSTOWN — A recent lunch at FutureCare Cherrywood, a nursing home in Reisterstown, was Salisbury steaks served with green beans, mashed potatoes and rice pudding.

The ground beef used in the steaks was from farmer Shane Hughes of Liberty Delight Farm, located just four miles from the nursing home. Bread was only offered to those residents who asked for it, in an effort to cut food waste and save money for organic and local food.

Many of the residents were in

wheelchairs and dealing with respiratory issues, but they are taking part in a new statewide initiative at health care facilities that encourages patients to eat more sustainably.

FutureCare Cherrywood is one of nine Maryland health care facilities that is regularly purchasing and serving local, sustainable beef and poultry to its patients, while reducing its food budget.

These hospitals and nursing homes are all part of the Chesapeake Food Leadership Council, a group made up of rep-

See LOCAL, Page A7

Atlantic City is Dying Casino Tax Revenue Declines in New Jersey as Casino Tax Revenues in Surrounding States Increase

By DAVID GUTMAN and MARIA-PIA NEGRO
Capital News Service

COLLEGE PARK — When Superstorm Sandy put Atlantic City under water, it dealt another blow to a city already reeling financially from the economic downturn and recent casino expansion throughout the Mid-Atlantic region.

The explosion of newly legalized casinos over the last decade in neighboring states—New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware—has eroded the monopoly that Atlantic City once held on Mid-Atlantic gambling.

Now, after the passage of Question 7, Maryland will soon be home to six full-service casinos, cutting another slice from a regional gambling pie that is not expanding.

"There is \$6 billion in gaming for the whole region," said Bob McDevitt, the president of Unite Here Local 54, the union representing Atlantic City casino workers. "The casino in Queens has had an impact, and Pennsylvania has had a devastating impact. Almost \$2 billion has moved to Pennsylvania from Atlantic City in gambling revenue."

Revenue at Atlantic City casinos peaked in 2006 at \$5.2 billion, according to data from the Center for Gaming Research at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Around the same time, five casinos opened in Pennsylvania, which had just legalized casino gambling, and revenues in Atlantic City began to slip.

As Pennsylvania continued to

See DYING, Page A3

Despite Gambling Options in State, Some Marylanders Still Prefer Trips to Atlantic City

By CAITLIN JOHNSTON
Capital News Service

ATLANTIC CITY — Every morning, Donald Alcorn misses Michigan.

He misses his house and the quiet. He misses fishing. He misses the life he had before his daughter asked him to move to Maryland so she could better look after him in his old age.

Most of all, he misses the peace. Life is cluttered here. Fish-filled streams and country are replaced by the noise of bickering family. There are fewer places to hide.

Which is why, one Thursday every month, Alcorn boards a bus with about two-dozen other retirees and rides three hours to Atlantic City.

Once there, he makes his way through the garland-covered walkway into Trump Plaza. He walks past the blinking lights and whirring machines, past the cocktail waitresses with full trays, even though it's barely noon.

Halfway through the casino floor, he sits down at a "Lucky Lemmings" slot



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY CAITLIN JOHNSTON.

Sisters Fran Brooks and Johnette Cates ride a bus to Atlantic City. The sisters try to take a trip to Atlantic City a few times a year.

machine, one of his favorites.

As he presses the "spin" button, all those concerns of home and the yearning for Michigan begin to fade away. For the first time that week, his mind starts to clear.

Casino proponents in Maryland rejoiced when November's referendum passed, saying it would keep gambling

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INSIDE

County Crime Hits New Low

Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, Prince George's Police Department (PGPD) Chief Mark A. Magaw, State's Attorney Angela D. Alsobrooks, Sheriff Melvin C. High, along with other local, state, and federal officials, announced the low 2012 crime statistics for the County.

Community, Page A3

New Secretary of DBED

Gov. O'Malley announced Dominic Murray as Maryland's Secretary of Business & Economic Development (DBED), following the decision by Secretary Christian S. Johansson to leave public service to join Maryland-based Laureate Education to head a new group focused on university partnerships in the U.S.

Business, Page A5

Grand Prix of Baltimore

Tickets for Grand Prix of Baltimore Presented by SRT to Go on Sale to General Public December 21. Fans Will Benefit from Expanded Price Options and Reserved-Seating Flexibility. The event will feature a wider range of ticket prices and, multi-day ticket buyers will have the option of selecting different seats for each race

Out on the Town, Page A6

Movie Review "Jack Reacher"

I understand why fans of Lee Child's series of Jack Reacher novels would be upset by the casting of Tom Cruise in the lead role.

Jack Reacher is supposed to be a tall, blond, muscle-bound, physically powerful brute of a man, and Cruise isn't any of those things except a man.

Out on the Town, Page A6

Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:
It might seem obvious, but what would be the primary benefits of public transit as an alternative to the private automobile if our country were to make a major commitment to it?

— James Millerton,
Armstrong, PA

Features, Page A7

Towns and NEIGHBORS

In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

Morningside Rescue Engine 27 featured in 'Firehouse'

Morningside Fire Department's new Rescue Engine gets yet another national nod, this time in the November 2012 issue of Firehouse magazine.

The Engine made two sections; the first was in the Apparatus Showcase section where it was pictured and featured for Spartan Chassis. The second was in the Apparatus Architect column where the Engine was highlighted for its ability to operate as a Squad or an Engine Company.

Rescue Engine 27 went into production in January 2012, after a thorough design process, and was delivered in April. It's the pride of the department.

Baby Katelyn

Ruth Sanford, of Morningside, has a new great-granddaughter, Katelyn Morgan Brown-Sandoval, born in Baltimore Nov. 30 to Kevin and Kerri Sandoval. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 11 ounces. Ruth's daughter Linda Sandoval is the proud grandmother.

Neighbors

A group of residents, most from Offut Drive, gathered on the street Dec. 18 to meet with WSSC inspectors and other authorities, to point out how water is coming up right through the newly paved street, apparently from new-laid pipes, though maybe from springs. Investigation continues.

Nita Boone, formerly of Suitland Road, called from her new home in Pennsylvania to report that she had been here, visiting family and friends, when she stopped at the ESSO station, corner of Suitland and Skyline Drive, to get gas. She was having problems with the pump when a nice man said, "I'll help you." He directed her to another

pump and pumped the gas for her. She asked me to say that there are nice people everywhere.

Correction: In last week's column I wished happy Dec. 24 birthday to Ken Miller, and referred to him as "former Morningsider Mayor." Well, he was never mayor. He was a Town council member from 1989 to 1991.

Last week, what did I hear going by the house on a cold December day? The ice-cream truck playing "Twinkle Twinkle, Little Star"!

Congratulations

To Wise High School—now attended by Morningside and Skyline highschoolers—on toppling Quince Orchard to win the Class 4A State Title. The Pumas went undefeated this season. By the way, the school name is Dr. Henry A. Wise Jr. High School.

To Selena Holmes, a student at Suitland High, who created Stanley, a life-size octopus made of chicken wire, cloth, surgical gauze, dowel rods, paper mache, marbles, lights and bottle tops, to win first prize in the category of workmanship at the 11th annual Maryland Department of the Environment Rethink Recycling Sculpture Contest on Nov. 16. First Lady Katie O'Malley presented Serena with her award, a Nook Tablet.

To Mason Arroyo, 2nd grader at St. Mary's School of Piscataway, on being awarded 1st Place for the Christmas card he designed for the Catholic Standard newspaper's annual Christmas Card contest.

Morningside Memories

On Oct. 5, 1982, Tommy Wiman was honored with a surprise party on retiring as manager of Skyline Restaurant, which he had owned since 1968. Hosts were the Morningside Sportsmen Club, Dick Journey

and restaurant employees. Among the guests were Maryland State Delegates Joe Vallerio, John Wolfgang and Bill McCaffrey.

May they rest in peace

Gwendolyn M "Dodie" Savoy, 47, a cook at Shady Oak Inn in District Heights, died Dec. 6. She was the daughter of William Fletcher and May Savoy, mother of Phillip and Delonte Savoy, Derrell Owens and the late Nakia Savoy. She is also survived by four siblings and two grandchildren. Her friend and co-worker Chuckie Henry called to give me the sad news, said he had planned to take her to Ocean City on her next birthday, May 7.

Thomas J. Allshouse Sr., 61, marketing executive and a 1969 graduate of McNamara High School, died Dec. 8. He is survived by his wife of 12 years, Kit; sons, Thomas J. Sr. and Brian M. Allshouse; stepson, Broc Wilkerson; six siblings; and a grandson.

Milestones

Happy birthday to Christopher Garris, Anne Lucas, Patsy Anderson and my granddaughter Samantha McHale, Dec. 28; Brayden Proctor, Dec. 29; Amy Anthony and Robert Tretler, Dec. 30; Pat Spry, Dec. 31; Sister Haimanot, Dorothy Cullinan and Bridget Vilky, Jan. 1; Carmina Young and Evelyn Lozano, Jan. 2; Gene Desmarais and Courtnei Bland, Jan. 3.

Happy anniversary to my grandson David and Nina McHale, their 12th on Dec. 30; Tom and Monique Laws, on Jan. 3; my grandson Conor and Heather McHale, their 9th on Jan. 3. And to my Jack, in heaven, happy 62nd anniversary. We were wed at St. Mary's Cathedral in Saginaw, Michigan, at 9 o'clock in the morning, Jan. 3, 1951.

Brandywine-Aquasco

by Ruth Turner 301 888 2153

18th ANNUAL DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. BREAKFAST

Come and join us for breakfast on Saturday January 19, 2013 from 9:30 AM-11:30 AM. (Move The Dream forward thru Pride, Diversity and Culture). The location for the breakfast is North Point High School 2500 Davis Road, Waldorf Maryland 20603.

For tickets please contact Ruth Proctor 240-346-5129 or Robina Spruill 240-441-8080. Cost of tickets (adults \$30.00 and children under 12 is \$15.00).

CREATIVE AND VISUAL PERFORMING ART PROGRAM

Now is the time to apply for the 2013-2014 Creative and Visual Performing Arts Program at Suitland High School. The deadline is February 1, 2013. The Center for the Visual and Performing Arts is a rigorous four-year arts program. The program includes Dance, Drama, TV Production, Instructional Music, Visual Arts and Vocal Music.

This program is offered to educational, artistically talented high school students in Prince

George's County. Please contact the program coordinator Maria Saldana- Suitland-switl.cvpa@pgcps.org if you have questions.

GREATER BADEN-AQUASCO CIVIC ASSOCIATION

GBACA promotes and protects the quality of life in our community. Our meetings are 3rd Wed/odd months at Baden Firehouse. Telephone number is 301-888-1587.

CHANGE YOUR COMMUNITY

Many volunteer opportunities can be found through the M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation. Volunteering is a healthy habit and if you would like to volunteer in your community you can get a complete list of opportunities, visit:

www.pgpcps.com/Volunteers. To get more information, contact the Department's Volunteer Services and Community Partnerships Coordinator at 301-446-3321.

MID ATLANTIC OUT-DOOR SPORTSMAN EXPO

Visit the Expo Friday, January 11, 2013 at Show Place Arena located at 14900

Pennsylvania Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. The time is 1:00 PM to 8:00 PM. There will be over 100 hunting, fishing, boating and outdoor specialists. There will be guest speakers who will cover topics like targeting rock fish in the Chesapeake and how to prepare for your fish African hunt. Specialists will also prepare you how to tackle the bay with light tackle. A large selection of outdoor gear and fishing tackle will be available to purchase.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR KIDS

Children's Global Readiness Academy located at 70 Watkins Park Drive in Upper Marlboro Maryland will offer Spanish and French to students ages 2-12 and French to students ages 2-12 from January 12, 2013-March 16, 2013. Activities includes total immersion Spanish or French, Arts & Crafts/ Movement and Exercise, Vocabulary/Reading/Writing/Snack.

At the Academy students develop language skills through a professional curriculum. Call or email for enrollment information: info@cgrkids.org or call 301-842-4056.

Neighborhood Events

Edwards and others: Chained CPI Should Have No Part in Deficit Deal

Washington, DC —

Representatives Edwards (MD-04), Grijalva (AZ-07), Ellison (IL-05), Schawkowski (IL-06), Defazio (OR-04), and others condemned the use of the chained CPI in any deficit reduction deal. The chained CPI represents an immediate benefits cut for over 56 million seniors, children, veterans, and the disabled. The Congressional Budget Office finds that the chained CPI grows more slowly than does the traditional CPI, stating "the effects would be felt with each [cost-of-living adjustment], when benefits would be slightly smaller than they would have been without the change in indexing. The impact would be greater the longer people received benefits." Therefore, the average Social Security recipient, who at age 65 receives just \$15,000 per year, will suffer cuts of \$650 a year by age 75 and \$1,130 a year by age 85. All total, those losses by age 95 for a retiree with average earnings would be nearly \$25,000. Members of Congress were joined by the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM), and numerous other groups (see below).

"We must reach a deal and we must strengthen Social Security. But those two goals must not be conflated at this critical moment. Using the chained CPI as a mechanism to achieve savings is unfair to beneficiaries and further reduces already modest benefits for millions of Americans," said Representative Edwards.

"The less money our Social Security recipients — including 9 million veterans — are able to spend, the less money goes to the businesses that create jobs. Chained CPI makes life harder for millions of retirees, weakens Social Security and doesn't reduce the deficit by a penny. It's a Beltway fig leaf that I will never support, and I call on my colleagues to make their feelings known as soon as possible before this becomes yet another piece of conventional wisdom that makes things worse," said Representative Grijalva.

"102 Democrats signed a letter saying Social Security should be off the table in these negotiations. Any agreement brought to the House floor is going to need many of those same Democrats to pass, so it will be difficult to pass something that includes a cut for those who use every dollar from their Social Security checks to pay for food and housing," said Representative Ellison.

"We cannot punish seniors for a deficit they did not create. Millionaires and billionaires should pay the Clinton era tax rates-period. If we do nothing, millionaires and billionaires pay more so why should we diminish the already inadequate COLA as part of a final deal? I am urging the president, and my colleagues, to reject the chained CPI just to avoid the so-called 'fiscal cliff'," said

Representative DeFazio.

"In order for Republicans to agree to ask even a single penny more from the very wealthiest Americans, they are demanding cuts to programs like Social Security and Medicare that help the poorest adults — seniors. I refuse to accept that we need to ask poor seniors to sacrifice in order to have the most fortunate give a little bit more. We should not put a higher burden on lower-income and middle-class seniors and the millions of American families who depend on their earned benefits. To do so in order to shield the wealthiest Americans from a tax increase is nothing less than immoral, said Representative Schakowsky.

"Those who want to cut Social Security are burying this plan's harsh nature in technocratic language by calling it 'chained CPI indexing.' But big words can't hide hard truths: this plan is a cut for America's seniors, one that would harm our oldest and most vulnerable seniors the most, one that asks for no shared sacrifice from anyone else in the nation. That is simply, brutally wrong," said Representative Rush Holt, NJ-12.

"Pure and simple, this is a benefits cut placed largely on the poor and middle class. In fact, cutting COLAs would be especially harmful to women — including those of color — who live longer but have less wealth than men. Instead of protecting the American people against growing retirement, disability and survivorship risks, the chained CPI would do the opposite by weakening the earned inflation protection of current and future beneficiaries," said Dan Adcock, Director of Government Relations and Policy, NCPSSM.

The following groups supported this event: AFL-CIO, Alliance for Retired Americans, Latinos for a Secure Retirement, NCPSSM, National Organization for Women, National Women's Law Center, ProgressiveCongress.org, Progressive Change Campaign Committee, Social Security Works, Strengthen Social Security Coalition

Prince George's County Offers Christmas Tree Recycling Collection and Drop-Off Services

Christmas Tree Recycling Program provides environmentally safe alternative for the disposal of holiday trees

LARGO, MD — The Prince George's County Department of Environmental Resources' (DER) Waste Management Division will provide County residents with Christmas tree collection and drop-off services for recycling of their live Christmas trees, at no charge, beginning December 26, 2012 and continuing through February 1, 2013.

To participate, residents with County-provided yard waste collection should place

their undecorated live Christmas trees at the curb before 6:30 a.m. on their regularly scheduled collection day. Residents may also bring their undecorated tree, at no charge, to the Prince George's County Yard Waste Composting Facility located at 6601 Southeast Crain Highway in Upper Marlboro, Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. In addition, residents may bring their undecorated, live trees to the Brown Station Road Public Convenience Center located at 3501 Brown Station Road in Upper Marlboro, Monday through Saturday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

"I encourage you to 'go green' this holiday and recycle your Christmas tree, said DER Acting Director Adam Ortiz. "By recycling your live Christmas tree, you will help to save valuable landfill space and create a valuable resource for landscaping."

Every tree collected will be shredded and cured into mulch for DER's annual spring Mulch Giveaway. Last year more than 168 tons of Christmas trees were collected for recycling.

For more information on recycling, call the 3-1-1 Call Center.

Hundreds of 4TH Graders Selected for WSSC'S 2013 Children's Water Festival Elementary Schools in Montgomery, Prince George's Counties Selected to Participate

Laurel, 2012: In a lottery-style drawing held at the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) headquarters, schools from Montgomery and Prince George's counties were selected to participate in the 8th Annual Children's Water Festival to take place May 8 and 9, 2013 at WSSC's Brighton Dam facility in Brookeville, Maryland. Over the two days, several hundred 4th graders will spend one day per group learning about water.

The winners in the drawing, selected by WSSC Commission Chair Christopher Lawson (Prince George's County) and Vice-Chair Gene Counihan (Montgomery County) are:

From Prince George's County: Indian Queen Elementary School in Fort Washington; Lewisdale Elementary School in Hyattsville and Rockledge Elementary School in Bowie. From Montgomery County: Belmont Elementary School in Olney; Candlewood Elementary School in Derwood and Waters Landing Elementary School in Germantown.

The Children's Water Festival offers students the opportunity to participate in hands-on learning activities about water, wetlands, human health, aquatic life and more. Each year the festival coincides with "National Drinking Water Week" and provides the students with a chance to dive into the world of water education and soak up an exciting, interactive lesson about life's most precious resource.

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Call 310-627-0900

COMMUNITY

Practical Money Skills

By Jason Alderman

Retirement Plan Limits Increase in 2013

Benjamin Franklin once declared, "Nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." Although I don't have any updates on the former, where taxes are concerned I do have news:

As it does every year, the Internal Revenue Service announced 2013 cost-of-living adjustments to many of the amounts you and your employer can contribute

toward your retirement accounts. These new limits mean most people will be able to contribute more money in tax-advantaged accounts for their retirement savings.

Here are highlights of what will and won't change in 2013:

Defined contribution plans. The maximum allowable annual contribution you can make to workplace 401(k), 403(b), 457(b) and federal Thrift Savings plans increases by \$500 to \$17,500. Keep in mind these additional factors:

People over 50 can also make an additional \$5,500 in catch-up contributions (unchanged from 2012).

The annual limit for combined employee and employer contributions increased by \$1,000 to \$51,000.

Because your plan may limit the percentage of pay you can contribute, your maximum contribution may actually be less. (For example, if the maximum contribution is 10 percent of pay and you earn \$50,000, you could only contribute \$5,000.)

Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). The maximum annual contribution to IRAs increases by \$500 to \$5,500 (plus an additional \$1,000 if 50 or older — unchanged from 2012). Maximum contributions to traditional IRAs are not impacted by personal income, but if your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds certain limits, the maximum amount you can contribute to a Roth IRA gradually phases out:

For singles/heads of households the phase-out range is \$112,000 to \$127,000 (increased from \$110,000 to \$125,000 in 2012). Above \$127,000, you cannot contribute to a Roth.

For married couples filing jointly, the range is \$178,000 to \$188,000 (up from \$173,000 to \$183,000 in 2012).

Keep in mind these rules for deducting traditional IRA contributions on your federal tax return:

If you're single, a head of household, a qualifying widow(er) or married and neither spouse is covered by an employer-provided retirement plan you can deduct the full IRA contribution, regardless of income.

If you are covered by an employer plan and are single or a head of household, the tax deduction phases out for AGI between \$59,000 and \$69,000 (up from \$58,000 to \$68,000 in 2012); if married and filing jointly, the phase-out range is \$95,000 to \$115,000 (up from \$92,000 to \$112,000 in 2012).

If you're married and aren't covered by an employer plan but your spouse is, the IRA deduction is phased out if your combined AGI is between \$178,000 and \$188,000 (up from \$173,000 to \$183,000 in 2012).

For more details, read IRS Publication 590 at www.irs.gov.

Retirement Saver Tax Credit: As an incentive to help low- and moderate-income workers save for retirement through an IRA or company-sponsored plan, many are eligible for a Retirement Saver's Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 (\$2,000 if filing jointly). This credit lowers your tax bill, dollar for dollar, in addition to any other tax deduction you already receive for your contribution.

Qualifying income ceiling limits for the Retirement Saver's Tax Credit increased in 2012 to \$59,000 for joint filers, \$44,250 for heads of household, and \$29,500 for singles or married persons filing separately. Consult IRS Form 8880 for more information.

Jason Alderman directs Visa's financial education programs. To Follow Jason Alderman on Twitter: www.twitter.com/PracticalMoney.



Baker Announced Historic Reduction in Overall Crime

By PRESS OFFICER
County Executive's Office

Upper Marlboro, MD — During a standing room only press conference, Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III, Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, Prince George's Police Department (PGPD) Chief Mark A. Magaw, State's Attorney Angela D. Alsobrooks, Sheriff Melvin C. High, along with other local, state, and federal officials, convened to announce the historically low 2012 crime statistics for Prince George's County and early correlated impact of the Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI).

"When all public safety partners are working in concert and engaging the communities they serve, positive results are more likely," said Baker. "Today's statistics are an overwhelming result and a sign that the infusion of the community policing, the Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative strategy, collective efforts of the State's Attorney and Sheriff's Offices as well as State and Federal resources are making an undeniable mark in all categories of the County's

public safety commitment to our residents and citizens ~ to serve and protect."

Since 1992 the County-wide crime trend in Prince George's County has seen significant peaks and fluctuating valleys. In 2012, the crime cliff dramatically began to spiral downward in the following areas: Overall Violent Crime 7.6%; Overall Property Crime -7.1% and Overall Total Crime 7.1% (2,240). Fatal Motor Vehicle Crashes in the County are down by 29%. Fatal Pedestrian Crashes are down 14%. Homicides are down by 35.5%, Robberies down by 8.5%, Burglaries down by 19%, Stolen Cars down by 14.9% and Non-Fatal shootings down by 12%.

"Thanks to County Executive Baker's leadership and the hard work of County, State, and local law enforcement, we've continued to make significant progress in building a stronger, safer Prince George's County," said Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown. "But our work is far from over, and I look forward to continuing our efforts until all of our communities -- in Prince George's County and throughout Maryland -- are safe and strong."



PHOTO BY COUNTY EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE
Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown and Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III

"It has taken a collaborative effort to achieve this level of crime reduction. I want to thank County Executive Baker, Chief Magaw, Sheriff High and the entire Prince George's County law enforcement community for their commitment to ensuring the safety of our citizens," said Prince George's County State's Attorney Angela D. Alsobrooks.

The Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative is a holistic approach to uplifting communities through the coordination of social services, anti-crime programs and job creation. "All peo-

ple across our great County want the same things and the best way to yield better results is through innovative strategies and open communication," said Baker. "It is evident that early signs of TNI's impact are a correlated factor in the County's reduction in crime."

All six TNI areas: Langley Park, East Riverdale/Bladensburg, Palmer Park/Kentland, Suitland, Hillcrest Heights/Marlow Heights and Glassmanor/Oxon Hill encompassed a drop in Violent Crime -11.5%, Property Crime -7% and Overall Crime -8.75%.

Dying from A1

open casinos (there are currently 11), Delaware horse tracks morphed into racinos, and slot machine parlors opened in New York City, Atlantic City casino revenues fell off a cliff. From 2006 to 2011, Atlantic City casino revenues fell over 36 percent.

And with the revenue has gone the jobs. From 2006 to 2011, Atlantic City lost 12,220 casino jobs, while Pennsylvania gained 11,850 casino jobs over the same period.

"The damage that's been done has been done, Maryland won't have that much of an impact," McDevitt said. "The real impact has been Delaware. When they developed the three casinos in Delaware, they gave people the opportunity to not drive the extra hour and a half to

Atlantic City from the D.C. and Baltimore areas."

Tony Rodio, the president of the Tropicana Casino and Resort and head of the Casino Association of New Jersey, said the success of year-round residents in Atlantic City and the surrounding areas correlates with the casinos' success.

"When the casino industry is not doing as well, there are not as many hours to be worked, not as many jobs to be had and our local suppliers don't get as much service requests," Rodio said.

As casino jobs disappeared, the unemployment rate soared. It was 12.9 percent in October, ranking Atlantic City 362nd out of the 372 metropolitan areas that the Bureau of Labor and Statistics tracks.

While tax revenue has obvi-

ously fallen as the casinos draw in less money, demand for social services has spiked. In the last five years, food stamp recipients in Atlantic County, N.J., (home to Atlantic City) have doubled, according to the New Jersey Department of Human Services.

"People asking for help are usually families that are underemployed. They might work in the casino industry, in the kitchens or housekeeping-type jobs," said Tom Davidson, director of development at Atlantic City Rescue Mission, a local shelter and food pantry.

Davidson has seen a steady increase of people asking for help—including families in crisis who receive one of 250 emergency food baskets every month.

Over the last six years, families receiving assistance from the

Community FoodBank of New Jersey nearly doubled, said Margie Barham, the food bank's southern Jersey executive director.

The rise in families applying for charitable assistance mirrors the rise of unemployment and underemployment in the state, said Diane Riley, the food bank's director of advocacy.

"People are not making enough. They have to pay their rent first and then perhaps supplementing their food," Barham said. "They get on food stamps, go to food pantries, try to do whatever they can."

Sandy has just exacerbated the underlying problems.

"No one is coming to the casinos because half our market is underwater," McDevitt said. "Half our members haven't worked since the storm."

Harbor from A1

Gwen McCall is the president and CEO of the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation, a nonprofit that receives funding from the county.

National Harbor has been extremely successful, McCall said, and has stopped residents in Prince George's County from having to leave the county when looking for a place to shop and eat.

"A lot of the things that we hear from people, from the residents of Prince George's County, is that they don't have the type of amenities that they have here," said McCall. "Well those things are offered now at National Harbor."

Prince George's County is the most affluent, majority-black county in the nation, yet prior to National Harbor many shoppers would make trips across the river to Virginia or travel into Montgomery County to shop.

With restaurants like McCormick and Schmick's, Ketchup and Cadillac Ranch, and shopping destinations like Build-A-Bear Workshop, Harley-Davidson and Life is Good, National Harbor now gives county residents an upscale shopping destination to spend their money locally. The addition of Tanger Outlets, expected to open in 2013, will only bring more revenue into the county.

One complaint that has arisen about National Harbor is the difficulty in getting there for those without a car. While McCall acknowledged having a Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority subway station at the complex would be advantageous, she said the visibility from the Capital Beltway and travelers heading up and down the I-95 corridor makes up for this lost traffic.

"I think everybody would love it if the Metro came right here," said Karen Simonet, general manager for Peeps and Co.'s

National Harbor location. For those looking to take mass transportation to National Harbor now, there are both buses and water taxi companies that service the area from nearby Metro stops.

The foot traffic also varies by season and time of week, said Simonet, as is often the case with an outdoor shopping area without large offices nearby. Simonet said as National Harbor grows, so should her shop's business.

"During the week we have a lot of people that are attending conventions in the area," said Simonet, "and on the weekends we have a lot more of the families and more of our local crowd."

Albert Black is so convinced National Harbor is sustainable that he is transferring in from New Jersey, saying that at 43-years-old and after being in hospitality for 27 years he doesn't want to move around any longer. Black will work at Bond 45's National Harbor location. The

restaurant is part of Fireman Hospitality Group, which owns two restaurants in National Harbor and is looking to open a third on the property.

Having worked throughout the country, Black said the complex most reminds him of Coconut Grove in Miami, in that it is a pedestrian town and a "closed community."

"I've never seen so many police cars and officers in an area than I've seen here," said Black. "That just shows me that they are hell-bent on making sure all the suits, and all the convention goers and all the families that are here for the ice sculpture feel safe and feel safe returning."

While there is no denying that National Harbor is beautiful and clean, Manikowski said a sense of liveliness has not yet followed.

"It kind of seems like they have this idea to create this nice neighborhood," she said. "But they kind of forgot about the people."



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COMMENTARY

Barbara A. Mikulski United States Senator for Maryland



Mikulski Speaks on Senate Floor

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.) today spoke on the Senate floor after being ratified by her Democratic colleagues as the Chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. She is the Committee's first woman chair, succeeding Senator Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), who sadly passed away on Monday.

The Senate Appropriations Committee's role is defined by the U.S. Constitution, which requires "appropriations made by law" prior to the expenditure of any money from the Federal treasury. The Committee writes the legislation that allocates federal funds to the numerous government agencies, departments and organizations on an annual basis.

Senator Mikulski's full remarks, as delivered, follow:

"The Democratic Caucus has just ratified me as the Chair of the United States Senate Appropriations Committee.

"I take to the floor today to announce that with great humility. I am following in the footsteps of Senator Danny Inouye, who was indeed a giant among men, a war hero and an advocate for social justice, national security and a compassionate government.

"As I assume this Chairmanship, I look forward to working with each and every member of the United States Senate, both within my own Caucus and across the aisle, and to having a committee that functions on a bipartisan basis.

"The Appropriations Committee is a Constitutionally mandated committee. It is governed by the Constitution of the United States, by the laws of the land and by the rules of the United States Senate. And under the Constitution, the Founding Fathers said that every year there should be a review of the annual federal expenditures.

"And that's what our Committee will do. We will bring forward legislation that will show the expenditures of the United States government as we propose them to be ratified by the full Senate. We will do it all on a bipartisan basis.

"One of the first calls I made when I knew that this honor would come to me, was to reach across the aisle to Senator Richard Shelby of Alabama, my good friend and colleague, who is now the

Ranking Member on Appropriations. I reached out to him to say — as I say publicly today — that when we look at how we are going to spend the money, we need to look not just at how we're going to meet our national security needs but also the compelling human needs in this country. We need to look at the public investments in our children, in our future and in how to promote our economy. And we need to do it on a bipartisan basis. I want to thank Senator Shelby, because he assured me of his cooperation to do so.

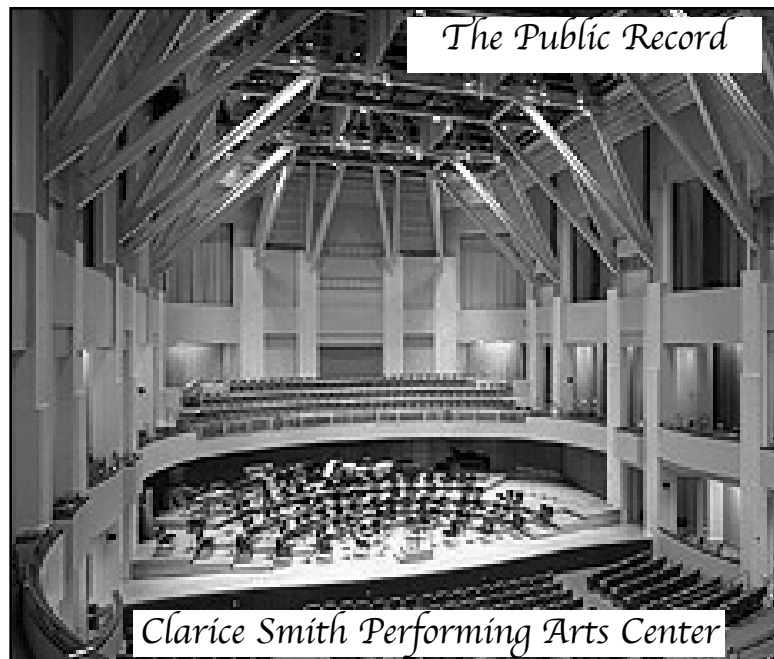
"Our committee will function in a way that is open, transparent and follows the regular order. What we want to do in following the regular order is today ask our colleagues to join with us in moving the urgent Supplemental Appropriations Bill, which so many of the American people are depending on us to pass to restore homes, lives and livelihoods.

"It's going to be a new day in Appropriations, but we're going to follow old-school values of the men who went before us. Danny Inouye. Ted Stevens. Men who fought in World War II to defend America. They stood on this Senate floor to defend the Constitution, and they spoke up for their states. That's what we're going to do.

"But I want everyone to know we also will ensure our spending reflects our values of protecting our country, protecting vulnerable populations and to also preparing America for the future.

"I will have more to say about all of this at a later time, but I just wanted to say I take this not as an honor, but as a great responsibility. I'm so appreciative of the Caucus who confirmed me and I'm very appreciative of the way members of the other side of the aisle have also reached out.

"You know, if we take the time to listen to each other, to respect each other and listen to the needs of the people, we can really work to get more bang out of the buck and get more value for the dollar. We can have a stronger economy and a safer country. We can be frugal without being heartless. And at the same time, we can assure the taxpayers that we've heard them. They want us to really do a better job with our spending but at the same time they want to see it done in an open and transparent process."



The Public Record

Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center

From the moment it opened, the **Clarice Smith Center at Maryland** has redefined the artistic and physical landscape of the University of Maryland campus and Prince George's County. The Center continues to fulfill the mission of serving diverse regional audiences as well as campus departments and residents. Our 318,000 square foot facility, located on 17 acres, has been praised for its extraordinary architecture and acoustics.

Pictured: Elsie & Marvin Dekebloum Concert Hall

Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



It Is Time to Act to Protect Children Against Gun Violence

Over the past few days we've all learned a bit more about twenty beautiful six- and seven-year-olds who each seem as if they could have been any of our children or grandchildren. Jessica asked Santa for new cowgirl boots for Christmas. Daniel's family said he "earned" all the ripped knees on his jeans. James liked to remind people that he was six and three-quarters. Grace loved playing dress-up and with her dog Puddin'.

As the stories kept coming about the children and teachers at Sandy Hook Elementary School and their families began saying goodbye, many of us have spent much of the last week in tears. But many parents, especially those with their own young children, have instead gone through each day desperately willing themselves not to cry—trying to do what little they could to protect their children from the overwhelming adult sadness all around them. After all, for most parents protecting their children is a primal and primary instinct. This is just one reason this tragedy, which happened in school—a place where tens of millions of parents send their children every single day and need to trust they will be safe, has instilled so much horror and despair.

When two serial snipers terrorized the Washington, D.C. area ten years ago, using a Bushmaster .223-caliber rifle very similar to the one used in the Newtown shootings, one of the most horrifying moments came after the shooters targeted a child on his way to school, later asserting in a note: "Your children are not safe anywhere at any time." After this latest tragedy, America's mothers, grandmothers, fathers, grandfathers, and all those with a mothering spirit must finally stand up and fight that truth and make our politicians act to fight that truth doing whatever it takes for as long as it takes. We must seize the moment and say no more.

Right now the pervasive culture of violence in America only reinforces the sense of threat both children and adults feel. This year's "Black Friday" shopping set a record for gun sales: the FBI reported 154,873 requests for background checks from shoppers wanting to buy guns on the day after Thanksgiving alone. Those numbers are not about what many people think of as the "criminal" gun culture involv-

ing guns bought and sold on the streets. These are the guns being sold to the millions of Americans who are willing and able to go through background checks and follow all existing laws and proper legal channels so that they can either buy guns for their own pleasure or their own theoretical protection. It appears the Newtown shooter's mother fell into this very large category of Americans. There were 16.8 million background checks in 2012, nearly double the number ten years ago. What is it about American culture that encourages tens of millions of Americans to either use guns as a form of entertainment or feel so fearful they believe they need guns in their homes, including semiautomatic weapons and high capacity ammunition clips designed specifically to kill large numbers of other people, to feel a sense of safety?

Why are we so terrified of one other, even during periods when actual crime rates go down? There is an obvious connection between that feeling of terror and the culture of violence that saturates Americans in violent language, violent imagery, and violent entertainment. Right now, instead of responding as parents and a nation by saying no to the culture of violence, we are apparently responding by defensively arming ourselves with more and bigger weapons. If that cycle of violence and fear is having such a deep psychological impact on adults, how do

we expect our children to navigate or survive it?

The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence reports a gun in the home is more likely to be used in a homicide, suicide, or unintentional shooting than it is to be used in self-defense, and other studies have found guns in a home are more likely to kill or injure a family member or friend than a stranger. Guns lethargize anger and despair. Gun owners who know these facts seem to either discredit the research behind them or hold to the belief their own guns and families would certainly be the exception. If the Newtown shooter's mother knew those risks she likely felt the same way. In fact, if her son had only used her guns to kill her or kill himself, it would have been an outcome that would never have been national news. Instead, the weapons she apparently chose to buy and bring into her home were used to kill her, her child, and twenty-six other people who were all somebody else's mother, child, or both.

All mothers who allow firearms in their homes should ask themselves what kinds of guns they are deliberately, inadvertently, or by example giving their own children access to—and why? All mothers who don't keep guns in their own homes but do allow their children to visit anyone else's homes should be aware that

See WATCH, Page A8

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



Gun Violence in America

"These neighborhoods are our neighborhoods and these children are our children. We're going to have to come together and take meaningful action to prevent more tragedies like this..."

President Barack Obama

A movie theater in Aurora, Colorado. A Sikh Temple in Wisconsin. A shopping mall in Oregon. A political event in Tucson, Arizona. The weekend streets of big cities like Chicago. And now a first grade class in Newtown, Connecticut. When will the madness stop? When will we take "meaningful action" to end gun violence in America? These are just the latest high-profile mass shootings that have taken the lives of too many innocent victims. And when those victims are small school children and their teachers, the weight of grief is almost too much to bear.

A weight of responsibility also falls on our shoulders. Immediately after one of these mass killings, someone always says it is too soon to talk about sensible gun control measures. We must take time to grieve first. But after the flying of flags at half-staff and the tearful memorial services, we invariably go back to business as usual. I say, not this time. As a father, a former mayor and a life-long advocate of a safe and quality education for every child, I too am in mourning. But at the same time, I call on our leaders in Washington and in states across this nation, to take immediate action to protect our children and prevent the kind of senseless carnage we saw last week.

Even before this latest tragedy, for years, the National Urban League has been calling for sensible gun control. In fact, on the day after the

recent presidential election, I sent a letter to President Obama and the leaders in the House of Representatives, saying in part. "The scourge of gun violence cries out for a comprehensive approach to community safety and crime reduction. This requires stronger enforcement of existing gun laws and re-enactment of the assault weapons ban..." We asked the President and the Congress to make this a top priority for the next four years.

Gun violence has often been associated with poor, urban neighborhoods, and it is true that urban violence is much too prevalent. But most of these mass shootings have occurred in quiet, suburban towns where crime is typically low and gun ownership is high. The point is, gun violence can happen anywhere. The one common denominator is easy access to guns. In a nation of 314 million, there are 270 million privately held firearms. It is no coincidence that America has the highest gun-related murder rate of any developed country. And it's not just criminal gun violence. There are a substantial number of gun-related suicides and accidental deaths. Just last week, a 3-year-old Oklahoma boy found a gun in a relative's home, shot himself in the head and died. Clearly, fewer guns in America and none in the wrong hands must be part of the solution. We are pleased that on Sunday's "Meet the Press" Senator Dianne Feinstein pledged to introduce a gun control bill on the first day of the next Congress that would limit the sale, transfer and possession of assault weapons, along with high capacity magazines. She expects the President to offer his support for the law. We hope so. It's time to turn our tears into action.

The Prince George's Post

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BUSINESS

Small Business Spotlight

MBDA Establishes Partnership with Alliance of Healthcare Stakeholders to Expand Opportunities for Minority-Owned Firms

Agreement Increases Firms' Access to Networking and Certification Opportunities

WASHINGTON, 2012) — The U.S. Commerce Department's Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Healthcare Supplier Diversity Alliance (HSDA) that establishes guidelines for a working relationship aimed at opening doors to the healthcare industry for minority-owned firms.

The MOU, signed during the National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference on December 5-6, 2012, will increase access to healthcare procurement opportunities for minority-owned businesses that currently provide goods and services to treat patients, assemble medical equipment and supplies, and manufacture medicines and new biotechnologies. The partnership will also create a pathway for minority-owned firms that seek to enter the healthcare supply chain.

Some of the major provisions of the agreement include MBDA client participation in HSDA's Executive Healthcare Certificate Program facilitated in partnership with Rutgers University's Center for Management Development and Novation. MBDA clients will also be invited to attend the annual Owens & Minor Supplier Diversity Symposium to network with healthcare supply chain executives and procurement decision makers.

"This partnership is an example of the commitment by the Obama Administration, the Commerce Department and MBDA to create greater access for minority-owned firms in emerging and high-growth sectors. The medical sector is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries that is leading the way in job creation," said David A. Hinson, MBDA National Director.

The Healthcare Supplier Diversity Alliance was formally established in 2003 to improve supplier diversity in healthcare. HSDA is comprised of industry executives who promote diversity in the healthcare supply chain, implement best practices and partner with like-minded allies. "In the midst of our economic challenges, three industry sectors fared better than others — transportation, energy and healthcare," states Kevin J. Price, HSDA Board Treasurer. "Supplier diversity is gaining visibility as a business imperative in the healthcare industry, particularly in highly competitive markets. HSDA is a catalyst for encouraging diversity in the healthcare supply chain process and we are excited about furthering our efforts with the addition of our new relationship with MBDA."

Healthcare is a \$2.5 trillion dollar industry that has steadily increased spending at an average annual rate of 4% since 1960. It also represents one of the top industry sectors for minority-owned businesses with over 13% of all minority firms concentrated in Healthcare and Social Assistance.

To learn more about HSDA and MBDA alliance, visit www.mbd.gov.

Governor Martin O'Malley Appoints Dominick Murray Secretary of Economic Development

By PRESS OFFICER
Department of Business and Economic Development

ANNAPOLIS, MD (December, 2012) — Governor Martin O'Malley announced Dominick Murray as Maryland's Secretary of Business & Economic Development (DBED), following the decision by current Secretary Christian S. Johansson to leave public service to join Maryland-based Laureate Education to head a new group focused on university partnerships in the U.S. Succeeding Murray as Deputy Secretary will be Robert Walker, who previously served as the Department's Chief Operating Officer and Assistant Secretary for Business and Enterprise Development, as well as Maryland's Secretary of Agriculture. The changes will be effective mid-January.

"We are fortunate to have someone with Dominick's knowledge and extensive background in economic development take the helm at DBED. Maryland is recovering jobs at the 7th fastest rate in the nation and we have great confidence that Dominick will continue that progress," said Governor O'Malley. "I want to thank Christian for his work in creating an economic development strategy centered on creating jobs not just for today, but creating jobs for generations to come. Under Christian's leadership, we put in place a number of key programs to put Maryland at the forefront of entrepreneurship and innovation, including the largest venture capital program in State history — InvestMaryland. I could not have asked for a more engaged or visionary person to help me move Maryland's economy forward and I wish him well in his new endeavors."

Murray has served as DBED's Deputy Secretary since 2007, and has been an integral part of Governor O'Malley's business development and job growth team for more than 10 years, leading Baltimore City's economic development efforts during the Governor's tenure as Mayor of Baltimore. In that role, Murray streamlined the City's development and permitting processes, facilitated inter-agency communication on development issues and acted as a business community ombudsman for the Mayor's office.

His advocacy for Maryland's businesses continued during his tenure at DBED, where he has led the agency's regional development team and offered critical assistance to Maryland's local economic development offices and businesses. Murray also designed and implemented DBED's participation in the Governor's Delivery Unit, which works with agencies to help them align state and federal resources around 15 strategic and visionary goals the Governor has outlined to improve the quality of life in Maryland. He has served on critical technology and business development boards, including the Greater Baltimore Committee's Technology Council, the Maryland Aviation Administration board, the Marcellus Shale Advisory Commission and the Governor's Workforce Investment board.

A Michigan native who earned a BA from the University of Detroit, Murray also brings to the position significant private sector experience and perspective, after working in sales and marketing and senior management at large corporations like Chrysler, Westinghouse, GE Capital and CBS Radio, as well as in small companies like O/E



PHOTO COURTESY DBED
Dominick Murray, Maryland's Secretary of Business & Economic Development

Mid-Atlantic, G1440 and ARIS Corp. His public service also includes serving on the boards of the Johns Hopkins Diabetes Center and the UMBC Cooperative Education Office.

Johansson, who joined DBED at the height of the economic downturn in 2009, developed a number of successful initiatives to spur the State's innovation economy, connect small businesses with credit and build on core industries like life sciences and cyber security.

Among many accomplishments, Johansson worked with the Governor's office to develop InvestMaryland, which has \$84 million raised through an online tax credit auction to invest in the State's early stage companies. While other states have similar programs, InvestMaryland is unique in that if investments are successful, 100 percent of the principal and 80 percent of the profits are returned to the State's general fund. To date, nearly \$2 million has been deployed through the program since mak-

ing its first investment in September. Earlier this year, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce cited InvestMaryland and other programs focused on innovation as the key reason they ranked Maryland #1 in Entrepreneurship and Innovation. Johansson was also instrumental in helping to pass the Maryland Innovation Initiative, which is a first-ever partnership between the State and five qualifying universities to advance cutting-edge research to the commercial marketplace and foster collaboration between the universities and federal laboratories.

To address the credit crunch, Johansson worked with the Governor's office and federal partners to craft the State Small Business Credit Initiative, part of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010. Under the program, Maryland and 33 other states and U.S. territories received federal funds to provide state-backed loan guarantees to small businesses that were unable to access traditional bank financing. To date, the program has helped create 887 jobs and leverage more than \$74 million in private sector loans and investments.

In addition, he also advocated for streamlining regulations for Maryland businesses through the State's Maryland Made Easy program; worked to bring businesses to the table through the creation and revitalization of a number of boards and commissions, including the Maryland Economic Development Commission and the Maryland Advisory Commission on Manufacturing Competitiveness; and he oversaw two successful economic development missions to China, South Korea, Vietnam and India, which netted a total of \$145 million in trade and investment deals for the State.

Lunch from A1

90 responses in about a month.

The majority of the students surveyed reported that the new lunch restrictions have left them hungry for more.

More than half of the survey responses came from middle-school children, including one Accokeek Academy eighth-grader who wrote, "I am still hungry after eating the lunch because it is not enough carbs and protein."

Hunger is also a problem for a Tuscarora Middle School fourth-grader according to his mother.

"Our son buys two (lunches) just to have enough food," she said. "At least when they got tater tots, they had enough food. Now the menu choices have been marginal, and rarely anything the kids eat."

A typical lunch at Tuscarora Middle School and other schools across the state consist of foods like chicken nuggets, spaghetti with meat sauce or cheese pizza, paired with two fruit options and two vegetable options.

In Charles County there was a complete overhaul of their lunch menu two years as a part of the HealthierUS School Challenge and now students are used to the healthier food choices, Bill Kreuter, the county supervisor of food services, said.

"In our system, students are taking more fruits and vegetables and they aren't complaining about being hungry," he said.

One of the keys to their success is the students' ability to

choose their food.

"The students are taking what they want (and) aren't being forced to have what they don't want," he added.

Higher quality food leads to less hunger, according to Maryland health coach Gina Rieg.

"Quality of food is much more significant, especially to be nourished, sustained and satisfied from a meal," she said.

Feelings of dissatisfaction with school lunch have been voiced across the country with students in a Pittsburgh suburb going on strike in late August and starting the trending topic "BrownBagginIt" on Twitter, encouraging students to pack their lunches instead of eating the school lunch.

Students in Kansas protested lyrically by creating a music video, "We Are Hungry," a parody of the song "We Are Young" by Fun, showing students who are unable to complete their daily tasks due to extreme hunger. The video has received more than 1 million views on YouTube.

While students have spoken out about their post-lunch hunger, it is not something that is exclusive to those still in school.

"Being hungry after a meal is very common for many age groups, not just these younger age groups," Rieg said. "However, common does not equal normal. It's common because the majority of us follow the mainstream health advice that we have been led to believe is true and healthy. Unfortunately, there are many health and food myths out there that form our eating habits and

thus trickles into school lunches as well."

Rieg said healthy fats are just as essential to a healthy diet as fruits and vegetables are.

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, spearheaded by first lady Michelle Obama, focuses on improving child nutrition by increasing the availability of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and setting calorie and sodium maximums. Schools have to meet the guidelines set in order to receive financial reimbursement for the meals distributed to students.

Previously the requirement for fruits and vegetables was one-half to three-quarters of a cup of fruit and vegetables combined per day, and now three-quarters of a cup of vegetables is required per day, in addition to one-half cup of fruit. There were also calorie minimums, allowing at least 633 to 825 calories depending on grade level, and now there are minimums and maximums, with the maximum ranging from 650 calories to 850 calories depending on the grade. The new program has also gone from simply encouraging whole grains to requiring that at least half the grains served are whole grains, with all grains being whole in July 2014. Sodium maximums have also been implemented, which will range from 1,230 milligrams for elementary school students to 1,420 milligrams for high school students by 2014, when there previously were none.

Meeting these guidelines is the main goal when planning the lunches in Prince George's County, where nearly half of the CNS survey responses came

from, according to Joan Shorter, director of food and nutrition services in the county.

Although taste and quantity of food is considered, "primarily we must ensure that the menu meets the requirements for a reimbursable meal," she said in an email.

Crafting a menu to meet the guidelines can be a chore.

"It's challenging to make sure the right combinations of food are offered in the right portion sizes per age group," she said.

While portion size and calories are important, it should not be how proper nourishment is determined, according Rieg.

"I don't believe it's a matter of calorie counting at all," Rieg said in an email. "When we try to determine what's enough for a lunch, or any meal, focusing on the calorie count, we miss the most important aspect of food, quality. I truly believe that most of us, especially our children, are undernourished, not underfed."

Rieg believes serving more nutrient-rich foods instead of "200 calories of plain broccoli or 200 calories of skinless chicken breast" can solve the hunger problem in schools.

"I am not saying that vegetables shouldn't be a part of our meals," she said, "but if school lunches contained more sustaining and nourishing foods and ingredients, such as avocados and food —vegetables, meat and fish,—being cooked liberally in coconut oil and other satisfying saturated fats, I believe post-lunch hunger would occur much less."

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Council Member Obie Patterson
and The District 8 Staff

OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S
IN THE DARK

Movie Review

“Jack Reacher”

"JACK REACHER" B
Rated PG-13 for a little
profanity, a lot of strong vio-
lence
2 hrs., 10 min.

I understand why fans of Lee Child's series of Jack Reacher novels would be upset by the casting of Tom Cruise in the lead role.

Jack Reacher is supposed to be a tall, blond, muscle-bound, physically powerful brute of a man, and Cruise isn't any of those things except a man. And truth be told, there's a line or two in the movie "Jack Reacher" (written and directed by Christopher McQuarrie, adapting Child's novel "One Shot") that don't make sense when applied to someone of Cruise's stature.

But putting that aside, Cruise sparkles in the role, exhibiting charisma, menace, and action-hero awesomeness as Reacher, a former Army investigator who now lives off the grid and shows up only when his skills as a cop or fighter are needed. When an Iraq veteran is framed for an awful set of random murders in Pittsburgh, Reacher contacts the man's defense attorney, Helen (Rosamund Pike), who happens to be the daughter of

the district attorney (Richard Jenkins). At first Reacher and Helen have no reason to disbelieve the evidence against her client (who's comatose and can't explain himself), but soon Reacher's Sherlock-like ability to notice minor details leads them to the suspicion that something is amiss. (Which it is, of course. We saw the murders as they were committed, and the shooter was not the man who's been arrested. No mystery there, at least not for us.)

McQuarrie, who wrote "The Usual Suspects" and wrote and directed "The Way of the Gun," has fun with the conventions of the genre of movies where savvy detectives follow clues and uncover hidden conspiracies. He's not reinventing the wheel here, but he gives Cruise and company a lot of quick, snappy dialogue to keep things interesting, and the story is engaging as it unfolds. David Oyelowo lends support as a police detective, Robert Duvall is a welcome sight as the owner of a gun range, and Werner Herzog (yes, the crazy German director) is giddily hammy as a cold-hearted villain.

The movie only stumbles when it dabbles in realism. The sniper incident at the beginning is chilling, as are certain other



PHOTO COURTESY ROTTENTOMATOES

Six shots. Five dead. One heartland city thrown into a state of terror. But within hours the cops have it solved: a slam-dunk case. Except for one thing. The accused man says: You got the wrong guy. Then he says: Get Reacher for me. And sure enough, ex-military investigator Jack Reacher is coming. He knows this shooter-a trained military sniper who never should have missed a shot. Reacher is certain something is not right-and soon the slam-dunk case explodes. Now Reacher is teamed with a beautiful young defense lawyer, moving closer to the unseen enemy who is pulling the strings. Reacher knows that no two opponents are created equal. This one has come to the heartland from his own kind of hell. And Reacher knows that the only way to take him down is to match his ruthlessness and cunning-and then beat him shot for shot. -- (C) Official Site

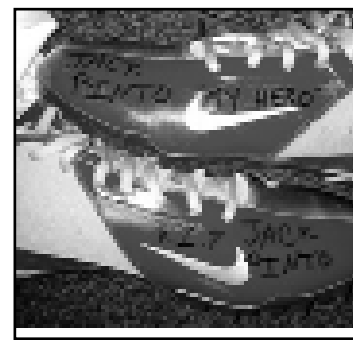
violent elements in the story – unnecessarily, and uncomfortably so. Usually McQuarrie keeps things light, letting us enjoy the fantasy of one man defending himself against five enemies with nothing but his fists, or an absurd interrogation in which someone is ordered to

bite off his own thumb. But when McQuarrie gets serious on us, the tone doesn't jibe at all with the movie's frivolity. When you've got the title character saying, "I mean to beat you to death and drink your blood from a boot," it's hard to go back to down-to-earth

Sports

by STAFF

The NFL Responds to the Sandy Hook Massacre. Should We Listen?



After the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, the NFL and its players made an effort on Sunday to recognize the collective grief shaking the country. There was a moment of silence at all 14 NFL games in remembrance of the 26 people, including 20 children,

mercilessly gunned down. Players on the New York Giants wore decals with the school's initials on their helmets. Their star wide receiver Victor Cruz paid tribute to one of fallen children, writing "R.I.P. Jack Pinto," and "Jack Pinto, my hero" on his shoes and "This one is 4 u!" on the backs of his gloves. Cruz was Pinto's favorite player and six-year-old Jack will be buried in his Victor Cruz jersey. The New England Patriots also made a statement, wearing a helmet sticker with the Newtown city seal and a black ribbon. They in addition pledged to donate \$25,000 to help the each family affected by the tragedy. But it's what the Patriots didn't do that speaks volumes and perhaps says more than they intended. Normally after the team scores at home, their "end zone militia", dressed as revolutionary war soldiers, shoots 20 muskets in the air. There were no guns fired, thankfully, on Sunday night.

The NFL's intervention into this national tragedy as a voice against gun violence comes at an awkward time for the league. Just two weeks ago, Kansas City Chief's player Jovan Belcher shot and killed the mother of his two-month-old child, Kasandra Perkins before taking his own life. Belcher had an arsenal of weapons in his house, all of them - like the guns used in Newtown - legally purchased. When NBC broadcaster Bob Costas, the day after the Belcher murder/suicide, said that easy access to military-proficient guns combined with our glorified "gun culture" played a central role in this tragedy, he was derided by the Fox News crowd as a fool. Now he looks horribly prescient.

But, as we try to understand the numbing regularity of these mass shootings, there is also a question that goes beyond just gun control and mental health. Should our culture, and in particular the violence of the sports we consume, shoulder some of the blame? It's an increasingly recognized fact that our most popular sport, football, is also our most violent. Every new study reveals that on Sundays we are watching people become mentally and physically crippled for our entertainment. In addition to the violence between the lines, this is a league that drapes itself in the trappings of war, from military flyovers before games to the constant slickly produced recruitment ads for the US armed forces.

Given all of this, can the NFL as an institution be a credible voice of peace? The answer is simply no: not even when they silence their muskets. The NFL cannot be a force for non-violence because its popularity is the perfect reflection of what we've become as a country. We are a nation that has outsourced war overseas to remote control killer drones we overwhelmingly support, private security forces we don't control, and an armed forces we barely acknowledge. Meanwhile, a host of basic freedoms have been eroded over the last decade except the freedom to arm ourselves to the teeth. We can't assemble with our neighbors in protest but we can assemble military style weapons alone in our apartments.

As we become further atomized and further desensitized to the daily violence that surrounds us, we also further worship a sports league that acts as the perfect metaphor for this state of affairs. Safely hidden under helmets for our consumption, we don't have to see the glassy eyes or faces contorted with pain on the field. We also don't have to see the broken bodies and lives off the field. We just get three and a half hours of incredibly entertaining, highly commodified violence in a safely consumable package. The true costs are hidden from us until they erupt into view, as in the case of Jovan Belcher or the suicide of the great Junior Seau. Similarly, the true costs of worshipping the way of the gun are only dragged into open view when it comes home to places like Newtown, Connecticut. We don't have to see the faces or learn the names of the children killed in the drone strikes in Pakistan. We aren't asked to care about the young black teenagers who die on the corners of Chicago. No NFL player writes their names on their shoes. But now we have to look in the mirror and either reckon with what we see or recoil and turn away.

If we want to follow the example of the NFL, the answer doesn't lie on the field. Follow the example of the seven NFL players who turned in their guns to team officials the week after the Belcher shootings out of fear of what might happen if they were in the wrong state of mind or if a family member somehow grabbed a hold of their weapons. But even that is not enough. We need to throw ourselves on the machines of violence in Washington DC otherwise we are just dooming ourselves to more of the same. And the same is simply intolerable.

Tickets for Grand Prix of Baltimore Presented by SRT to Go on Sale to General Public December 21

Fans Will Benefit from Expanded Price Options and Reserved-Seating Flexibility

BALTIMORE, 2012 – Race fans planning to attend the third annual Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT will be able to purchase tickets online beginning Friday, Dec. 21, 2012. The 2013 event will feature a wider range of ticket prices and, for the first time, multi-day reserved-seat ticket buyers will have the option of selecting different seats for each race.

Tickets will be available for purchase with all major credit cards at www.grandprixofbaltimore.com. All fans who purchase reserved seats by midnight on Jan. 15, 2013 will receive a free paddock pass, up to a \$45 value. Active duty military with valid identification will receive a 10 percent discount on all ticket levels.

Pricing for top tier grandstand seats remains unchanged from last year; however, a third grandstand pricing tier has been added to offer fans the opportunity to purchase reserved seats at a lower price. General admission and junior ticket prices also have been lowered, making the Grand Prix a greater entertainment value for families and newcomers to motorsports. Details on VIP club amenities and pricing will be announced in the near future.

"We're pleased to announce an enhanced ticket structure for 2013 that will appeal to casual fans and hard-core racing enthusiasts alike," said J.P. Grant, manager of Race On, LLC, the event's promoter. "Last summer, we established the Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT as the region's premier motorsports experience. In 2013, we look forward to taking the Grand Prix to yet another level."

A private pre-sale will be available on Dec. 19 and 20 for those who purchased reserved seats for the 2012 Grand Prix of



PHOTO BY YOSPIN, FLICKR

Race fans attending the third annual Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT in 2011.

Baltimore presented by SRT. Promoters will hold the seats of 2012 reserved-seat customers until Jan. 4, 2013 to ensure fans who want to retain their seats have an opportunity to do so.*				
Adult	\$45	\$25	\$25	\$15
Junior	\$25	\$15	\$15	\$5

Following is an overview of ticket pricing for the 2013 event. For complete details, visit www.grandprixofbaltimore.com.

Grandstands	3-Day			
Sunday	Saturday	Friday		
Gold Adult	Upper Level			GA
\$185	\$115	\$100		
Gold Junior	Upper Level			GA
\$140	\$85	\$75		
Silver Adult				GA
\$145	\$95	\$85		
Silver Junior				GA
\$110	\$70	\$65		
Bronze Adult				GA
\$90	\$65	\$55		
Bronze Junior				GA
\$60	\$40	\$30		
General Admission				
Adult				
\$65	\$45	\$40	\$15	
Junior				
\$35	\$15	\$10	\$5	
Paddock				

More than 130,000 tickets were sold to the 2012 Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT – also known as “the 100-day miracle” because organizers had less than four months to plan and execute the event. The core operations team responsible for the 2012 Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT, including Andretti Sports Marketing, is returning for the 2013 event.

About the Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT

The third annual Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT will feature the IZOD IndyCar series and the American Le Mans Series presented by Tequila Patron. The Grand Prix's races are held on a 12-turn, two-mile course through downtown Baltimore, adjacent to the famed Inner Harbor. The 2013 Grand Prix of Baltimore presented by SRT will take place Labor Day weekend, Aug. 31 to Sept. 1, 2013.

About SRT

The Chrysler Group's Street and Racing Technology (SRT) brand uses a successful product development formula featuring five proven hallmarks: awe-inspiring powertrains; outstanding ride, handling and capability; benchmark braking; aggressive and functional exteriors and race-inspired and high-performance interiors to remain true to its performance roots. For the latest on all SRT news and vehicles, go to www.driveSRT.com.

The SRT vehicle lineup includes the Chrysler 300 SRT8, Dodge Challenger SRT8 392, Dodge Charger SRT8 and Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT8.

Making a highly anticipated return to the high-performance sports car market in late 2012 are the new 2013 SRT Viper and SRT Viper GTS. The SRT flagship performance machines will feature more power and performance, superior craftsmanship, new technologies and creature comforts.

*Please note that Grandstand 11 will not be built in 2013, nor will the top three rows of Grandstands 12-16. Ticket buyers whose 2012 seats were located in these areas are invited to select new seats.

Calendar of Events

January 3 - January 9, 2013

Mentor + Mentee II: Maryland Edition

Date & Time: Saturday, January 26, Mondays-Fridays: 10 am-7 pm; Saturdays: 10 am-4 pm; Closed Sundays
Description: The Brentwood Arts Exchange presents "Mentor + Mentee II: Maryland Edition" in the gallery. The exhibition is a partnership with Washington Printmakers Gallery (WPG), and features original prints by thirteen of WPG's members, as well as prints by their teachers and students. "Mentor + Mentee II: Maryland Edition" is the second iteration of the student-teacher show, first presented by WPG in the fall of 2009, this time focusing on the groups Maryland membership. An insightful look into the presenting artists creative foundations and influences, the exhibit is a striking and eclectic exhibition of bold prints that explores a wide range of traditional and contemporary approaches. Concurrent with the exhibition, the Brentwood Arts Exchange and WPG will present gift-priced original fine art prints in the front of the Craft Store, just in time for holiday shopping and collection building.
Cost: FREE **Ages:** All ages
Location: Brentwood Arts Exchange at Gateway Arts Center 3901 Rhode Island Avenue, Brentwood 20722
Contact: 301-277-2863; TTY 301-446-6802

Senior Game Time

Date & Time: Fridays, December 7-June 8, 9 am-12 noon
Description: Join us every Friday for our Senior Game Time. Play cards, board games, bingo and many more fun games. Coffee and light refreshments served.
Cost: \$2/person **Ages:** 60 & better
Location: Glenarden Community Center 8615 McLain Avenue, Glenarden 20706
Contact: 301-772-3151; TTY 301-218-6768

Youth New Year's Party

Event date: Friday, January 04, 2013, from 2:30 PM to 5:30 PM
Date & Time: Friday, January 4, 2:30-5:30 pm
Description: Enjoy dancing and socializing with music provided by a top-notch DJ. Celebrate the New Year with friends and fun!
Cost: Resident \$5; Non-Resident \$6 **Ages:** 6-12
Location: Indian Queen Recreation Center 9551 Fort Foote Road, Fort Washington
Contact: 301-839-9597; TTY 301-203-6030

Card Game Night

Event date: Saturday, January 05, 2013, from 7:00 PM to 10:00 PM
Date and Time: Saturday, January 5, 7-10 pm
Description: Spades, Uno, 5 Hundred
Cost: FREE **Ages:** 10-17
Location: Baden Community Center 13601 Baden-Westwood Road, Brandywine
Contact: Information: 301-888-1500; TTY 301-203-6030

Prince George's County Senior Idol Auditions

Date and Time: Monday, January 7-Wednesday, January 9, 9 am
Description: Calling all talented senior singers to audition to be the 2013 Prince George's County Senior Idol! The winner and runner up will represent Prince George's County in the 2013 Maryland Senior Idol Contest on April 3, 2013.
Location: Monday, January 7, 9 am-1 pm
 Laurel-Beltville Senior Activity Center
 7120 Contee Road, Laurel 20707
 Tuesday, January 8, 9 am-1 pm
 Camp Springs Senior Activity Center
 6420 Allentown Road, Camp Springs 20748
 Wednesday, January 9, 9 am-1 pm
 Prince George's Ballroom
 2411 Pinebrook Avenue, Landover 20785
Contact: For Idol guidelines and to reserve an audition time, please call 301-446-3400; TTY 301-446-3402

G.E.A.R.: Mis Quince Program Open House 2013

Date & Time: Tuesday, January 8, 2013, 6:30-8:30 pm
Description: Learn about this wonderful 10-week program for girls ages 14 to 15. This program includes a series of workshops including: etiquette, dance, health and fitness, swimming, self-defense, college preparation, personal development, service projects and more! Meet our staff, instructors, partners and sponsors and get ready for a magnificent Spring Quinceañera celebration.
Cost: Free with M-NCPPC Youth ID **Ages:** 14-15 and parents
Location: Langley Park Community Center 1500 Merimac Drive, Hyattsville 20783
Contact: 301-445-4508; TTY 301-445-4512

The 70s Disco Hand Dance Party

Date and Time: Saturday, January 12, 6-9 pm
Description: Come get down, boogie, hang loose and have a groove-shaking good time at this year's 70s Disco Hand Dance Party.
Cost: \$10/person **Ages:** 18 & up
Location: Largo/Kettering/Perrywood Community Center 431 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro 20774
Contact: 301-390-8390; TTY 301-218-6768

Black History Month Opening Exhibit

Date and Time: Wednesday, January 16-Tuesday, February 26
Opening reception: Sunday, February 3, 2-4 pm (reservations required)
Description: View this year's exhibition, Fighting on Two Fronts: Black Military Service in the United States, which highlights African American service and support of the U.S. Military from the Revolutionary War to the Vietnam War. During this 200-year period, African Americans have fought, worked and sacrificed in support of their country. Fighting on Two Fronts explores their efforts in the changing face of discrimination at home and abroad. At the opening reception, see the unveiling of the 2013 Black History Month Poster designed by art students from Forestville Military Academy, with assistance from teachers Carlton and Joshua Smith and resident artist Curtis Woody.
Cost: FREE **Ages:** All ages
Location: Montpelier Arts Center 9652 Muirkirk Road, Laurel 20708
Contact: 301-699-2544; 240-264-3415

EARTH TALK ... The Benefits of Public Transportation

Dear EarthTalk:

It might seem obvious, but what would be the primary benefits of public transit as an alternative to the private automobile if our country were to make a major commitment to it?

— James Millerton,
Armstrong, PA

The benefits of making a major commitment to building up and efficiently managing a larger and more comprehensive public transit network are many.

According to the National Alliance of Public Transportation Advocates (NAPTA), an organization that represents grassroots transit coalitions, organizations and advocates, expanded public transit, coordinated with greener development and other "operational efficiencies," can reduce our carbon footprint by some 24 percent, which is significant given that carbon dioxide (CO₂) output from the transportation sector as a whole account for 28 percent of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. After all, buses and trains burn much less fuel per rider than a car with a single rider in it. Switching to public transit for a typical 20-mile round trip commute would decrease a commuter's annual greenhouse gas emissions by some 4,800 pounds a year, which is equal to about a 10 percent reduction in a two-car household's carbon footprint.

Options from A1

money in state. And though bus tours to Atlantic City have seen a decline since Maryland Live! and other casinos opened, some gamblers say it doesn't matter how many casinos Maryland builds or how many table games it adds.

These trips to Atlantic City are less about the bets and more about the escape.

The bus rides themselves are what you'd imagine - about 20 senior citizens and retirees spaced throughout the plush, blue patterned seats.

Usually there's a movie playing, but on a recent trip, Ernie Baylor, the bus driver, announced that one of the discs was scratched, so they'd save the remaining film for the ride back.

Without the noise of a movie, it's a quiet ride. The women sit with their purses on their laps. Some stare out the window. Some doze off. A couple of women chatter about getting their nails done and how much

Local from A1

representatives from hospitals and food service professionals from across the state.

The council works to connect healthcare professionals so they can implement sustainable environmental programs at health facilities across the state, said Louise Mitchell, the sustainable foods program manager for Maryland Hospitals for a Healthy Environment.

"One of the most powerful ways you can make change in the environment's health is to work with health care providers. They are huge companies and reach everyone ... they have a huge impact on people and the environment," Mitchell said.

Sustainability programs have been implemented at multiple nursing homes and hospitals throughout the state, said Mitchell, and the number of council participants continues to grow each year.

At FutureCare Cherrywood, one initiative spiraled into lasting benefits that have improved multiple aspects of the residents' lives.

Margie Ginsberg, a registered dietician at FutureCare Cherrywood, became active

Another group, the American Public Transit Association (APTA), reports that current use of public transit in the U.S. already saves 37 million metric tons of CO₂ annually, equivalent to the emissions resulting from electricity generation to power some five million typical American homes.

A massive shift to public transit would also be good for our pocketbooks. According to NAPTA, U.S. car owners can save as much as \$112 billion a year in gasoline and other vehicle costs. "Public transportation offers an immediate alternative for individuals seeking to reduce their energy use and carbon footprints," reports NAPTA. "Taking public transportation far exceeds the combined benefits of using energy-efficient light bulbs, adjusting thermostats, weatherizing one's home, and replacing a refrigerator."

As to reducing oil use, NAPTA says public transit already saves Americans the equivalent of 4.2 billion gallons of gasoline annually, or some 900,000 automobile fill-ups every day. And the Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) reports that individuals who live in areas served by public transportation save more than 300 million gallons of fuel a year. Meanwhile individuals can save upwards of \$9,000 a year by taking public transportation instead of driving and by living with one less car.

they tip for eyebrow waxing.

Sisters Fran Brooks and Johnette Cates don't like gambling in Maryland.

"They don't give anything to you for free," Brooks, 66, said. "Not even the drinks."

In Atlantic City, the sisters get all sorts of things comped: hotel rooms, buffets, tickets to shows and those delicious pina colodas at Caesar's.

And there's more to do besides gamble. Shopping, shows, walking the boardwalk. Casinos in Maryland just can't compete, Brooks said.

"And the payout in Maryland sucks," Cates said.

So, instead, they take a bus to Atlantic City every few months and enjoy the perks. This trip, they have a comped night at Caesars and a free buffet.

They don't mind the bus ride up, either. It's a nice ride, especially when the leaves still have a little color left in them. And the ticket, which costs \$35, is basically free. Casinos, such as Trump Plaza, give riders \$30 in slot money and \$5 in food.

with the Chesapeake Food Leadership Council in early 2010, when she began a campaign at the nursing home to recycle more. This included reminders to use the labeled recycling bins, turn off lights and reduce food waste in the dining halls.

In March, Ginsberg moved to the kitchen, where most of the food was processed and expensive. She worked with the new Food Service Director Sandy Stallings to begin buying all local produce, cut costs and offer healthier alternatives on the menus.

"It wasn't an option for us to continue serving the status quo," said Joselyn King, another registered dietician on staff who is involved in planning the meals.

The costs went down as the kitchen began making everything from scratch, Stallings said.

So did the complaints. "When I first came here, the complaints were astronomical. Now, there are no complaints, just suggestions. The residents know oysters are in season now, and we are trying to find them some local oysters," she said.

Each week, local produce was sold out front of the home,



CREDIT: ISTOCKPHOTO

A large public transportation network, in concert with other sustainability efforts, could reduce our carbon footprint by 24 percent, significantly reduce our oil consumption, save us money, reduce our travel time and its associated stress, and improve our overall health. Pictured: a Washington, DC Metro station.

An improved quality of life is yet another benefit of more public transit. In some ways public transit can be considered a life saver: It produces 95 percent less carbon monoxide and nearly 50 percent less nitrogen oxide—both key triggers for asthma and other respiratory and cardiovascular health problems—per passenger-mile than driving a private vehicle.

Also, transit users tend to be healthier than car commuters because they walk more, which increases their fitness levels. Public transit use also means fewer cars on the road, thus reduced travel times—and less stress and road rage accordingly—for everyone. TTI reports that Americans living in areas

served by public transportation save themselves almost 800 million hours in travel time every year.

CONTACTS: NAPTA, www.publictransportation.org; APTA, www.apta.com; TTI, tti.tamu.edu.

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he's done gambling.

Since the bus doesn't leave to go back to Maryland until 6 p.m., he sometimes has to find other ways to fill the time. His favorite is walking the boardwalk.

That's another reason he doesn't like going to casinos in Maryland. All there is to do is gamble, which is fine for the addicts, he says, but not for people such as himself who are looking for entertainment.

"People want a dual purpose," Alcorn said.

At the end of the day, after six hours of gambling, three pina colodas, and a couple full plates of food at the buffet, Alcorn had won more than \$110. He stopped by the Starbucks on the way out and used his \$5 food voucher on a couple bags of mixed nuts.

"It's a good trip, as far as I'm concerned. A wonderful trip," Alcorn said, walking toward the bus to go home. "And I'll get home in time to watch Jay Leno."

But they've noticed a change in the bus rides. The sisters, who have taken these trips for several years, said the buses used to be packed. Now, it's not even half full. And that's after two companies consolidated.

Instead of helping business, it just added more stops to the trip, which means longer rides to get to the casinos. Still, the sisters have no interest in changing their gambling destination from Atlantic City to Maryland.

"More than anything, it's nice to get away," Brooks said. "Maryland, they don't do anything for you. They don't make it worth your time. Here, everything's free. And it's a break from everything back home."

It's several hours later and Donald Alcorn is still gambling with the initial money he started with. Better than that, he's up \$100.

Alcorn allocates \$200 to gamble with each trip. Once he blows through that on slots - some days faster than others -

and residents were able to shop for foods not always available in the dining hall, like strawberries and watermelon. Choosing what foods to buy each week gave the residents independence and flexibility, traits not often associated with nursing homes.

"It has been huge for (the residents) to have something to look forward to, it gives them something in their permanent residence that they can enjoy and count on," Bosley said.

The residents didn't have to wait for the market to find fresh produce. Annette Fleishell, the performance improvement supervisor at Cherrywood, began a garden club on the patio next to the nursing home, in clear view of the McDonald's across the street.

She helped to design garden beds at wheelchair-accessible height, and brought residents, who named themselves the "Deep Roots," outside to plant seedlings and, eventually pick the food.

"I liked the flowers, potting them in the spring. ... I liked the broccoli. We loved the cucumbers, but not the collard greens, I ate too many," said Martha Ayers, 70, of Baltimore. She has been living in

Cherrywood for almost two-and-a-half years, and used to be a secretary at a bank downtown, she said.

But the residents agreed the best part of the club was the food.

Stallings brought the produce the garden club picked into the kitchen, and began serving it to the residents at mealtime.

"People pick a nursing home for the type of care, the convenience and location, not for the food. But we like to think we are breaking the stereotype of institutionalized food," said Marla Bosley, the director of admissions and marketing at FutureCare Cherrywood.

The nursing home was one of 27 applicants to submit a recipe that included locally sourced ingredients to Gov. Martin O'Malley's Buy Local Cookbook. FutureCare Cherrywood submitted its fiesta herb-encrusted chicken and chocolate bread pudding, which was one of 17 submissions to be selected for a Buy Local Recipes cookbook.

"It was amazing how it happened. We had no idea this would go so well, it snowballed," Ginsberg said.

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PLEASE DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL AND DRIVE!

Watch from A4

nearly half of Americans say they keep a gun in their home or on their property, that one-third of homes with children younger than age 18 have guns, and that more than 40 percent of guns in homes with children present are left unlocked. Before your child visits a friend or relative's home, do you ask? If not, it's time to start. Parents need to wake up and take care to protect all children.

There are many more questions: Do you buy your child violent video games? Why? Do you allow your child to see violent movies or listen to music with violent lyrics? Why? Do you keep those things from your children but continue to do them for your own entertainment? Why? Why? Why?

An advertising campaign for

bestselling Bushmaster rifles uses the tag line "Consider Your Man Card Reissued." When the Newtown shooter used that Bushmaster .223 semiautomatic rifle to kill seven women and twenty first-graders, did he earn his "man card?" Is this the best definition of American manhood we have to give our children?

On April 4, 1967, exactly a year to the day before he would be killed by a gun, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave the speech "Beyond Vietnam" at New York City's Riverside Church. He said: "We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation. We must move past indecision to action . . . If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power with-

out compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight."

For mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts and uncles, neighbors, teachers, faith leaders and everyone else in America who is saying enough, this is our moment. Which one will we choose?

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

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.