

# The Prince George's Post



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## Free Holiday Lyft Rides to Prevent Drunk Driving in PG County Have Begun

By PRESS OFFICER WRAP

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—Combating that holiday period when, last year, “781 people lost their lives in traffic crashes involving a drunk driver during the month of December 2016” (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration), a local nonprofit organization announced today that free safe rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers

throughout the Washington-metropolitan area during the winter holidays.

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the annual Holiday SoberRide® program Began on December 15, 2017, and will operate through January 1, 2018, between 8:00 pm and 4:00 am each evening as a way to keep local roads safe

See **FREE RIDES** Page A5

## Fort Mead Resident Keith Duffin Selected CIAA Rookie of the Week

By PRESS OFFICER Bowie State University

CHARLOTTE, NC—The Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA) released their Week #5 Honor Roll and Bowie State freshman Keith Duffin, Jr. (Fort Meade, MD) was voted as the Rookie of the Week by the conferences men's basketball coaches and Sports Information Directors. Over two games during the week, Duffin, averaged 11.5. ppg off the Bulldogs bench and shot 50 percent from the field (7of-14). His breakout game at home against the University of D.C., recording a double-double of 19 points and 12 rebounds in Bowie State's win.



PHOTO COURTESY BOWIE STATE  
**Keith Duffin, Jr.**



CAPITAL NEWS SERVICE PHOTO BY HELEN PARSHALL

WASHINGTON—The urgency to relocate the FBI's headquarters is increased by the security risks related to the state of the J. Edgar Hoover FBI Building in downtown Washington, which is deteriorating rapidly.

## Revised Plan Underway for New FBI Site, Raising Hopes in Maryland—Again

By HELEN PARSHALL Capital News Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.—After planning that began in the George W. Bush administration, officials from Maryland at the national and state level are cautiously optimistic the latest push for a new FBI complex located outside the District of Columbia will come to fruition after a five-month delay.

“This project has been going on for more than a decade,” Sen. Ben Cardin, D-Maryland, said in a statement to Capital News Service. “This is about the needs of the FBI and our national security. We want to know how GSA (General Services Administration) is going to get to ‘yes.’”

Five months after GSA announced it would cease planning for a new FBI complex,

the project received a fresh 60-day extension from the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee last week to revise its building plan.

“Providing the FBI with a new headquarters to carry out its critical mission to protect the American people is a top priority for GSA,” said a statement from the General Services Administration. “We look forward to continuing to work with Con-

gress to develop the best possible solution in as timely a manner as practicable.”

GSA's explanation for the cancellation in July cited a shortfall of \$882 million in 2017 federal funding for a project that called for \$1.4 billion.

“That appeared to be much more of an excuse than a real

See **FBI** Page A3

## CEO Kevin Maxwell Proposes \$2.1 Billion Operating Budget to Expand Innovation, Increase Collaboration

By PRESS OFFICER PGPCS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—CEO Kevin Maxwell proposed a \$2.1 billion operating budget yesterday for Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) that would expand existing innovative programs and support increased collaboration with key partners. The CEO's Fiscal Year 2019 proposal represents a 6.7-percent increase over last year's revised budget.

The operating budget will support the growth of dual enrollment, including the 3D Scholars, P-TECH and the Academy of Health Sciences, while addressing the growing demands that come with the school system's increasing enrollment.

More than 132,000 students entered Prince George's County PGCPS classrooms this fall, which included nearly 2,100 additional students and marked the fifth consecutive year of enrollment growth. PGCPS has experienced enrollment growth of nearly 10,000 students over the last five years.

“It's a good challenge to have. Enrollment growth is an indication that our community values its public schools and has confidence in the quality of instruction in our classrooms,” Dr. Maxwell said. “We will continue to engage our parents and community partners in ways that add value to our schools and strengthen our communities.”

Dr. Maxwell proposed \$1.5 million for planning to develop a full-scale “community schools” model, aligned to the best practices of organizations and school districts from throughout the nation. This model would build on the County's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative currently supporting over 40 schools.

The PGCPS Community Schools initiative will provide a comprehensive array of resources and services provided by partners at the school. The intention is to create a feeder pattern from elementary to middle to high, where schools become centers of community life. They will be hubs of activity and learning.

The major budget recommendations include \$131.5 million in the five pillars of our strategic plan:

- Academic Excellence (\$44.2 million)
- Grow dual enrollment programs, including the new P-TECH, the Academy of Health Sciences, and a middle college teacher preparation pathway
- 3D Scholars began with 17 juniors this school year and 150 seats will be added for new 9th, 10th and 11th graders next school year
- Career and technical education programs where students have opportunities to earn college credit, industry certification/licenses, or pre-apprenticeship experience prior to leaving high school.

See **BUDGET** Page A3

## Governor Hogan with Federal, Local and State officials Break Ground on University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center

State-of-the-Art Facility Will Serve Over One Million Marylanders

By PRESS OFFICER Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Governor Larry Hogan today joined local, state, and federal elected officials, civic and community leaders, as well as representatives from the University of Maryland Medical System and the University of Maryland to celebrate the groundbreaking of the new state-of-the-art University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center in Largo. The governor was joined by Brad Seamon, Chair, University of Maryland Capital Region Health Board of Directors; E. Albert Reece, MD, PhD, MBA, Vice President for Medical Affairs, University of Maryland; Robert A. Chrencik, MBA, CPA, President and Chief Executive Officer, University of Maryland Medical System.

The Hogan administration has committed more than \$200 million toward the project, which will replace the current University of Maryland Prince



PHOTO COURTESY ?????

Artist's rendering of the Regional Medical Center in Prince George's County.

George's Hospital in Cheverly. The new facility will transform healthcare in Prince George's County and across the Southern Maryland and Greater Capital region.

“As a proud and strong supporter of this project since day one, our administration is incredibly pleased to see that this vital and long-awaited project is finally getting underway,”

said Governor Hogan. “As a University of Maryland Medical System patient during my battle with cancer, I can attest first hand that there is no better place to receive high-quality medical care than right here in our great state. And now, with this much-needed project, resi-

See **MED CENTER** Page A8

### INSIDE

#### Six Million Guests, One Monumental Year: MGM National Harbor Celebrates First Anniversary

The star-studded inaugural year also brought incredible celebrity guests to MGM National Harbor, with performances by iconic stars like Cher, Bruno Mars, Sting and Chris Rock

Community, Page A3

#### Van Hollen, Senate Democrats Urge House Colleagues to Reject GOP Tax Bill

Slashing the deduction for state and local taxes means that hard-working families get double taxed on their income, and results in higher taxes for many constituents throughout these states.

Commentary, Page A4

#### Governor Larry Hogan Announces 2018 Jobs and Economic Development Initiatives

The governor pledged to introduce new legislation in the upcoming session to expand on the already-successful More Jobs for Marylanders Act, which was passed in the 2017 session and went into effect on June 1st.

Business, Page A5

#### Movie Review: Suburbicon

It's the late '50s in the squeaky-clean planned community called Suburbicon, and the Meyers family are the first African Americans in the neighborhood. The white people freak out, saying the sort of blatantly racist things that many white people often said in those days, about property values and miscegenation.

Out on the Town, Page A6

#### Earth Talk

Dear EarthTalk:

I want to set a good environmental example with my gift-giving this holiday season. Any tips on how—or even better, what—to give greener?

—Jane P., Bowie, MD

Features, Page A7

# Towns and NEIGHBORS

## In and Around Morningside-Skyline

by Mary McHale 301 735 3451

### Come to Our Saviour's Lutheran for The Festival of Lessons and Carols

'Tis the season, indeed, and you are invited to celebrate it with the Festival of Lessons and Carols at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church on Saturday, Dec. 23, at 5 p.m. Three choirs will perform: St. Philip's Episcopal Church, Epiphany Episcopal Church and St. Michael's Truth Church. The program includes excerpts from Handel's Messiah.

This joy-filled music of praise and thanksgiving is made possible by Pastor Emmanuel F. Y. Gantson, Ph.D. and Mr. Egerton Peters-John, Choir Director. There's no charge for admission, but a free will offering will be accepted.

Our Saviour's is at 4915 St. Barnabas Road in Temple Hills. For information, call 301-249-6222 or 301-894-3556.

### Happy 75th anniversary Jerry and Jean

Gerald Glaubitz and Jean Quapp met in August 1941 at the five-and-dime in Lincoln, Nebraska. Jean was a clerk and Jerry a shopper, quite impressed with her. He asked for a date but she was 17 and had to get permission from her folks. Besides, Jerry was a 21-year-old sailor on leave from the USS San Francisco.

Four months later, on December 7, the San Francisco was anchored in balmy Pearl Harbor when the Japanese attacked. Jerry and his ship survived. Over the next year, loving letters traveled back and forth between Nebraska and the Pacific. And so, on December 23, 1942, Jerry and Jean were wed at the American Lutheran Church in Lincoln.

After discharge in December 1945, Jerry went to work for Naval Research. In August 1947 the Glaubitz family—including children Carol and Larry—moved to 507 Maple Road in Morningside. In 1961 Jerry was elected mayor, a job he held for 43 years. He also served 11 years as chief of the Morningside Volunteer Fire Department, just one more of the major po-

sitions he held and the honors he was awarded.

He died April 26, 2005. Jean joined him on March 19, 2014. I like to think they're celebrating their 75th anniversary, in Heaven.

### People

Jonathan and Yolanda Hutto, of Skyline, have a new baby girl, Nadira Hope, born Nov. 25 at Sibley Hospital. Jonathan sent the good news and added a little background. He first met Yolanda on the campus of Howard University in Jan. 1996 when both were undergraduates. While finishing his service with the Navy, he bought a home on Reamy Drive in Skyline, and on May 19, 2012, he and Yolanda were married. And now they have baby Nadira.

Madeline Hayes Reese recently emailed me. "I attended Suitland Elementary School," she said, "then Suitland Jr. High, moved to Hillcrest Heights and from there graduated Surrattville Sr. High. I lived at the corner of Suitland Road and Southern Avenue SE. My family owned and operated Cedar Hill Cemetery for over 40 years. I went to Teen Club in Morningside a few times." She added that some of her family lived on Silver Hill Road, others on Meadowview.

What caught my eye is her family's ownership of Cedar Hill Cemetery. More about that next week.

### Another "Hidden Figure"

If you read the excellent book (even better than the movie), *Hidden Figures*, you may remember Dorothy Hoover (not Dorothy Vaughn, featured in the film).

Dorothy Hoover was among the first African-American female mathematicians—called computers—hired to work at Langley. She attained a GS-9, left to get her master's in physics from Arkansas A&M and to work towards a doctorate at the University of Michigan. She went to work for the U.S. Weather Bureau in 1956 and then Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, earning a promotion to grade 13 Mathematician.

She moved to Temple Hills, across the street from Judy Rodney who befriended her. Judy said that Dorothy lived alone and seemed to have no family. She never talked about her amazing years as a government mathematician. But when the book and the movie came out, Judy learned her story. By then Dorothy had died, of heart failure, on Feb. 7, 2000, alone in her Temple Hills home. Many are now seeking honors for Dorothy Hoover, another hidden figure.

### Applause

The Wise Pumas defeated Quince Orchard 38-10 to win the Maryland High School 4A State Championship at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium in Annapolis on Dec. 1. This gives them their third state title in a row. Dr. Henry A. Wise, Jr. is the "neighborhood" school that our high-schoolers in Skyline and Morningside attend.

### Changing landscape

Great Eastern Plaza in District Heights is now called St. Paul Towne Center. St. Paul's is also building a huge church on the vacant land behind Pep Boys.

Olive Garden has opened in Richie Station Marketplace, Capitol Heights. One great advantage: it employs 185 Prince George's County residents.

Maybe this has something to do with the new rating Prince George's has. We are ranked 21st in the United States in job growth among large counties.

### Milestones

Happy birthday to Timothy Flaherty, Dec. 22; former Morningside Mayor Irving Robinson, Paul Ford and Russ Kyser, Dec. 23; Kendall Lanehart and former Morningside Councilman Ken Miller, Dec. 24; Jean Holly Nichols, Jason Tomlinson, Samantha Bowie and Christine Mucker, Christmas Day; Jeffrey Norton, Michael Nichols, Car-

See MORNINGSIDE Page A3

## Neighborhoods

### Longtime DC-Based General Contractor, Columbia Enterprises, Bets on Prince George's County

By Patricia Ellis

CAMP SPRINGS, MD—When Bruce Mitchell—Chief Executive Officer, Columbia Enterprises, Inc.—began the search to find additional office space in Maryland to expand his growing construction firm, he saw many locations that just didn't fit the bill. But it was a fortuitous meeting at the Airforce Sergeants Association Building, 5211 Auth Road in Camp Springs, Maryland, that brought his search to an end.

After meeting with the manager, Keith Reed, touring the building, touring the surrounding area (the office building is located just blocks away from the Branch Avenue Metro Station and will be the new home of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (US-CIS) Headquarters in 2020) the time was right to put his long-game in motion.

Columbia has operated from its single location in the District of Columbia since 1995, all the while its business in Maryland, primarily in Prince George's County, continued to increase. "It started to make sense that we would choose a Prince George's location, not only to fully capitalize on developing business opportunities—public and private sector—but to have options for Prince George's-based employees," Bruce reflected.



PHOTO COURTESY TIFFANY RENEE BALMER  
Bruce Mitchell with Rushern L. Baker, III, Prince George's County Executive and staff members.

With clients like Kaiser Permanente, MedStar Health and soon, Johns Hopkins Health System—Maryland locations—Bruce sees the move to Prince George's as a strategic advantage. In addition, Columbia has recently been named as a strategic business partner with Clark Construction Group on the construction of the new state-of-the-art Prince George's Regional Medical Center.

As a former SBA 8(a) firm, Columbia has many years of experience with federal contracting and continues to provide construction services to key federal agencies like General Services Administration (GSA), State Department and the Department of Air Force. Additionally, as a long time, local DC-based Certified Busi-

ness Enterprises, Columbia is uniquely qualified, due in part to its bonding capacity, to deliver municipal contracting projects and plans to grow Prince George's County public projects into a major business unit within the company.

On November 15th, Columbia Enterprises had its grand-opening celebration at its new offices. Gubernatorial Candidate and current Prince George's County Executive, Rushern L. Baker, III, helped to commemorate the occasion at the ribbon cutting ceremony along with company executives. "We believe locating to Prince George's County will prove to be a progressive move for Columbia," Bruce stated, "and we're looking forward to the next chapter in the growth of our company."

## WSSC is Winter Ready: Dropping Potomac River Water Temps Increase Water Main Breaks in WSSC's 5,742-mile Distribution System

LAUREL, MD—On December 7, 2017, WSSC General Manager and CEO Carla Reid outlined WSSC's #WinterReady plans at the utility's Anacostia Depot in Hyattsville—the largest of four WSSC maintenance facilities—surrounded by crews, backhoes, leak detection equipment and new zinc-coated ductile iron pipes that will last 100 years. WSSC maintains more than 5,700 miles of water mains throughout Prince George's and Montgomery counties, and as temperatures drop in the winter, the chance of water main breaks increases.

"WSSC is winter ready," said Reid. "We have more than 200 personnel, hundreds of pieces of heavy equipment and contractors on standby to restore service for our customers as quickly as possible."

WSSC closely tracks the correlation between the water temperature of the Potomac River and water main breaks. This chart shows how the number of breaks increases as the river water temperature drops. The Potomac River is the primary source of drinking water for the majority of WSSC's 1.8 million customers.

WSSC crews repair nearly 1,800 water main breaks each year, with the vast majority of them, approximately 1,200, occurring between November and February. WSSC has al-

ready repaired 308 breaks and leaks this November.

"Our maintenance depots are stocked with all the necessary materials and equipment to handle this expected increase in water main breaks," said WSSC's Utility Services Director Damion Lamplery.

Nearly 40 percent of WSSC water mains are more than 50 years old. With such a large water distribution network spanning both counties, customers are encouraged to report water main breaks and leaks as quickly as possible.

### There are three simple ways to report a break:

- Call WSSC's 24/7 Emergency Center at 301-206-4002
- Email WSSC's 24/7 Emergency Center at emergencycallcenter@wsscwater.com
- Use WSSC's Mobile App

The "Report a Problem" feature on WSSC's Mobile App allows customers to easily snap a picture of water and sewer problems and send it directly to the Emergency Call Center. The application uses GPS to pinpoint the location of the image, which allows WSSC dispatchers to send an inspector to the location.

WSSC maintains the pipes in the streets and the connections up to the property line. If a pipe in your home freezes, it is the homeowner's responsibility to repair.

### What to do if a home plumbing pipe freezes:

- Completely open the cold water faucet nearest the frozen pipe. This relieves the pressure and reduces the chance of a rupture.

- Use a hand-held dryer if you decide to thaw the pipe yourself.

- When in doubt, call a registered plumber.

### Homeowner winterization tips:

- Keep the temperature inside your home above 55 degrees.

- Turn off the water to outside faucets, remove hoses and drain the pipes.

- Inquire with your local hardware store about pipe insulation.

- On colder nights, open cabinet doors to expose pipes to the home's heat.

- If a break impacts water service to your home, flush the cold water lines after service has been restored for five minutes, starting with the highest faucet in your home and opening all other taps (highest to lowest) one at a time. Turn off these faucets after five minutes— from lowest to highest.

For more information on WSSC's #WinterReady plans, including a video on how to locate the main water shutoff valve in your home, visit: [www.wsscwater.com/winterready](http://www.wsscwater.com/winterready).

## Brandywine-Aquasco

by Audrey Johnson 301 888 2153

### WIN FAMILY SERVICES

Make a difference in a young person's life and become a Foster Parent. Win Family Services, a faith-based foster care agency is always looking for individuals wanting to make a difference. They need parents with a BIG heart to provide homes for youth who have big needs. There are thousands of youth in Maryland that need a loving home. They need compassion adults to nurture and love them. If you feel this is your calling and have extra love to give to a child, please contact (410) 578-8004 or [info@winfamilyservices.org](mailto:info@winfamilyservices.org).

### MEDSTAR SOUTHERN MARYLAND HOSPITAL CENTER

Hospital Volunteer program volunteers make a difference every day helping to support the health of our community. Please call 301-877-4553 for more information about volunteer opportunities.

Stroke Support Group meet the last Thursday of every month from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM in MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Library (ground floor) Registration required. The cost is free. Call 301-877-5858 or visit [MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Calendar](http://MedStarSouthernMaryland.org/Calendar).

### BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY

Bowie State University Department of Fine and Performing Arts presented a Holiday Extravaganza Soulful Celebration Friday, December 8, 2017 at their Fine and Performing Arts Center Main Stage Theater. Mistress of Ceremonies was Carolyn Mills Bowden. Selections were by BSU Community Jazz Ensemble under the direction of Dr. Knight. Guest Vocalist were Alisha Pryor and Martina Kerns. Darius Cortez a music performance student performed a Solo. Morgan Booth a musical theater student performed a Solo. Bowie State University Gospel Choir performed musical selections. Holiday messages by Dr. Gail Medford Chair, Department of Fine and Performing Arts.

The Department of Fine and Performing Arts shares the honor of being one of only two All-Steinway Schools in the State of Maryland. All Steinway Schools demonstrate full commitment to excellence by providing their students and faculties with the best instruments possible for the study and performance of music. That is why the only acoustic pianos at this institution, from the practice rooms to the performances halls are designed by Steinway & Sons.

Thanks to those who made this production a fruitful and enjoyable holiday treat. It is through their unselfish dedication to the arts that we can bring the spirit of the season to this holiday celebration as a reminder that our world provides many ways to enjoy the excitement of this time of year.

### AUDITIONS

Monday, January 8, 4:30 Missoula Children's Theatre provides two professionals tour actor/directors who will audition and cast 50-60 local elementary and secondary school students in a full-length, original musical production of Cinderella. Children must be at the John Addison Concert Hall in Fort Washington Maryland by 4:30 PM. Latecomers will not be admitted. Please wear comfortable clothing. All materials for song and movement auditions will be provided. Grades Pre-K-12; FREE admission. Telephone number is 301-203-6070; TTY 301-699-2544. You can also visit [HarmonyHallArts@pgparks.com](http://HarmonyHallArts@pgparks.com) for more information.

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to All of My Readers



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# COMMUNITY

## The American Counseling Association's Counseling Corner

### Don't Let A Holiday Family Visit Become A Holiday Disaster

During the holiday season, advertisers and the media are constantly portraying families as all having these perfectly wonderful, caring and loving relationships. Unfortunately, for most of us, our families are probably less than perfect.

When it comes to holiday gatherings with our families, there's always the chance it's going to be less than perfect times. It's not uncommon to feel stress and anxious about an upcoming family visit. But if you take the time to understand the sources of the stress that can come with a family get-together, it often can help at least minimize those feelings.

A common problem is that you've become a different person than the image of you that parents, siblings and other family members still carry with them. For them you may still be that little kid or immature teen, and they can't see how you've developed and matured. It's a source of annoyance when others can't recognize the changes that have made you who you are today.

Another source of anxiety for many is not having met family expectations. You may have faced a recent job loss, financial problems or a relationship that has ended badly. It can feel awkward and difficult to be back with family knowing you're not the success you think your family expected of you.

Family visits also bring with them family history. There may be memories of stressful times, past disagreements, awkward relationships or an unhappy childhood. It's not uncommon for family arguments or misunderstandings to rekindle once again.

One starting point in minimizing such issues is simply recognizing that the stress you're feeling is a very normal reaction. When you try to understand why an upcoming family gathering is feeling stressful, you can begin to find ways to minimize such feelings. This might mean avoiding certain situations or people, or simply accepting that you won't have a wonderful time with everyone.

Seek out people to see and things to do that will make your visit more enjoyable. Try to avoid the trouble spots. When cornered in an awkward situation use the cell phone excuse ("Oops, I forgot I have to call Sharon by 4 ...") to walk away from potential problems.

And if you find that the whole trip is really going to be significantly traumatic, consider shortening, or even avoiding the visit completely. Don't let old problems ruin your current holiday enjoyment.

*Counseling Corner is provided by the American Counseling Association. Comments and questions to ACAcorner@counseling.org or visit the ACA website at www.counseling.org*

### Morningside from A2

Happy 63rd anniversary to Jerry and Arvilla Atkinson on Dec. 27; and happy 40th to Nola and Bruce Thomas on Dec. 27.

Happy 63rd anniversary to Jerry and Arvilla Atkinson on Dec. 27; and happy 40th to Nola and Bruce Thomas on Dec. 27.

*Blessed Christmas to my Readers and to my Editor*

### Budget from A1

- Expanding full-day preK by seven classrooms. PGCPs currently has 155 full-day preK classrooms with 3,100 seats available. Capacity will increase by 198 seats
- High-Performing Workforce (\$66.5 million)
  - Compensation and benefits
  - Increase mentor teachers
  - Cultural proficiency training
- Safe and Supportive Environments (\$18.7 million)
  - Facility and Building Services supplies
  - Preventative maintenance
  - Security staff and equipment
- Family and Community Engagement (\$1.1 million); and
  - Student Safety Action Plan
  - Parent engagement assistants
  - Diversity office staffing
- Organizational Effectiveness (\$1.0 million)

- Second review of grading and graduation certification processes
- Customer service initiative
- Risk Management

The FY 2019 budget proposal also includes a projected \$27.2 million increase from the State and a \$115.9 million increase from the County.

About PGCPs: Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPs), one of the nation's 25 largest school districts, has 208 schools and centers, more than 130,000 students and nearly 19,000 employees. Under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell, the school system serves a diverse student population from urban, suburban and rural communities located in the Washington, DC suburbs. PGCPs is nationally recognized for innovative programs and initiatives that provide students with unique learning opportunities, including arts integration, environmental and financial literacy, and language immersion.

**Proudly Serving Prince George's County**  
Since 1932

## Six Million Guests, One Monumental Year: MGM National Harbor Celebrates First Anniversary

*Resort Has Become the Largest Contributor to Maryland's Education Trust Fund in its First Year*

By PRESS OFFICER  
MGM National Harbor

NATIONAL HARBOR, MD—Since officially opening its doors one year ago, MGM National Harbor, the Capital Region's first fully integrated resort experience, has engaged millions of guests from across the globe while delivering on the promise of significant contributions to Prince George's County.

The anniversary caps off a year of remarkable accomplishments for MGM National Harbor:

- Contributed more than \$170 million (as of November 30), becoming the largest contributor to Maryland's Education Trust Fund
- Contributed a higher dollar amount to the State of Maryland than any other gaming facility, becoming the highest contributor of tax revenue in the State of Maryland
- Contributed more than \$17 million in local impact grants since opening (as of November 30, 2017, in accordance with Maryland law)
- Created new career opportunities for 3,700 employees, nearly 50 percent of whom are Prince George's County residents; contributed more than 5,000 cumulative volunteer hours to date in 2017
- Provided over \$1 million in philanthropic contributions to institutions including Prince George's County Community College, Bowie State University, University of Maryland College Park and the Community Foundation of Prince George's County

- Established the MGM National Harbor Endowed Veterans Scholarship to provide educational support for veteran students at the University of Maryland and awarded the first recipient, a 10-year U.S. Air Force veteran who served deployments to Iraq and Haiti
- Consistently demonstrated its commitment to supporting women-owned and minority-owned business enterprises (MBEs) in Maryland: paid more than \$367.9 million to MBE-certified companies, awarded construction contracts to 170 MBEs, and paid more than \$158.4 million to Prince George's County Minority Business Enterprises (CMBEs)
- Invested approximately \$6 million in improvements to the former Thomas Addison School in Prince George's County, where it will be available for community use in 2018
- Hosted approximately 6 million guests, more people than the population of Singapore
- Produced 50 sold-out shows in the Theater at MGM National Harbor
- Performed 62,000 hotel check-ins, reaching full capacity on more than 240 nights since opening
- Dealt more than 6 million cards and rolled the dice 14,000 times
- Thrilled players with more than 50,000 jackpots paying out over \$130 million in winnings
- Poured more than 76,000 glasses of sparkling wine and champagne

"As I reflect on the past year at MGM National Harbor, there's a lot to be proud of," said Anton Nikodemus, Chief Operating Officer for Regional Operation of MGM Resorts International. "We aimed high when we developed the concept for this resort—we wanted to introduce something that didn't exist in the region. Based on the 6 million guests who've visited MGM National Harbor—whether for dining, nightlife, spa, concerts or even art—I feel confident that we've delivered. But most of all, I'm proud of the relationship we have built with the community and the 3,700 employees who breathe life into this resort each day."

The star-studded inaugural year also brought incredible celebrity guests to MGM National Harbor. From high-end retail outlets like SJP, Sarah Jessica Parker's shoe boutique, to sold-out theater performances by iconic stars like Cher, Bruno Mars, Sting and Chris Rock, the luxury destination outperformed every expectation becoming a must-see attraction in a region known for its incredible sights and experiences.

The resort elevated the Potomac dining experience, garnering rave reviews for Voltaggio Brothers Steak House, the first culinary partnership of Maryland natives Michael and Bryan Voltaggio; and Fish, a seafood concept from the award-winning José Andrés. MGM National Harbor diners quickly discov-

ered exquisite twists on modern dishes.

To celebrate the resort's first anniversary, MGM National Harbor hosted live entertainment throughout the property on Friday, December 8, the festivities began at 6 p.m., and culminated in a fireworks display that could be seen from the Potomac Plaza. It was a great night of fun and festivities.

### About MGM National Harbor

The newest addition to the MGM Resorts International (NYSE:MGM) portfolio, MGM National Harbor has an unrivaled setting offering stunning panoramic views of the eastern shore of the Potomac River in Maryland. The \$1.4 billion LEED® Gold Certified resort, which opened December 8, 2016, sits a short distance from Washington, D.C. to the north and historic sites, including George Washington's Mount Vernon estate across the river in Virginia. The 24-story, 308-room resort features premier amenities and experiences for locals as well as visitors from around the world including a dynamic casino with over 125,000 square feet of space that includes slots, table games and poker; a world-class spa and salon; an entertainment theater with flexible seating for up to 3,000; high-end branded retail; 50,000 square feet of meeting space; and restaurants from renowned local, national and international chefs. For more information, visit [mgm-nationalharbor.com](http://mgm-nationalharbor.com) or follow on Facebook and Twitter.

## Statement From Councilwoman Mary A. Lehman on The Retirement of Delegate Barbara Frush (D-21)

By PRESS OFFICER  
PG County Council

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—"I would like to publicly thank Delegate Frush for her more than two decades of distinguished service in the Maryland General Assembly, for her tireless and trailblazing work getting smoking banned in restaurants, and as a

stalwart protector of the environment. Her strong voice on clean air and water issues and the health of the Chesapeake Bay in particular will be greatly missed.

As a resident of District 21, I have long admired Barbara's commitment to the community and the people she represents. She is a person of humility who has never forgotten her roots. Barbara's pride

as a native Prince Georgian and her deep affection for her own neighborhood in the Calverton section of Beltsville is well known.

As a County Councilwoman, I have had the good fortune of working closely with Barbara on several environmental bills in Annapolis as well as on community issues in Council District 1. She has been a strong supporter

of our public schools and was a valuable participant on a work group that I formed to explore the feasibility of a replacement High Point High School.

I am grateful to have been represented by a reliable, progressive voice in the Maryland House of Delegates for the past 24 years and wish Barbara the very best in her retirement."

### FBI from A1

explanation for their decision," Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Maryland, told Capital News Service in an interview. "Congress on a bipartisan basis had already provided a very significant down payment on the new FBI building, and had legislation that said we would provide the remainder."

Van Hollen noted there was still \$323 million appropriated for the project in the 2017 budget, and that GSA was now looking into a range of different financing scenarios.

One of the obstacles in the old GSA plan was a so-called "swap" requirement, where the sale of the FBI's current headquarters, the J. Edgar Hoover building at 935 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., in downtown Washington, would be required as part of the funding for the new site.

Going forward, these two sites will be treated separately in the planning process, Van Hollen confirmed.

Before GSA cancelled its plans for the new FBI complex in July, there were three contenders for a new location: Greenbelt and Landover in Maryland, and Springfield, Virginia.

Advocates for the Maryland sites believe they have an advantage over the Virginia site, which

is home to existing federal agencies that would have to be moved, adding cost.

The FBI outgrew its headquarters on Pennsylvania Avenue long ago. A 2011 report by the Government Accountability Office stated that the Hoover building and its annexes no longer were able to "fully support the FBI's long-term security, space, and building condition requirements."

Calling the structure "aging and inefficient," the GAO study identified security risks and inefficiencies due to the dispersal of FBI employees across leased sites throughout the District of Columbia because the deteriorating building could no longer house the bureau's growing staff.

According to the GAO report, the FBI had more than 17,000 employees housed in more than 40 annexes, and programs in 21 of those sites that "should be relocated to meet the agency's mission requirements." The FBI staff was projected to grow by 7 percent between the report's time of publication and this fiscal year.

As for Prince George's County, home to both of the Maryland sites, the waiting game continues, but with renewed hope.

"After the initial shock (from the July cancellation), what we decided to do, very wisely, was

stay in this (ready) posture," said Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker III, who is also running for governor. "They (the FBI) can't stay where they are, therefore there is going to be a new and hopefully consolidated facility. It was just a matter of talking to developers and making sure they were still very interested."

To date, Prince George's has spent about \$1 million on the FBI effort, according to David S. Iannucci, head of economic development for the county.

"I remain confident that Prince George's County continues to be the best choice for the fully consolidated FBI headquarters," Rep. Steny Hoyer, D-Mechanicsville, said in a statement to Capital News Service.

Hoyer and Rep. Anthony Brown, D-Upper Marlboro, have been outspoken in favor of moving the building to Prince George's, both for the economic benefits to Maryland and to meet new security requirements for the FBI.

"Both the locations are near transit with available space where you can build secure facilities, and where the men and women of the FBI can find a place where they want to work and live," said Matthew Verghese, Brown's communications director

GSA has until February 1, 2018 to submit a new plan.

Baker had a meeting with the FBI and GSA regarding the project a few weeks ago where he said he was left with a mixed message about next steps.

"The ideal situation would be to start from where they left off (in the planning process) and in the same breath, they said there may be a resolicitation of the bids," Baker said. "We don't think there should be a resolicitation. If the bidders are willing to leave their money on the table and their work and their site, there should not be a solicitation."

After the July cancellation of the project, there was media speculation that the Trump administration was behind it for a range of reasons, including the Robert Mueller investigation or the possibility that a hotel would replace the Hoover building and compete with the Trump International Hotel, only blocks away.

Capital News Service could not confirm any overt influence over the July cancellation by the White House.

For Maryland's sake, hopes remain high that the new process by GSA will land the project in Prince George's County.

"It'd be the same as getting the Pentagon in northern Virginia," Baker said.

# COMMENTARY

**Marc Morial, President and CEO**  
*National Urban League*



## The President's Claim To Be Above the Law is "An Affront to the Very Principle on Which Our System is Built"

*"No man is above the law and no man is below it: nor do we ask any man's permission when we ask him to obey it."*

—Theodore Roosevelt,  
Third Annual Message, December 7, 1903

A claim this week by President Trump's personal lawyer that "president cannot obstruct justice because he is the chief law enforcement officer" sparked immediate comparison to Richard Nixon's notorious 1977 statement, "When the president does it, that means that it is not illegal."

While the Senate Judiciary Committee did approve a charge of obstruction of justice against Nixon in 1972, Nixon's 1977 statement to interviewer David Frost referred to another article, considered but rejected by the committee: the secret bombing of Cambodia. The committee also rejected an article regarding Nixon's personal finances and failure to pay taxes.

Nixon famously resigned before the House of Representatives could vote on the three articles of impeachment—in addition to obstruction, the committee approved articles charging him with abuse of power and contempt of Congress. But it was widely accepted the House would vote to impeach.

In a memo prepared for Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski, the legal team argued not only that "no man in this country is so high that he is above the law," but the offense of obstruction was of particular concern.

Failure to deal evenhandedly with the President would be an affront to the very principle on which our system is built. And this failure would be all the more severe because of the nature of the crime in question, a conspiracy to obstruct justice, the purpose of which was to place certain individuals beyond the rule of law. The result would probably be greater public disrespect for the integrity of the legal process than has already been created by public knowledge of attempts by the nation's highest officials to put themselves beyond the law."

Twenty three years later, Congress would vote to impeach President Bill Clinton, on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice.

The special prosecutor investigating Clinton, Ken Starr, wrote in his report, "An effort to obstruct justice by withholding the truth from the legal process—whether by lying under oath, concealing documents, or improperly influencing a witness's testimony—is a federal crime. There is substantial and credible information that President Clinton engaged in such efforts to prevent the truth of his relationship with Monica Lewinsky from being revealed in the Jones case."

No President is above the law. Nixon and Clinton were not, and Trump is not. Nor is the President the chief law enforcement officer in the nation; the Attorney General holds that distinction.

President Trump, of course, has not been charged with obstruction of justice or any other offense. But his lawyer's claim represents a dangerous and un-American view.

Thomas Paine, in his revolutionary pamphlet *Common Sense*, wrote "But where, says some, is the King of America? ... In America the law is king."

John Adams enshrined the concept in the Massachusetts Constitution with the often-quoted phrase, "a government of laws, not of men."

It has been a common rhetorical device in modern American politics for rivals to accuse one another of placing themselves above the law, particularly when protesting some executive action or another. But with the notable exceptions of Nixon and Trump, it's unheard of for a U.S. President to claim that privilege for himself. It's disputed whether King Louis XIV of France really said "L'état, c'est moi"—"I am the state"—on his deathbed in 1715, but it's certain that the expression has consistently been held up as the antithesis of American rule of law.

There are nine current members of the Senate who voted to convict President Clinton of obstruction of justice in 1999. They would be hard pressed, now, to agree with Trump's legal team that the offense does not exist.

**Cong. Chris Van Hollen**  
*United States Senator for Maryland*



## Van Hollen, Senate Democrats Urge House Colleagues to Reject GOP Tax Bill

*Proposal Would Double Tax Americans' Income and Raise Taxes on Maryland, California, New York, and New Jersey Residents*

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On December 4, 2017, U.S. Senator Chris Van Hollen led a letter with his Senate colleagues from Maryland, California, New York, and New Jersey, urging the 29 House Republicans who represent these states to oppose the Republican tax bill in light of a study finding that residents of these four states would pay higher taxes under the plan. Senator Van Hollen was joined in this letter by Senators Cardin (D-Md.), Schumer (D-N.Y.), Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Menendez (D-N.J.), Booker (D-N.J.), Feinstein (D-Calif.), and Harris (D-Calif.).

The Senators wrote, "As members of the congressional delegations for California, New York, Maryland, and New Jersey, we are writing to urge you not to support tax legislation that raises taxes on our constituents to finance tax cuts for multinational corporations."

Slashing the deduction for state and local taxes means that hard-working families get double taxed on their income, and results in higher taxes for many constituents throughout these states. According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, in 2027 alone, California residents would face a \$12.1 billion tax hike, New York residents would face a \$4.0 billion tax hike, Maryland residents would face a \$430 million tax hike, and New Jersey residents would face a \$137 million tax hike.

The Senators added, "Congress cannot force these partisan tax increases on our constituents without your support. There are 29 Republican Members of Congress representing our four states, but none in the Senate. If the final tax legislation raises taxes on our states, our last chance to stop it will be when it comes back to the House of Representatives for a vote. If you join your Democratic and Republican colleagues and vote against the bill, we can stop this tax increase and work together towards our shared goal of real bipartisan tax reform that is fair to everyone."

The full text of the letter follows.

Dear Colleagues,

As members of the congressional delegations for California, New York, Maryland, and New Jersey, we are writing to urge you not to support tax legislation that raises taxes on our constituents to finance tax cuts for multinational corporations.

On November 16, 2017, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1. This tax legislation would raise the overall tax bill for residents of our states, according to analysis by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. In 2027 alone, California

See **TAX BILL** Page A8

*Winter Festival of Lights*



*Open to the Public*

PHOTO CREDIT: WATKINS PARK

WINTER FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS AT WATKINS PARK

301 Watkins Park Drive, Upper Marlboro, Maryland. Runs November 24, 2017–January 1, 2018 from 5–9:30 p.m. daily. \$10 per car; \$20 for mini-buses and limos; \$30 for buses; \$15 for multi-visit passes for cars and vans (good for three visits). The festival is FREE on December 25. You may bring canned food items to donate to local food banks for the holidays. Winter Festival of Lights is Prince George's County, Maryland's spectacular drive-through Christmas light display featuring more than a million twinkling lights.

The park is also home to the following facilities: Watkins Nature Center, the Chesapeake Carousel, Old Maryland Farm, the Watkins Regional Park miniature train and the Watkins Miniature Golf Course. Those who enjoy nature, sports, picnics, hiking, camping, or outdoor family activities will find plenty to do at Watkins Regional Park. Throughout the year the park hosts a variety of exciting special events including summer concerts in the park, the Winter Festival of Lights, National Senior Health Fitness Day, and charity runs/walks.

## Child Watch

by Marion Wright Edelman



## Congress' Urgent Unfinished Business for Children

As if our fight to stop the profoundly unjust Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was not enough, we must all work hard to ensure there will be no unfinished business as Congress works to wrap up the Continuing Resolution before December 22nd with all the crucial help children and other vulnerable populations need. Entire groups of children and families' well-being are at risk without action. The Continuing Resolution must include five years extended funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); home visiting support for infants and toddlers and other young children through the Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting Program; support for Dreamers and future Dreamers, young people who came here as children and face risk of deportation; and desperately needed help for hurricane victims in Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. All are crucial for children and youths and have bipartisan support. These are not new needs or requests and Congress needs to act on them with urgency.

Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP): For 20 years CHIP has given working families the security of knowing their children had access to high-quality, child-appropriate affordable health coverage. CHIP has helped cut in half the number of uninsured children, improved child health outcomes and access to care, helped reduce school absenteeism and improved children's readiness to learn. CHIP is a lifeline for 8.9 million children whose families earn too much to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to buy private coverage. CHIP and Medicaid are the foundation of our health care system for children.

Although CHIP began with and continues to have bipartisan

support, partisan politicking about how to pay for it keeps blocking the way. CHIP funding is 76 days overdue and a patchwork of temporary assistance will no longer work. Colorado and Virginia began sending letters to families this month warning that without renewed federal money, CHIP coverage would end in January. Texas and Connecticut plan similar notices this month. Although Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) was one of the original sponsors of CHIP and is a continuing CHIP champion, Utah announced it will end CHIP in January if Congress does not find the money. West Virginia's CHIP board voted to end it February 28 and 30 states will exhaust CHIP funds by March. How unbearable the fear parents feel must be as cancellation notices hit their mailboxes during the holidays.

Brooke, a Texas mother of three, is a church child care provider and her husband is a mechanic. She puts it this way: "Having health insurance through CHIP has meant that my kids are healthy, my family is more financially stable, and my husband and I don't stay up nights worrying about how to pay our medical bills. My middle daughter was diagnosed six years ago with OCD [Obsessive Compulsive Disorder] and anxiety. We've had years of treatment with therapists and doctors to teach her coping mechanisms and give her the medications she needed. She's now healthy and happy, does so well in school and has improved so much. Without CHIP we never would've been able to afford the care she needed and she'd still be struggling ... If CHIP gets cancelled I don't know what we'll do. It's not like

See **Jobs** Page A5

## The Prince George's Post

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# BUSINESS

## Social Security Matters

### Ask Rusty—Computing Spousal Benefits

by Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I read an article today, which talked about how one spouse's benefits should be 50% of the other spouse's and about something called a "spousal boost". I do not make 50% of my husband's Social Security benefit and am wondering if I qualify for this "spousal boost."

#### Signed: Feeling Cheated

**Dear Feeling Cheated:** Oh, so many times I have seen written that "a low income spouse gets one half of the other spouse's benefit," or something similar to that. Unfortunately this is a very misleading oversimplification of Social Security's spousal benefit rules. To illustrate, we need to start with a few definitions: First, all Social Security benefits start with an eligible worker's Primary Insurance Amount, or "PIA". The PIA is the amount that a worker is gets at their full retirement age (FRA). Retirement benefits (what the worker gets) and spousal benefits (what a lower-earning or no-earning spouse gets) are both reduced if the benefit is started before full retirement age.

For ease of discussion, let's assume here that the husband is the higher-earning spouse (it could easily be the other way around) and that the husband's PIA is \$2000. To show how spousal benefits work let's use a couple of different scenarios:

If the wife was a stay at home Mom who is not eligible for her own Social Security retirement benefit because her lifetime career was running the household, raising the kids, and caring for elderly parents, she would get ½ of the husband's PIA if (and only if) her spousal benefit started at her FRA. If it started any earlier than that it would be reduced to as little as 35% of the husband's PIA if the spousal benefit started at age 62 and the wife's FRA is 66. The portion of her husband's PIA that the wife is entitled to is reduced by a fraction of a percent for each month before her FRA that the benefit starts. Example at age 62 with an FRA of 66: Instead of 50% of husband's PIA, wife gets 35%, or \$700 (instead of \$1000).

If, instead, the wife is eligible for her own Social Security retirement benefits because she worked enough years, but she took some years off for family purposes and has a smaller PIA of \$750, her spousal benefit is computed somewhat differently. The wife's PIA is compared to one half of her husband's PIA to arrive at a "spousal boost" - an amount that will be added to her own retirement benefit if her spousal benefit starts at her full retirement age. In this example, half of the husband's PIA (\$1000) minus the wife's PIA (\$750) equals \$250. If the wife's spousal benefit starts at or after her full retirement age, the full \$250 will be added to her own retirement benefit. But if her spousal benefit starts earlier, the \$250 will be reduced by a fraction of a percent for each month taken early. To illustrate: Taken at age 62 with an FRA of 66, the wife's retirement benefit would be reduced by 25% for early retirement and she would get \$562. If her spousal benefit starts (her husband starts his retirement benefit) when she is 66, the full "spousal boost" will be added to her reduced retirement benefit and her new benefit would be \$812 (\$562 plus \$250). But if the spousal benefit starts before her FRA, say at age 65, the spousal boost will be reduced to about \$229 (about an 8.3% reduction) making her total benefit \$791. Which is, again, less than one-half of the husband's PIA.

Essentially, a low-earning (or no-earning) spouse gets half of the higher-earning spouse's Primary insurance Amount only if the spousal benefit starts at their full retirement age - otherwise it will be less than 50%. And this is why the blanket statement "a low income spouse gets one half of the other spouse's benefit" is a very misleading oversimplification of how spousal benefits work.

*The information presented in this article is intended for general information purposes only. The opinions and interpretations expressed are the viewpoints of the AMAC Foundation's Social Security Advisory staff, trained and accredited under the National Social Security Advisors program of the National Social Security Association, LLC (NSSA). NSSA, the AMAC Foundation, and the Foundation's Social Security Advisors are not affiliated with or endorsed by the United States Government, the Social Security Administration, or any other state government. Furthermore, the AMAC Foundation and its staff do not provide legal or accounting services. The Foundation welcomes questions from readers regarding Social Security issues. To submit a request, contact the Foundation at [info@amacfoundation.org](mailto:info@amacfoundation.org).*

### Jobs from A4

we have a spendy life—we've cut everything we can as it is. I'm not sure what we'd choose to go without to pay for our family's medical needs."

There will be millions of families like Brooke's in Texas and nationally. Children will miss doctor appointments and go without medication. Pregnant women will lose prenatal care. Ongoing treatments will stop. Congress must immediately reauthorize CHIP for five years without making harmful cuts in other programs serving children and families to pay for it.

#### Maternal and Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting Pro-

**gram (MIECHV):** Pregnant women and children under five benefit from MIECHV in every state and territory. It has had bipartisan support since its 2010 enactment but its services and jobs will be lost if Congress doesn't renew it immediately. MIECHV-funded programs use evidence-based voluntary home visiting models that must demonstrate measurable improvements on at least four of six benchmarks—improvements in maternal and newborn health, reductions in abuse and neglect and childhood injuries, improved school readiness and achievement, reduction in crime or domestic violence, improved family economic self-sufficiency

## Governor Larry Hogan Announces 2018 Jobs and Economic Development Initiatives

By PRESS OFFICER  
Office of the Governor

ANNAPOLIS, MD—Governor Larry Hogan today announced a series of new initiatives to spur job creation and economic growth in Maryland and further establish the state's leadership in key STEM-related (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) industries. The governor was joined by Commerce Secretary Mike Gill, Labor Secretary Kelly Schulz, University System of Maryland Chancellor Robert Caret, Wicomico County Executive Bob Culver, and numerous officials from the counties benefiting from the governor's expanded jobs initiative.

"For nearly three years, the focus of our administration has been on growing our private sector, putting more people to work, and turning our economy around—and that is exactly what we have done," said Governor Hogan. "The initiatives we are announcing today will help us to create an environment of economic opportunity for every Marylander, and to accelerate growth in some of the sectors where Maryland already leads."

The governor pledged to introduce new legislation in the upcoming session to expand on the already-successful More Jobs for Marylanders Act, which was passed in the 2017 session and went into effect on June 1st. The program incentivizes manufacturing companies to create jobs in areas with higher unemployment by providing a tax credit for each new job created. In less than six months, nearly 70 manufacturers have filed letters of intent with the Maryland Depart-

ment of Commerce, with the potential to create thousands of jobs. Seventeen of those companies have filed official applications, which will create approximately 450 new jobs, including Marlin Steel and Tulkoff Foods in Baltimore City, Alertus Technologies in Prince George's County, Lanco Dairy Farms in Washington County, and Sherwin-Williams in Somerset County.

"Governor Hogan's program to create manufacturing jobs is paying off," said Drew Greenblatt, CEO of Marlin Steel. "Marlin Steel is hiring engineers, welders, and robot technicians who all live locally in Baltimore City."

The new legislation, the More Jobs for Marylanders Act 2.0, will build on that success by expanding the reach of the program to additional jurisdictions, including Garrett, Caroline, Kent, and Wicomico Counties, and allowing all eligible jurisdictions to select up to three industries or sectors in addition to manufacturing where the tax credits would be applicable. This will give jurisdictions the ability to leverage their unique economic development goals and strengths to create even more jobs. The expanded program will also increase the available funding for tax credits from \$9 million to \$15 million.

"I would like to thank Governor Hogan for his tireless efforts to bolster economic opportunity throughout the state, and especially on the Lower Shore," said Wicomico County Executive Bob Culver. "Through the expanded More Jobs for Marylanders Act, local jurisdictions will have greater flexibility to identify their own individual economic

development needs based on their local goals and strengths."

"We are grateful and excited for the governor to include us in the More Jobs for Marylanders Act. As a small and economically depressed area, the need for state support through these types of incentives is paramount if we are going to have any opportunities for growth. This is big for us!" said Garrett County Commissioner Paul Edwards.

Governor Hogan also unveiled a series of new initiatives to maximize growth in Maryland's leading industries, including cybersecurity and life sciences, based on recommendations from Excel Maryland, the administration's comprehensive statewide economic development program launched earlier this year. He announced that the administration will launch a \$33 million partnership with the University System of Maryland to increase degrees awarded in STEM-related fields. The degree program dovetails with the administration's ACCESS Initiative, which targets STEM education to K-12 students.

In addition, the governor announced new legislation to incentivize cybersecurity companies to grow in Maryland, after the legislature failed to act on a bill proposed in 2016. Despite the legislature's inaction, the administration was successful in securing an investment of \$3 million in a cyber-specific grant through the state's nationally-recognized Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) apprenticeship program.

Building on the administration's commitment to workforce development, the governor announced that he will fund the Maryland Technology Internship

Program for the first time in state history, which provides matching funds to companies for internship stipends. To support the program, the state will launch a social network technology platform called IN-MD to create a one-stop-shop for internships in STEM-related fields.

Finally, the governor announced a groundbreaking new partnership between the state, Johns Hopkins University, Cognate Bioservices, and Forest City to invest \$17 million to establish the Maryland Center for Cell Therapy Manufacturing in Baltimore City. This critical infrastructure investment will leverage Maryland's robust clinical and research base to become a world leader in the regenerative medicine industry.

"Investment to support cell therapy manufacturing is an exciting opportunity and an important initiative to support both research and treatment to benefit patients," said Johns Hopkins University President Ron Daniels. "This crucial funding will ensure Johns Hopkins and Maryland remain a destination for cutting-edge patient therapies."

"With all of these important announcements we are making today, we are continuing our focus on jobs, jobs, jobs," said Governor Hogan. "We are providing the job training needed to increase the number of qualified and skilled job candidates right here in Maryland, and we are working to address current industry demand to help our businesses and our economy continue to grow. Most importantly, we are continuing our very successful efforts to create tens of thousands of new high-paying jobs for Marylanders."

### Free Rides from A1

from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk, holiday period.

During the evening hours, between now through January 1st, area residents age 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may download Lyft to their phones, then enter the code in the app's "Promo" section to receive their no cost (up to \$15) safe transportation home. WRAP's weekly Holiday SoberRide promo codes will be posted at 2:00 pm on December 23 and December 31 on [www.SoberRide.com](http://www.SoberRide.com).

"Last December, nearly a thousand (911) Greater Washington residents did the right thing and availed themselves of this lifesaving service rather than possibly driving home impaired," said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President. "For SoberRide's hours of operation on New Year's alone,

this level of ridership (336) translated into SoberRide removing a would-be drunk driver from Greater Washington's roadways every one-and-a-half-minutes."

The charity also offers its SoberRide program on St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, Independence Day and Halloween.

(In March 2017, WRAP announced a partnership with the ridesharing service Lyft to provide WRAP's SoberRide service in the Washington-metropolitan area through 2017. SoberRide, the popular free safe ride service to prevent drunk driving, is now solely available via the Lyft mobile app ridesharing platform.)

SoberRide is offered throughout Lyft's Washington, D.C. coverage area which includes all or parts of: the District of Columbia; the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and the Northern Virginia counties of

Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William.

"Lyft is proud of the role ridesharing has played in reducing impaired driving across the nation. Here in the DC area, partnering with the Washington Regional Alcohol Program allows us to take our commitment to providing safe, convenient, and affordable transportation a step further, particularly during times of the year when people are out celebrating and in need of a ride home," said Steve Taylor, GM, Lyft Washington, D.C.

Sponsors of this year's Holiday SoberRide campaign include the 395 Express Lanes, AAA Mid-Atlantic, Anheuser-Busch, Brown-Forman, Constellation Brands, Diageo, District of Columbia Association of Beverage Alcohol Wholesalers, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Giant Food, Glory Days Grill, Heineken, Lyft, MillerCoors, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington, Volkswa-

gen Group of America and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

Since 1991, WRAP's SoberRide program has provided 68,706 free safe rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

Founded in 1982, the non-profit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average.

More information about WRAP's SoberRide initiative can be found at our website [www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com).

and referral for other community resources and supports. Families in at risk urban and rural communities facing risk factors like substance abuse or child abuse and neglect are given priority for services. MIECHV must be reauthorized for five years at least at its current funding level of \$400 million.

**Dreamers and the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) Program:** Dreamers and future Dreamers are young undocumented immigrants brought to this country as children who have passed background checks, gone to school, met other requirements and contribute to their communities every day though work, studies

and service. They enjoy strong bipartisan support and agree that they should not be deported. Nearly 800,000 immigrants were granted protection from deportation under DACA, which President Trump has set to end in March. Beginning March 5th, 1,000 Dreamers will lose protection every day. Announcing DACA's end, President Trump asked Congress to provide these Dreamers permanent legal status. These protections must be preserved.

**Emergency Relief for Children, Families and Others Struggling from Hurricane Destruction:** Children in Florida, Texas, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are still suffering

from devastating hurricanes. Children's health and education are at great risk, especially in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Many are struggling and surviving without electricity and water and many schools remain closed. Additional emergency funding is long overdue!

Rather than crucial help for children and youths, the Administration and Congress have been pushing for massive tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans and powerful corporations. In this holy season celebrating the birth of a poor baby in a manger, this is a travesty. In a season when Christians believe wise and powerful men gave their gifts to a poor baby on the first Christmas,

we should all tell our leaders they should give our nation's poor, sick, and most vulnerable children the things they urgently need to survive and thrive.

*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](http://www.childrensdefense.org).*

*Mrs. Edelman's Child Watch Column also appears each week on The Huffington Post.*

# OUT ON THE TOWN

ERIC D. SNIDER'S  
IN THE DARK  
Movie Review

## Suburbicon

Suburbicon

Grade: B-

Rated R, some harsh profanity and violence, a little sexuality  
1 hr., 44 min

George Clooney, like most powerful creative types, needs to be told “no” more often. He and regular writing/producing partner Grant Heslov were developing a story about a black family moving into an all-white suburb in the 1950s when Clooney remembered an unproduced script by Joel and Ethan Coen about ordinary idiots pursuing a criminal endeavor and getting in over their heads (a common Coen theme). For reasons that only Clooney can explain, he chose to cram the disparate stories into one screenplay.

The resulting film, *Suburbicon* (whose production notes include the foregoing information) is unsurprisingly disjointed, yet surprisingly not bad as a Hitchcockian, *Fargo*-lite quasi-satire. I credit that to the strength of the Coens’ script, which occupies roughly 75% of the story and is too distinctive to be wrecked by a non-Coen’s mishandling. Clooney, who directed five movies before this one and has starred in four of the Coens’ own films, no doubt thought himself up to the task of interpreting Joel and Ethan’s peculiar speech patterns and evocative one-scene characters for the big screen. He wasn’t—he gets the tone all wrong—but darned if it isn’t watchable anyway. The racism angle, a mistake, comes across as a fascinating error rather than a ruinous one.

It’s the late ‘50s in the squeaky-clean planned community called Suburbicon, and the Meyers family are the first African Americans in the neighborhood. The white people freak out, saying the sort of blatantly racist things that many white people often said in those days, about property values and miscegenation. Neighbors on both sides of the Meyerses put up fences to block their view of the



ROTTENTOMATOES

**Suburbicon is a peaceful, idyllic suburban community with affordable homes and manicured lawns ... the perfect place to raise a family, and in the summer of 1959, the Lodge family is doing just that. But the tranquil surface masks a disturbing reality, as husband and father Gardner Lodge (Matt Damon) must navigate the town’s dark underbelly of betrayal, deceit, and violence. This is a tale of very flawed people making very bad choices. This is *Suburbicon*.**

Negroes, but the back-fence neighbors, the Lodges, withhold judgment. Aunt Maggie (Julianne Moore) encourages young Nicky Lodge (Noah Jupe) to play with the Meyers kid, possibly just so she can see what happens. Nicky’s mom, Maggie’s twin sister Rose (also Moore), is confined to a wheelchair since a car accident and has little interest in anything. The father, Gardner (Matt Damon), is also mum on the race issue, for now.

Violence does come to Suburbicon, but not because of the black family. There is a home invasion perpetrated by two sinister Coen-esque goons, and Mom ends up dead. Gardner, Nicky, and Aunt Maggie are devastated, Gardner returning to his nondescript office job to a chorus of “So sorry to hear about your loss” but finding himself unable to work. Uncle Mitch (Gary Basaraba), the twins’ brother, takes a fatherly interest in Nicky, realizing before we do that Gardner isn’t much of a dad.

Then things REALLY go awry. Without spoiling anything beyond what is implied by this being (mostly) from the writers of *Blood Simple*, *The Man Who Wasn’t There*, and *Burn After Reading*, certain people’s motives and actions are called into question, first by a cop (Jack Conley) who should be selling insurance and then by an insurance investigator (Oscar Isaac) who should be a cop. Nicky emerges as the true protagonist of the story, albeit one who observes and witnesses more than he takes action.

While all of this is happening, the racists continue to gather outside the Meyers house to make noise and be a nuisance. Clooney sometimes cuts to authentic-looking news footage of white people voicing concern about coloreds moving in, and our main characters occasionally interact with them. But Clooney’s point in juxtaposing these separate stories never becomes clear beyond the obvious, facile one about using

minorities and immigrants as scapegoats for our problems. The real story, a meat-and-potatoes crime caper with comic undertones, doesn’t need the racism tangent and isn’t improved by it.

Clooney’s handling of the main thread isn’t smooth, either. He chose an arch, plastic tone rather than a gritty or natural one, with a musical score (by Alexandre Desplat) that’s intentionally oversized and melodramatic. It all has the sheen of satire without actually being satiric, save for a few moments. Keeping us at arm’s length from the characters’ emotions makes the dark story easier to swallow; but paradoxically, it also lessens the impact of the story’s darkness. The pleasure in a plot like this is in vicariously experiencing the thrill of wrongdoing and the satisfaction of seeing wrongdoers punished, all in one. Those sensations are muted here, but the twisting mechanism of the story and the Coens’ colorful dialogue ring through.

## Secretary of State’s Office Warns Marylanders to Beware Of Charity Scams This Holiday Season

By PRESS OFFICER  
State of Maryland News

ANNAPOLIS, MD—As the holidays approach, Governor Larry Hogan and Secretary of State John Wobensmith warn citizens to beware of scam charities and deceptive practices. Charities in Maryland and beyond rely upon the generosity of citizens to provide programs and services to those in need across the state.

While the holidays inspire a spirit of generosity among many Marylanders, it is important to be vigilant about scams

that are posing as legitimate charitable organizations.

All charities who solicit money in Maryland are required to register with the Office of the Secretary of State if they collect \$25,000 or more in direct public support or use paid solicitors to raise funds for the organization. Marylanders can use the Secretary of State website to confirm if a charity is authorized to raise money in Maryland: <http://sos.maryland.gov/Charity/Pages/SearchCharity.aspx>.

The Secretary of State’s Office urges citizens to recog-

nize “red flags” that can help determine if a charity is worthy of support. Ask questions and be suspicious of any charity that won’t provide satisfactory information. Examples of “red flags” that should help you question whether a charity is worthy of your support include:

- Did the organization refuse to send you written material or financial information?
- Did the solicitor offer to send a person to collect your contribution?
- Did the charity send you an invoice or statement that indi-

cates a payment due for a contribution you never pledged?

- Does the organization’s name and logo closely resemble another charity with a similar purpose?

The Secretary of State’s Office investigates complaints about charity fraud. If you think you’ve been the victim of a scam or to report a potential scam charity, contact the Investigations Unit at 410-260-3879 or 800-825-4510.

More information about charities can be found on the Secretary of State’s Charity page: <http://sos.maryland.gov>.

## Prince George’s County Public Schools Announces Updates On Improvements to Grading and Graduation Certification

By PRESS OFFICER  
PGCPS

UPPER MARLBORO, MD—In a letter to parents, Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) CEO Dr. Kevin M. Maxwell today described improvements underway to practices and policies around record-keeping, credit recovery programs and grade changes. Since last month’s release of a state audit of grading and graduation rates, Dr.

Maxwell and school system administrators have met with all high school principals, provided information to staff and parents, and received critical feedback for improvements.

“We are taking the audit findings very seriously,” Dr. Maxwell said. “Academic integrity must be at the foundation of our work. I am committed to ensuring that students and their families can have confidence that their diplomas represent the knowledge and skills

needed to be successful in life after high school.”

Over the last several weeks, PGCPS administrators, principals, professional school counselors, registrars and grade managers have reviewed the recommendations and data across schools and departments. The system is working towards greater accountability, oversight and transparency in the following areas:

- **Grades and Transcripts**—Prior to the start of the current

school year, PGCPS implemented stricter controls regarding access to student records. The number of grade and transcript managers for each school has been reduced to two. The system began running quarterly grade change reports to identify irregularities and where there may be an excessive number of changes.

- **Credit Recovery Programs**—Quarterly Learning

See GRADING Page A7

## Why a Protection Plan?

### Protect Your Gear, Your Gifts And Your Memories Through The Holidays And Beyond

(NAPSI)—The holidays can be an exciting and frenetic time of year, full of equal parts stress and joy. A little planning and taking a few precautions can help give you peace of mind and save cherished memories.

#### • Protect your investment from accidental damage.

From cell phones to major appliances and other electronics, retailers have been offering protection programs and warranties for various types of products for years. While some require a small fee for a little peace of mind, from now until January 6, 2018, Canon is offering 13 months of free CarePAK PLUS coverage to customers who purchase select Canon cameras and lenses and register their product within 30 days of purchase. CarePAK PLUS offers protection from accidental damage such as drops, spills, power surges and more—including normal wear and tear beyond the standard warranty period. With CarePAK PLUS, a damaged product will be repaired to good working condition, or replaced with an equivalent product, with all services performed exclusively by Canon.

#### • Be aware of your surroundings.

Be aware of what you leave out in the open on office countertops and at holiday parties. Be sure to hide personal electronic devices, purses and shopping bags you leave in your car and keep your most valued personal items with you while at parties and functions.

#### • Secure your packages and gifts.

It is estimated that over 10 million U.S. consumers have packages stolen from their doorsteps. Consumers need to know when and where their packages will arrive. Most retailers offer package tracking. Be sure to reroute packages, pick them up at your local post office or package shipping store, and add insurance on packages for peace of mind. Don’t forget to back up and protect devices.

Remember to update passwords, embrace encryption technologies and install phone tracking on mobile devices to help prevent against loss or theft. Remember to back up your photos, music and contacts on home computers regularly.

#### • Preserve and protect your memories.

According to InfoTrends’ 2016 U.S. Consumer Digital Camera End User Study, there are about 4 trillion images worldwide stored on a variety of devices, storage media and in the cloud. Remember to organize and protect these memories at the end of each holiday season. Print your favorite photos for framing around the house or print a digital photo book.

And here’s a tip to reduce the risk of losing images in the event your files become corrupted—do not try to reformat the media before seeking professional data recovery assistance. Data recovery services can cost hundreds of dollars or more, but Canon’s paid CarePAK PLUS plans include Image Recovery—which will help retrieve lost or corrupted images or video—adding an extra layer of protection for your precious memories. And now until January 6, 2018, customers eligible for free CarePAK PLUS coverage can also purchase a 36-month Canon CarePAK PLUS plan, with Image Recovery effective from day 1. That’s a total of 49 months of coverage.

Protecting yourself, your gear and your memories is a great way to step into the New Year. The free 13-month Canon CarePAK PLUS coverage and additional option of 49 months of coverage with Image Recovery are transferable, so if you purchase a Canon product as a gift for someone or sell it during the covered period, the benefits can be transferred. For further information and complete terms and conditions, visit [www.usa.canon.com/protection](http://www.usa.canon.com/protection) or call 1-800-OK-CANON.

It helps to have a little awareness, preparedness and sometimes even a little bit of extra care to protect yourself and your loved ones from life’s unforeseen events.



PHOTO COURTESY NAPSI

Take steps toward a more stress-free holiday season: Get insurance for your plans and presents.

## Calendar of Events

December 21 — December 27, 2017

### Nick Cannon Presents: Wild 'N Out Live!

Date and time: Friday, December 22, 2017, 7:00 pm  
 Description: The lightning fast comedic improv with head-to-head battling and of course, celebrity guests and performances. Featuring Nick Cannon, Rip Micheals, Emmanuel Hudson, Chico Bean, Karlous Miller and DJ D Wrek!  
 Cost: Ticket Prices: • \$160: Floor Seating (Sections 1 & 2), includes Meet & Greet (Pre-event)  
 • \$140: Floor Seating (Last 6 rows in Sections 1 & 2/Sections 3 & 4)  
 • \$120: Bowl Seating (Sect.111\*,110, 109, 123\*, 124, 125)  
 • \$86: Bowl Seating (Sidelines 107,108,126,127)  
 • \$61: Rear Bowl Seating (Sections 104, 105, 106, 128, 129, 130)  
 • \$31: Rear Bowl Seating (Sections 101, 102, 103, 131, 132)

1.00 Facility Fee Included

\* Potential obstructed view

+ Additional Ticketmaster Service Charges will apply only if tickets are not purchased at The Show Place Arena box office

All tickets on sale through TicketMaster (including Accessible seating)

All Patrons Require Tickets

All Sales are Final/ NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES

Ages: No age restriction; however, we recommend those 17 and younger be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian

Location: The Show Place Arena  
 14900 Pennsylvania Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD  
 Contact: 301-952-7900; TTY 301-699-2544

### Xtreme Teens Xtreme Party

Date and time: Friday, December 22, 2017, 7:00 pm–10:00 pm  
 Description: Come join us every 4th Friday of the month for a live DJ; PS4 competitions, Glow in the Dark basketball, Trick Shot shootout, Giant games and so much more!  
 Refreshments are provided.  
 Cost: FREE  
 Ages: 10–17  
 Location: Berwyn Heights School Community Center  
 6200 Pontiac Street, Berwyn Heights, MD  
 Contact: 301-345-2808; TTY: 301-699-2544

### Montpelier Holiday Tours

Date and time: Through December 30, 2017, 11:00 am–4:00 pm  
 Tours available daily (except Wednesdays and Christmas Day)  
 Description: See Montpelier dressed up for the holidays on these self-guided tours. Witness traditional-styled rooms decorated by local garden clubs. You can also shop at the Artists' Boutique through December 29 which features original ornaments, fiber art creations, and other artistic crafts. Don't forget to visit the Montpelier Gift Shop to purchase themed-books, music CDs, old-fashioned toys, tea and tea equipment, as well as Montpelier memorabilia.  
 Cost: \$5/adults; \$4/seniors; \$2/children 5-18; children 4 and under FREE!  
 Ages: All ages are welcome  
 Location: Montpelier Mansion/Historic Site  
 9650 Muirkirk Road, Laurel, MD  
 Contact: 301-377-7817; TTY 301-699-2544

### Youth Boxing: Beginners

Date and time: Monday, December 25, 2017, 4:30 pm–5:15 pm  
 Description: This eight-week boxing program will teach youth an array of boxing techniques, and engage them in character-developing exercises and healthy habit principles. Don't forget to bring your headgear, boxing gloves, and mouth guards!  
 Cost: Resident: \$35; Non-resident: \$46  
 Ages: 11–17  
 Location: Bowie Community Center  
 3209 Stonybrook Drive, Bowie, MD  
 Contact: 301-464-1737; TTY 301-699-2544

### Chicago Style Steppin'

Date and time: Wednesday, December 27, 2017, 7:00 pm–9:00 pm  
 Description: This drop-in activity is a fun way to have you steppin' into an active healthy lifestyle! Chicago Steppin' is a specific form of swing dance. Learn to dance with a partner with stylish and soulful steppin'! Synchronize your movements to the rhythm and beat of the music. This class is taught using the eight-count method.  
 Have fun, meet new people and make sure you make it to the next drop-in session!  
 Cost: Resident: \$8; Non-resident: \$11  
 Ages: 16 and older  
 Location: Glenarden Community Center  
 8615 McLain Avenue, Glenarden, MD  
 Contact: 301-772-3151; TTY 301-699-2544

### Pickleball!

Date and time: Thursday, December 28, 2017, 10:00 am–12:00 pm  
 Description: Great exercise, camaraderie, and fun!! Join us for an easy to learn game of Pickleball, the latest in racquet sports. Pickleball combines the elements of badminton, tennis and table tennis. It is played on a badminton-sized court, a tennis-sized net with whiffle balls, and large Ping Pong paddles. Come ready to have fun, dress comfortably, and don't forget your hand towels and water! No registration is required.  
 Cost: FREE! with valid M-NCPPC ID  
 Ages: 60 and better  
 Location: Glenarden Community Center  
 8615 McLain Avenue, Glenarden, MD  
 Contact: 301-772-3151; TTY 301-699-2544

**ADVERTISE! WITH US**  
**Call Brenda Boice 301 627 0900**

## EARTH TALK ... Green Gifts: Feel Better About The Environmental Impact of the Holidays

Dear EarthTalk:

*I want to set a good environmental example with my gift-giving this holiday season. Any tips on how—or even better, what—to give greener?*

—Jane P., Bowie, MD

The holidays are a time for giving but it is also important to be conscious about spending your gift budget wisely to eliminate packaging waste, buy products that will last and patronize manufacturers and retailers known for social and environmental responsibility.

So, what are some ideas? The Waterpebble is a great gift for anyone trying to lead a greener lifestyle. This gadget tracks how much water you use in your shower. After programmed, it signals a yellow light at your half-shower mark and flashes red when it's time to turn off the faucet.

Music lovers might like the iBamboo speaker. This portable bamboo speaker for iPhones 4,5,6, and 7 requires no batteries or electricity and has no wires—it's just a simple block of bamboo that projects sound using natural acoustics.

If the iBamboo isn't loud enough, try eco-amp from eco-made. While it does use electricity, the eco-amp is made out of all recycled materials and can in turn be entirely recycled when

it's useful life is over—and it's made in the USA, which helps employ Americans while saving on transportation emissions.

The environmental clothes horse on your list may appreciate a shirt or some pants from Alternative Apparel, which uses non-toxic dyes on eco-friendly fabrics and makes 80 percent of its garments with sustainable materials. Another eco-friendly clothing brand is United By Blue, which pays to pull a pound of trash from water bodies for each of its fashionable and comfortable items sold.

Kids may not care whether their gifts are good for the environment, so it's up to us adults to make sure we are setting a good example and spending our money on "good" gifts. You can't go wrong for your kiddo with a bamboo bank from Jones and Mae. The eco-friendly three-way (share/save/spend) box teaches the importance of charity and saving. Meanwhile, Green Toys sells a wide range of 100 percent recycled kids products, including books, toy cars, baby toys and more at reasonable prices.

Of course, holiday presents do not always have to be physical items. A great idea for gifts that are personal and different are sports/active lessons. Would someone you love appreciate tennis lessons, an art class, or a yoga gift certificate? The holi-



CREDIT: EARTH TALK

**The portable iBamboo speaker makes a great gift for green-leaning loved ones as it's made out of sustainably harvested bamboo and uses natural acoustics to amplify the sound of your iPhone without any wires, batteries or electricity whatsoever.**

days are meant to show those who are special to you how much you love them and there are no better gifts than those that are personal, thoughtful and not only good for those who receive but also the environment!

And let's not forget that there is more to greener holiday shopping than just what you buy. Don't forget that your reusable shopping bags aren't just for the grocery store anymore: Bring them with you to the mall, as well, so you don't have to waste your favorite retailers' plastic or paper shopping bags. Also, if you're going to wrap your gifts, make sure to use recycled wrapping paper, or even better, get creative and repurpose some

other paper materials lying around as gift wrap.

**CONTACTS:** iBamboo speaker, [goo.gl/qdVewi](http://goo.gl/qdVewi); Eco-made, [www.eco-made.com](http://www.eco-made.com); Alternative Apparel, [www.alternativeapparel.com](http://www.alternativeapparel.com); United By Blue, [www.unitedbyblue.com](http://www.unitedbyblue.com); Jones and Mae Bamboo Bank, [goo.gl/QG6soK](http://goo.gl/QG6soK); Waterpebble, [goo.gl/XGpFRD](http://goo.gl/XGpFRD).

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**Send questions to:** [earthtalk@emagazine.com](mailto:earthtalk@emagazine.com).

## Prince George's County Winter Weather Preparedness And Warming Centers Locations

By PRESS OFFICER  
**PG County Government**

LANDOVER, MD—The Prince George's County Office of Homeland Security/Office of Emergency Management (OHS/OEM) reminds citizens to take steps to ensure preparedness for extreme weather as the potential for cold temperatures are prevalent this winter season.

"It is critical to the safety of all our residents that we prepare and take precautions for the upcoming winter season," said

Prince George's County Executive Rushern L. Baker, III. "I encourage all Prince Georgians to utilize the resources and advice of the Prince George's County Office of Emergency Management by knowing where the County warming centers are, checking in on family, friends, and neighbors, preparing emergency kits, and signing up for text alert notifications. Preparing today will prevent a disaster in the future."

Some of these steps include:

- Checking on elderly/disabled relatives and neighbors;
- Dressing appropriately for winter weather and monitoring symptoms of hypothermia;
- Making an emergency kit for at least three days of self-sufficiency;
- Preparing a winter to-go kit for your car; and
- Registering for Alert Prince George's to receive emergency information from the National Weather Service and OHS/OEM

### Warming Centers

Warming Centers are heated public facilities whereby residents can go during periods of extreme cold temperatures to stay warm and seek temporary relief from the cold. A number of facilities throughout Prince George's County have been designated as warming centers. Additional preparedness information can be found and at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) website or the OEM website. Also follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

### Grading from A6

Modules (QLMs) were eliminated as an option for credit recovery and future Multiple Pathways to Success program offerings are under review.

• **Staff Training and Support**—Grade and transcript managers attended mandatory training. Professional School

Counselors received additional time to update all student records for graduation certification.PGCPS

• **Technology Upgrades**—PGCPS is in the final stages of creating an online grade change process to improve accuracy and upgrading technology (i.e., SchoolMAX) to improve graduation certification.

• **Communications**—The audit identified the need to increase communication. Details on the audit findings are available on various platforms, including e-messages, information sheets, parent newsletter articles, social media and the PGCPS website [www.pgcps.org/graduation-audit](http://www.pgcps.org/graduation-audit). An update on this work and next steps will be provided to

the Board of Education on December 19. The school system also is preparing an action plan for improvement, which will be delivered to the Maryland State Board of Education by the end of December in response to the audit findings. The school system will continue to update parents on overall progress.

# RECYCLE your CHRISTMAS TREE

The Prince George's County Department of the Environment is making it easy for residents to recycle cut Christmas trees (no artificial trees) by offering convenient drop-off locations and curbside pick up.

**Due to the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, yard trim and Christmas Tree collection will start on January 8, 2018. Residents with Yard Waste Collection may place their undecorated, unbagged, live Christmas trees at the curb by 6 a.m. on their regularly scheduled yard waste collection day.**

Residents may also bring unadorned trees, free of charge, to the following locations for recycling:

<p><b>BROWN STATION ROAD PUBLIC CONTAINER PAD &amp; RECYCLING CENTER</b>                  3501 Brown Station Road                  Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772                  Mon. – Sat.: 7 a.m. – 6 p.m.                  Sun.: CLOSED</p>	<p><b>MISSOURI AVE SOLID WASTE ACCEPTANCE &amp; RECYCLING CENTER</b>                  12701 Missouri Avenue                  Brandywine, Maryland 20613                  Mon., Wed., Fri.: 6:30 a.m. – 3 p.m.                  Tue., Thu.: 10 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.                  Sat.: 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.                  Sun.: CLOSED</p>
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For more information, please call [www.CountyClick311.org](http://www.CountyClick311.org)

**SOURCE REDUCTION TIP:**  
 Save cardboard, paper and boxes for future gift wrapping.

\*Please remove all plastic bags, straw and decorations. No artificial trees.