

Motorcross athlete Chino Braxton pays surprise visit to B-360 students



Chino Braxton began riding dirt bikes at age six in Baltimore. Today, he is a highly sought-after motorcross athlete with an endorsement from Under Armor. He was born and raised in Baltimore City. He grew up in the Reisterstown Road area near Park Heights. Now 21, he recently made a surprise visit to students in B-360 Baltimore, an organization that utilizes dirt bike culture to end the cycle of poverty, disrupt the prison pipeline, and build bridges in communities. (Story on page 8)

Courtesy Photo

Choose to be grateful!

By Nikki Abraham, The Nucleus Team
Positively Caviar, Inc.

Even though gratitude is something that should be felt year-round, it becomes extremely pertinent in our lives during the month of November. In the season of Thanksgiving we ought to take the time to think about what we are truly grateful for.

Reflect on who and what you find important in your life. Be thankful for where you came from, where you are now, and where you are going. Practicing gratitude allows us to cherish the now—ultimately becoming more motivated, less fatigued and better off as a whole.

Looking for the positive, even in difficult situations will definitely encourage gratitude.

Our minds are automatically trained to find the negative instead of the positive in the simplest of situations. “My mom isn’t answering the phone, I hope she’s okay.” Why do we immediately assume that something is wrong?

Using positive words and positive statements will allow our brain to have a major impact on our emotional outlook in life. Change your attitude when you can’t change your circumstance.

The Greek philosopher Epictetus said

it best: “People are disturbed, not by things (that happen to them), but by the principles and opinions which they form concerning (those) things. When we are hindered, or disturbed, or grieved, let us never attribute it to others, but to ourselves; that is, to our own principles and opinions.” While this is easier said than done finding an optimistic viewpoint in bad situations will help us counteract the negative effects on our lives.

Express gratitude to others on a daily basis. “*Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it.*” — William Arthur Ward. It’s also important to express your appreciation to the people who love you, support you, and challenge you. Giving a larger tip than usual may seem like a small thing to you but it can make a huge difference in someone else’s day.

The simplest things such as writing a hand-written note or encouraging someone through a difficult situation will show just how much you care, and is also a way of showing your thankfulness to others.

Keep track of your gratitude. Do you have a favorite notebook/journal? A great way to track your thoughts of gratitude is by creating a positive habit of jotting down the things you are thankful for on a daily basis. Actively acknowl-



Nikki Abraham
The Nucleus Team
Positively Caviar, Inc.
Courtesy Photo

edging what you’re grateful for will help you to have fullness in your mind and heart— even when bad things happen.

I’m sure we all are grateful for the major things in our lives such as having a roof over our heads, our family and friends and even our jobs but let’s also

account for the little things. You can be thankful that you had the perfect dinner, your sister got into her top school or you had a chance to watch the sunset.

Simply admiring and accounting for the little things in life will change your perspective overall. Writing down what you are grateful for will open your heart up to so much more happiness.

We all live crazy busy lives but it is so important to take the time to stop and think about what we are grateful for. You won’t regret filling your heart as well as others with love and happiness.

Positively Caviar, Inc. is a nonprofit organization focused on a message of positivity and optimism. Once a month, our Nucleus Team writes a column focused on mental and physical health tips, scientific studies, nutrition facts and stories that are positive in nature to support a purposeful and positive lifestyle. To learn more about our organization, the nucleus team or how you join our positive movement, visit: stay-basedandpositive.com

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Seniors: Don't forget to sign up for Medicare drug coverage this fall

By Peter J. Pitts

Fall has arrived, which means it's time for flannels, football, and finding the perfect health insurance plan.

That's right— nestled amidst all the seasonal festivities is Medicare's open enrollment season, which kicked off October 15. Seniors will have until December 7 to select their Medicare plans for the coming year.

Seniors have a cornucopia of coverage options to choose from. In particular, they should be thankful for the Medicare Part D prescription drug program, which enables tens of millions of seniors to afford their medications.

Traditional Medicare plans cover physician and hospital visits, among other basic health services. But for many seniors— particularly those battling chronic conditions— basic Medicare coverage isn't enough. That's why many beneficiaries purchase supplemental drug coverage through Medicare Part D stand-alone plans, or Medicare Advantage plans that include Part D benefits.

Part D is Medicare's privately administered prescription drug program. Since 2006, it has helped seniors fill billions of prescriptions. Currently, three in four Medicare beneficiaries— or more than 40 million people— are enrolled in a Part D plan.

Part D plans aren't one-size-fits-all. In some states, seniors have as many as 30 different plans to choose from, each of which features different premiums, co-pays, and covered drugs.

However, all plans must meet certain standards. For instance, every plan must cover at least two drugs in six vital categories: immunosuppressants, antidepressants, antipsychotics, anticonvulsants, antiretrovirals, and antineoplastics. This regulation ensures that people with severe chronic diseases have a choice of medications.

Plans are quite affordable. In 2019, the average Part D monthly premium will cost just over \$32, which is even cheaper than the previous year.

These low premiums are no accident. Part D forces private insurers to compete against one another for seniors' business. Indeed, insurers negotiate directly with drug companies -- and the government is prohibited from negotiating or setting prices. The end result is quality coverage at an affordable price.

Part D is a literal lifesaver. Seniors who enroll in Part D coverage experience an 8 percent reduction in hospitalizations, according to a recent study by Johns Hopkins University and University of Illinois researchers. A 2016 analysis from North Carolina State University, meanwhile, revealed that Part D shrank beneficiaries' likelihood of developing high blood pressure, which can lead to heart attacks and strokes. Part D has curbed senior mortality by 2.2 percent each year since its implementation, according to a study in the *Journal of Health Economics*.

Given Part D's ample plan choices, low premiums, and lifesaving results, it's no wonder that 85 percent of seniors are satisfied with their coverage.

Choosing the right health plan is crucial -- seniors shouldn't wait for the foliage to change before signing up this open enrollment season.

Peter J. Pitts, a former FDA associate commissioner, is president of the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest.

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Community Affairs

Landmark partnership agreement signed to grow natural dye crops in West Baltimore

Annapolis— Governor Larry Hogan announced a multi-partner agreement to establish a pilot urban farming initiative in Baltimore City. The project aims to transform a portion of a vacant lot in West Baltimore into a garden which will produce crops such as indigo, beets, onions, marigolds and black-eyed Susans to make natural dyes for artistic, educational and commercial use.

The natural dyeing process has attracted recent attention and popularity in textiles and art for its ability to produce richer colors, softer fabrics with antiperspirant and antimicrobial qualities, and greater safety for the environment.

The initiative comes as a result of Governor Hogan's trade mission to Asia in May 2015 and a subsequent visit to South Korea by First Lady Yumi Hogan in September 2017, where she toured the Natural Dyeing Cultural Center in Naju and began to establish plans for the pilot program.

A delegation from the Natural Dyeing

Cultural Center visited Maryland earlier this year where they were introduced to a number of potential partners interested in learning more about the natural dyeing process and its commercial uses.

"Our trade mission to Asia yielded many positive results, and we are proud to work with our partners in Korea to bring this innovative initiative to Maryland," said Governor Hogan. "This urban garden will have a tremendous impact towards the community revitalization of West Baltimore and our economy— from the natural dyes produced by the crops to the unique apparel which will be manufactured for the marketplace."

The agreement between the state, Baltimore City, and academic institutions has been signed by six parties.

Beside funding organizations and government agencies, other key partners include the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), which is developing a curriculum to teach and better understand the natural dyeing process, promote the benefits of natural dyes, and engage those that may be interested in using the dyes for artistic or commercial applications, as well as Coppin State University, which is the landholder of the parcel where the urban farm will be developed.

The Great White Hope

By Vincent L. Hall, Garland Journal

James Earl Jones portrayed world heavyweight boxing champ Jack Johnson, whose power and persona took white America by surprise in the early 1900's. Johnson presented a double threat to the status quo; he violated laws that forbade him white female companionship, and literally, no one could whip his black ass.

The "Great White Hope" made its film debut in 1970, following its success on Broadway. Here is how a film critic described the plot: "A black champion boxer and his white female companion struggle to survive while the white boxing establishment looks for ways to knock him down."

The "establishment" marshaled a search party to promote what was to have been the "Fight of the Century." In 1910, former undefeated heavyweight champion James J. Jeffries was lured out of retirement. "I feel obligated to the sporting public at least to make an effort to reclaim the heavyweight champi-

onship for the white race and demonstrate that a white man is king of them all" said Jeffries.

Jeffries may have been the Great White Hope a century ago, but his replacement, Donald Trump has amassed a far better record. After he knocked out 17 wannabees in the Republican Presidential primary, he scored a TKO over the first woman to seriously approach the ring.

Hillary Rodham Clinton fought her way up to the championship bout. She

Donald "Agent Orange" Trump hits his foes below the belt, even when the referee is watching. He has a mean head fake. You can think you caught him in any of the hundreds of lies he spews weekly and he will manufacture a new tragedy to make you forget the most recent misdeed.

Agent Orange is no stranger to hanging onto the ropes, rabbit punching, head-butting or any other sudden or seditious movements.

The darker they get, the worse they get treated. He delivers low blows to the boxing cups of the guys and grabs the girls by their G-strings. Trump is an expert in the UFC and WWE methods and brings those foreign rules into the four corners and turnbuckles of the boxing ring.

When it comes to prefight hype, he makes Muhammad Ali look like an amateur.

Agent Orange picks an opponent, makes them public enemy number one and then spreads lies that make his fans run to his rallies, foaming at the mouth. Trump is always a sore winner because victimization is the game he excels in.

One day though, Donald "Agent Orange" Trump, like all fighters, is going to hit the canvass. The crowds will turn on him, and the debt he owes to Queen Karma will have to be settled.

Be leery, because that day is coming soon. Trump can't be content winning, so who knows how unhinged he'll be when fatigue and frustration take him to the mat.

Jack Johnson finally lost to the only unbeatable force in the United States of America—racism. Oddly, racism will turn on Trump and consume him as well. It was "mighty white" of Donald to pardon Jack Johnson the question is who will pardon this Great White Hope.

Vincent L. Hall is an author, activist and award-winning journalist.

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to seriously approach the ring."***

won more than enough votes to be elected, but as is characteristic in the fight business, she lost on a technicality. The founding fathers created the electoral system to favor rich white males.

This newest champ is a bit pudgy and a tad old to be in the ring, but he is as crafty as they come. He uses all the dirty tricks of boxing to his advantage and he concocts political poisons that lay bare every weakness of his opponents.

He uses his elbows to throw blows and his thumbs to violate the rules pugilists pledge to obey.

Donald Trump is the dirtiest fighter ever known to the game. He's a heavyweight who specializes in arranging bouts in the bantamweight, flyweight and middleweight categories. Agent Orange even hits girls. Jack Johnson had a thing for white women, but Donald Trump respects no woman.

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Top tips for consumers to be savvy shoppers this holiday season

Baltimore— The Thanksgiving holiday weekend, including Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday, marks the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season. Attorney General Frosh urges consumers to know their rights, educate themselves, and to be extra vigilant as consumer spending online and in stores sharply increases. Consumers in the U.S. are expected to spend more than \$700 billion on holiday shopping, much of which will take place this weekend. November also marks the start of a sharp increase in charitable giving.

“Being a savvy shopper begins with educating yourself about retail policies and pitfalls,” said Attorney General Frosh. “Sometimes that ‘great deal’ isn’t such a bargain if you’re left with a broken or unwanted gift that you cannot return.”

In an effort to help consumers avoid falling victim to holiday season traps, Attorney General Frosh issued the following tips for consumers:

Make sure your charitable donations are going to the intended cause— During the holiday season, many consumers make generous donations to charities but this is also a prime time for crooks to take advantage of that generosity. Before making a donation, check to see if the charity is registered with the Maryland Secretary of State’s Office. Educate yourself on the charity and determine what percentage of your donation goes to the charity’s mission. Several third-party websites (GuideStar, Charity Navigator, etc.) provide information on an organization’s financials, mission statements, and more. This may help you decide how to allocate your giving. Bogus charities frequently use names and logos that resemble well-known, legitimate organizations. These charities often surface after national emergencies, or natural disasters. The only way to be

sure a charity is legitimate is to do some research before you give.

Check return and refund policies— Maryland requires a retailer to disclose its return policy in writing so consumers are aware of the store’s policy before making a purchase. Stores can have a “no returns” policy, but that must be disclosed. Don’t expect to be able to return things like food and perishable goods or custom-made merchandise (like personalized jewelry) or custom-altered clothing (like a business suit). Always ask the store about its return policy, and read the fine print. Some stores charge restocking fees, or don’t allow the return of “final-sale” items.

Be mindful of the websites you visit— Online shopping is a convenient way to get your holiday shopping done, but consumers should triple-check that the website address they are visiting is legitimate. You should never send personal information or payments through a website if the address does not begin with “https”—the “s” at the end means that your confidential information is secure. Consumers should also be wary when clicking on ads found on a webpage or social networking sites. Scammers frequently lure consumers through

social media or emails to fake websites, which are set up to steal personal and/or financial information. See more about shopping smart and safe online.

Avoid potential pitfalls with gift cards— Ask questions and read all disclosures so you know all the terms and conditions of gift cards you are purchasing. Only purchase gift cards from reputable sources, or directly from the store. Encourage the gift card recipient to use the card to avoid additional fees or charges or in the event a business closes. Treat gift cards like cash and keep them in a safe place. Keep the receipt of the gift card purchase in case there are any issues with the card. Examine the card for any signs of tampering. Crooks can copy numbers from cards and wait for them to be activated. Be wary of bargains and “sale” prices. Delivery charges and/or other added costs such as assembly fees are often not reflected in the “sale price.” In many cases, hidden costs like these negate the value of the sale. In other cases, a product offered at a certain price may be available only if purchased with other items.

Know the terms of layaway plans— A merchant must give you a written lay-

away agreement, spelling out your rights and obligations, when you buy an item on layaway. If the seller does not comply, you can cancel the agreement and get a full refund. Consumers have the right to cancel a layaway agreement within seven days and receive all the money they’ve already paid. A merchant may only keep 10 percent of the full price of the item if a contract is cancelled after eight days or more, or if the consumer does not make a payment within 15 days of a due date.

No-interest financing can cost you plenty— While no-interest plans can save you money, many carry hidden charges. For example, some offers have a time limit. If you don’t pay off the amount of the purchase within the time period allotted, you are then charged interest on the entire purchase amount. Alternatively, some offers inflate the selling price to make up the difference. Consumers should read the fine print and understand the terms of the agreement before signing.

For more information and additional tips, follow the Office of Attorney General at: www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov.



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Baltimore native Cyrus Jones ready for increased role with the Ravens

By Tyler Hamilton

When a football player scores a long touchdown, announcers and analysts will occasionally refer to it as a house call. Perhaps, no situation was more fitting of being called a house call than Baltimore Ravens cornerback and return specialist Cyrus Jones' 70-yard punt return for a touchdown against the Oakland Raiders on Sunday, November 25, 2018 at M&T Bank Stadium. Fittingly, Jones held his hand to his helmet as if he was using the phone, as he walked to the back of the end zone after his touchdown.

Before excelling at the University of Alabama and being selected by the New England Patriots in the second round of the 2016 NFL Draft, Jones was a stand-out wide receiver and running back at Gillman High School in Baltimore.

Now, Jones is ready to build on scoring his first NFL touchdown and become a key contributor for his hometown team. The road has been far from easy for Jones. He tore his ACL in the final pre-season game of the 2017 NFL season and was placed on injured reserve.

The Patriots waived Jones on September 1 this year, and the Ravens picked him up two days later, adding him to their practice squad. New England resigned Jones from the Ravens' practice squad later that same month but released him in October. Jones' home team came calling again and he has been on the 53-man roster ever since. His perseverance paid off when he showed a flash of the brilliance that led to him being taken 60th overall in the 2017 draft.

"To do it in Baltimore, that's a lifelong dream. In front of my hometown, it's an unbelievable feeling," Jones said about his first NFL touchdown. I've been through a lot. I can't put it into words. I'm going to sit back and relish it then get back to work next week."

Cornerback is a position that requires a



Ravens return man and Baltimore's own Cyrus Jones celebrates after scoring on a 70-yard punt return against the Raiders at M&T Bank Stadium on Sunday, November 25, 2018.
Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

great deal of self-confidence. Jones was able to regain his moxie after his punt return and parlay that into solid play as a nickel cornerback.

"It feels good to get back into the end zone and to feel like I got my swagger back after everything I've been through over these last couple of years," Jones explained. "I knew it would happen eventually. It gave me time to learn the defense more. Timing is everything and I'm going to just make the most of my opportunities."

Ravens head coach John Harbaugh preaches to his players about stacking good days. Sunday's 34 - 17 win over the Raiders was a good day for Jones to build on. The victory will feel good for Jones but he must quickly tuck it away and get ready for the next game.

Next week, the Ravens face a potent Atlanta Falcons offense featuring two fellow former Alabama standouts in wide receivers Julio Jones and Calvin Ridley. Atlanta will use Julio Jones in the slot frequently to get favorable matchups.

If defensive coordinator Don Martin-dale doesn't have cornerback Jimmy Smith shadow the Falcons' top pass catcher, Jones may get to go against one of the best wideouts in the league—quite a reward for finally earning a spot in the defensive back rotation.

Motorcross athlete Chino Braxton pays surprise visit to B-360 students

By Ursula V. Battle

At the age of two, Chino Braxton could ride a pedal bike without training wheels. By age six, he began to ride dirt bikes. Over time, pedal and dirt bike riding evolved into a passion, prompting him to do stunts. He would eventually ask friends to film his attempts and upload the footage on YouTube. Braxton's YouTube videos, which were performed using both pedal and dirt bikes, quickly blossomed into viral sensations, generating over 11 million views and attracting new fans across the world.

Now 21, Braxton is a prominent motocross athlete and is renowned for his electrifying, motocross tricks. He has an endorsement with Under Armour and will soon be launching a line of boots through the footwear, sports and casual apparel company.

Recently, Braxton made a surprise visit to students involved in B-360 Baltimore, an organization that utilizes dirt bike culture to end the cycle of poverty, disrupt the prison pipeline, and build bridges in communities.

Braxton spoke to the excited students at the James McHenry Rec Center, located at 911 Hollins Street in Baltimore about STEM and mechanics.

"I was born and raised in Baltimore," said Braxton, who is also a former rapper. "I grew up in the Reisterstown Road area near Park Heights. I took a liking to bikes and focused on it. I want to give back to the community as much as possible."

Launched in March 2017 by Baltimore native and engineer Brittany Young, B-360 has provided service to more than over 2,200 students. Through STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) education, community engagement and workforce pipelining,



(Left) Motorcross Athlete Chino Braxton (middle) spends times with students in the B-360 Baltimore program during a surprise visit. Braxton spoke to the excited students at the James McHenry Rec Center, located at 911 Hollins Street in Baltimore about STEM and mechanics. (Right) B-360 founder Brittany Young (left) and Chino Braxton during the event. Young who is an engineer launched the program in March 2017 and to date B-360 has provided service to more than over 2,200 students.



Courtesy Photos

B-360 is changing the perception of engineers and dirt bike riders in Baltimore and beyond.

Young, who arranged the surprise visit, has been selected for Red Bull Amaphiko Academy's first U.S. cohort, is an Echoing Green Fellow, and Light City Labs' "Social Innovator of the Year."

"I met Brittany Young when she interviewed me," Braxton recalled. "She interviewed me about how I got into riding, and where did I see the culture going in the coming years. I liked what she was telling me about B-360 and got involved."

"Kids gravitate towards me and I want to be a positive role model. My goal is to work more with the program. I think it is something special for the commu-

nity and Baltimore City. Dirt bike riding is looked at in a bad way and B-360 helps to shine a positive light on dirt bike riding."

During Braxton's visit, he also spoke about his experience as a rider and artist, and the importance of safety.

"I touched on safe riding when I spoke to the students," said Braxton. "There was a time when I didn't ride with a helmet because I thought it was cool. But after falling off my bike, and going through the things I went through, I want kids to be safe. I fell and broke my nose. I don't want them to go through those experiences. I stress to kids to be safe and do what they need to do to protect themselves."

As he continues to showcase his

unique stunts, Braxton is hoping to use his platform as a professional motocross athlete to raise awareness for the sport, and encourage children to pursue it as a career.

Outside of dirt bike riding, Braxton is also a fashion aficionado and recently served as the face of Supreme & Fox Racing's Motocross-Inspired SS18 Collaboration that launched in May 2018. The collaboration will bring a new line of motocross-themed apparel and accessories.

"I hope encouragement came out of my visit with the students," said Braxton. "I wanted to let them know they should never give up or let anyone tell them they can't do something. Anything is possible."

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NAACP's Tiffany Dena Loftin honored at Black Girls Vote Ball

By Stacy M. Brown,
NNPA Newswire Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

National Director of the NAACP Youth and College Division, Tiffany Dena Loftin was awarded the Rising Star Award on Friday, November 16, 2018 at the 2nd Annual Black Girls Vote Ball.

The Black Girls Vote Ball celebrates the accomplishments of black women in politics and activism who are making a difference not only in their community but around the world, according to a news release.

The Rising Star Award is bestowed upon a person for their clear demonstration and dedication to changing the world we live in for the better.

Black Girls Vote, Inc. was launched on what would have been Shirley Chisholm's 91st birthday— November 30, 2015 in Baltimore.

Through nontraditional engagement efforts that focus on meeting people where they are, Black Girls Vote has registered more than 16,000 voters.

Black Girls Vote (BGV) is also supporting the next generation of leaders and engaged voters through their High School and Collegiate Ambassador Program where BGV Ambassadors activate their student body while bringing BGV's mission, vision and values on their campus, the organization said in the news release.

This midterm election cycle, under the leadership of Loftin, the NAACP Youth and College Division completed a highly successful Vote 2018 campaign in just a few short weeks, according to Black Girls Vote officials.

They were able to mobilize 5,800 students, recruit and maintain 2,607 new activists, host 232 "vote specific" events, organize at 174 schools across this nation and engage 33 of the 50 states, proving that young people are rising to the occasion and answering the call.

"I dedicate this award to everyone 35 and under who constantly prove this country wrong. I dedicate this award to those who can't vote. I dedicate this award to every black woman who says I



Tiffany Dena Loftin
National Director, NAACP Youth and College Division
Courtesy Photo/NAACP

told you so," Loftin said as she accepted the award. "Every year we have an opportunity to not only change government, to not only advance legislation but

to redefine democracy. I know we're winning because it's getting harder, but I am encouraged and inspired, and I'm committed to our communities."

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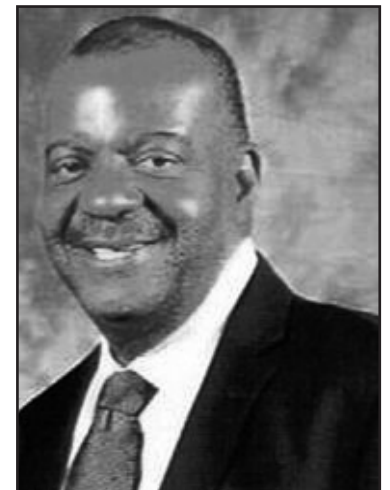
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Selecting a plan during Medicare Open Enrollment

(Family Features) Medicare's annual Open Enrollment period started on October 15 and ends on December 7, meaning this is the time for you to review your current coverage and decide if there are better coverage options for you based on changes to the current plans, your budget, and your health needs.

During Medicare Open Enrollment, you can keep your current plan or review the options in your area to join a different prescription drug plan or Medicare Advantage plan. The Open Enrollment period gives everyone with Medicare the opportunity to make changes to their Medicare health plans or prescription drug plans for coverage beginning January 1, 2019.

Think about what matters most to you and be open to different options, like Medicare Advantage plans from private insurers, which are plans allowing you to simplify your coverage by combining all your health and drug coverage into a single plan.

People who choose Medicare Advantage plans are often able to lower their out-of-pocket costs while getting extra benefits, like vision, hearing, dental, and prescription drug coverage. Some Medicare Advantage plans now offer supplemental benefits that can include adult day care services, in-home support services, caregiver support services, home-based palliative care, and therapeutic massage. Best of all, prices are going down. The average Medicare Advantage monthly premium will decrease to \$28 for 2019.

Medicare health and drug plans change each year, and so can your health needs. Think about your health status and determine if you need to make a change by asking yourself these questions:

- Does my current plan cover my medications?



- Does another plan offer the same coverage at a lower cost?

- Am I interested in having a plan that covers extra benefits like dental and vision?

- Does the network include the specialist or hospital I want for an upcoming surgery?

Get Started on Medicare.gov

Medicare.gov has new tools that can help you review your options:

- Compare Coverage Options Tool: Asks five simple questions to see if Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan meets your needs.

- Estimate Medicare Costs Tool: Helps you estimate out-of-pocket costs depending on the Medicare coverage you choose.

- Plan Finder Tool: Lets you compare plans to see the exact costs for plans in your area based on the prescription drugs you take and the pharmacy you use. If you are open to coverage choices,

you may find a plan that costs less, covers your drugs, and offers extra benefits like vision and dental coverage. Try the web chat feature for real-time help. Once you've chosen a plan, check its Star Rating before you enroll. Through the Plan Finder Tool, you can access up-to-date Star Ratings for Medicare health and prescription drug plans. You can use Star Ratings to compare the quality of health and drug plans being offered.

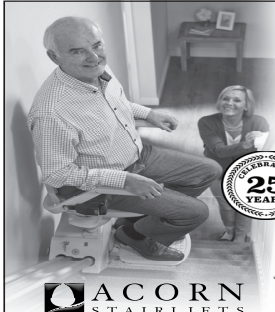
Medicare Open Enrollment ends on December 7. Now is the time to act if you want to enroll in or make changes to your Medicare health or prescription drug plan for coverage beginning January 1, 2019. If your current coverage meets your needs, you don't have to do anything. However, if you miss the December 7 Open Enrollment deadline, you will likely have to wait a full year before you are able to make changes to your Medicare coverage.

For more information, visit Medicare.gov or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048. Help is available 24 hours a day, including weekends. If you need help in a language other than English or Spanish, let the customer service representative know the language.

Help in your community is also available. You can get personalized health insurance counseling at no cost to you from your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). Visit shiptacenter.org or call 1-800-MEDICARE for your SHIP's phone number.

More information about Medicare is also available on the Medicare Facebook page and by following @MedicareGov on Twitter.

Information provided by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.



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Rambling Rose

Roots Lounge celebrated by folks from the old neighborhood



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, hoping that your Thanksgiving was all that you wished it to be. We went to Washington, D.C. to have dinner with artist, Dee Brent, the founder of the Motown group caledl "Signature Live" and her fiancé Frankie. Their family came from South Carolina, New York and Virginia. We had a mighty good time.

The following day, Valerie Fraling and I invited friends to Roots Lounge on Smallwood & Vine Streets in Baltimore. The idea was to thank Ronnie Jackson, the owner for her services to the community and to bring back some of the folks who once lived in the neighborhood and partied in her club many years ago. It was so great seeing so many of our friends show up. We had a good time reminiscing about the old neighborhood. I can't name everyone, but special thanks to Danny Brown, Bishop Jo Jo Ridgely and husband Joe, and Charlene Cooper, Valerie. I want to thank you. Ronnie thank you most of all. We must do this again when the weather breaks.

Congratulations to Calvin and Jaquetta Tinson the new owners of Blue Moon Family & Grill located 9036 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Maryland on the "Soft Opening" they had last Saturday. The Grand opening will be Saturday, December 1 from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Now, I want all of you to meet me as my guest at the "The Baltimore Times Holiday Marketplace Shopping Extravaganza" on Saturday, December 1 from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. It is fun for the whole family. There will be live entertainment, face painting, a caricature artist, and lots of vendors for your shopping pleasure and to get ahead of your Christmas gift shopping. I will also be there signing my two books about Pennsylvania and Baltimore.

On Sunday December 2, 2018 at 5

p.m. there will be a "Holiday Concert" with a performance by Roderick C. Demmings, Jr. at the First Baptist Church of Baltimore 4200 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore. Robert M. Johnson, Sr. is the Minister and Pastor.

On Sunday, December 9, 2018 starting at 4 p.m., promoter, Carlos Hutchins is celebrating his 23rd Anniversary as a producer and he is honoring yours truly. Dress up in your finest and come celebrate the holidays in fine style. You will be entertained by Baltimore's own, First Class, Slagz, Rolex Band and "Signature Live" Motown group out of Washington, DC. Our favorite DJ Sugar Chris and his wife "Scotta" will provide your dance music. This event is happening at the Forum Caterers, 4210 Primrose Avenue. For more information, call 410-999-1750. I will see you there.

Former radio personality "Moon Man," is hosting a "Holiday Show & Dance," cabaret style on Saturday, December 8, 2018 at 6 p.m. at the ODF Center, 401 Reisterstown Road, Pikesville, Maryland, (next to Howard Johnson Hotel). The entertainment includes: Harold Melvin's Blue Notes; Stylistics Review; David Smooth's #1 Temptations Review; BADD; Ten Karat God and Master T. For more information call 443-857-2771.

Well, my dear friends, I am out of space and time. Hopefully I will see you somewhere.

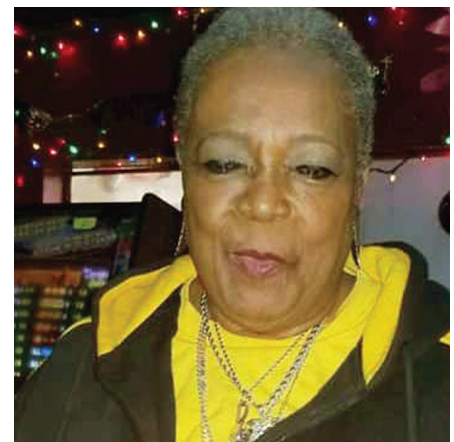
Enjoy your weekend, and remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



Kevin Brown, Co-owner and head chef of Station North Café and Nancy by SNAC in downtown Baltimore; Rosa Pryor, Entertainment Columnist for the Baltimore Times; Ronnie Jackson, owner of Roots Lounge, Valerie Fraling, Afro Columnist and Marsha Jews, Radio Personality with WEEA 88.9 Radio recently at Roots Lounge celebrating and remembering the old days.



Veronica "Ronnie" Jackson, the owner of Roots Lounge for over 40 years and still going strong presents Birthday cake to "Rambling Rose."



Rosa "Rambling Rose" Pryor celebrating her birthday at Valerie and Rosa's "Meet and Greet to Remember" Roots Lounge.



Rosa and her "Boo-Boo" (Shorty) at Roots Lounge on Smallwood and Vine Streets in West Baltimore. I needed a lot of wind to blow out all my candles on my cake.

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Jazz vocalist Sara Jones sings seasonal favorites at December 2 Arts in the Woods Concert

Annapolis—Vocalist Sara Jones will put the audience in a mellow mood for the holidays with “Winter’s Greeting: A Seasonal Collection of Jazz Standards,” on Sunday, December 2, 2018 at 3 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis (UUCA), 333 Dubois Road. Backing Jones are veteran musicians Paul Langosch on bass and David Kane on piano.

The concert is part of the UUCA Arts in the Woods music series. Tickets are \$15 at the door and free for 16 and under. Visit www.uuannapolis.org or call 410-266-8044 for information.

In describing the December program, Jones says it is designed “to celebrate the sparkle of winter, the warmth of cozy gatherings, friendship, and joy!” She invites listeners to come into the intimate setting, get comfortable and bask in the glow of cheerful melodies that will lighten the heart and ease the mind.

Praised by critics for her trademark “lush vocals” and her “velvet embrace” of the music, her vocal interpretations of seasonal songs by Cole Porter, George Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Johnny Mercer will delight and charm her audience as she has done in performances nationwide since she began singing professionally in 2001.

Jones is the first place winner of the 2004 Billie Holiday Vocal Competition and has performed in 49 states with the Soldiers Chorus of the U.S. Army Field Band. She has sung with the National



Jazz vocalist Sara Jones will perform a seasonal collection of jazz standards on Sunday, December 2, 2018 at 3 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis located at 333 Dubois Road, as part of the Arts in the Woods music series.

Photo by Tim Coburn

Symphony Orchestra, Cincinnati and Boston Pops orchestras, was a featured vocalist with the Jazz Ambassadors, and has performed at the Hippodrome Theater, Meyerhoff Symphony Hall, Strathmore Mansion, and the Kennedy Center. Her current CD “Daydream A Little” was recorded with the Brazilian group Trio da Paz.

The December 2 performance at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis concludes the fifth year of the Arts in the Woods music series. The 2019 series kicks off on Sunday, January 6, at 3 p.m., with an all-Chopin concert by classical pianist Brian Ganz.

For information, visit: www.uuannapolis.org or call 410-266-8044.

Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival & Holiday Market

It's a sweet destination plus the grand illumination of the BGE Holiday Light Canopy over West Street on Sunday December 2, 2018 in downtown Annapolis

Annapolis—Everyone loves chocolate and Annapolis' has been enjoying chocolate for at least 270 years. A recent dive in the Maryland Gazette newspaper archives revealed an advertisement from December 1748 of chocolate being made and sold on Duke of Gloucester Street in downtown Annapolis.

On December 2, 2018, Annapolis will celebrate by filling West Street with local chocolatiers ready to help chocoholics get through the holiday season. On the first blocks of West Street from noon to 5 p.m. the fourth annual Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival takes place, featuring family friendly entertainment, chocolate, holiday shopping and the lighting of West Street's BGE Holiday Light Canopy.

Start off the December holidays season with some fun and indulge your sweet tooth at the fourth annual Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival, to benefit the Annapolis Arts District and We Care and Friends. The day is loaded with family friendly fun. There is a giant gingerbread house moon bounce for the kids, you can roast marshmallows and make smores at the fire pit in the middle of West Street with the Annapolis Fire Department, drink hot coco with the PoPo, visit the cool VW Blue Photo Bus, get a chocolate massage at Sadona Spa and tell Santa what you really want for Christmas. Santa is also inviting you to drop off new toys, coats and hats to him for the We Care and Friends Holiday Party for local kids in need.

Take a chocolate tour along West Street with over 35 local and regional

Chocolate Binge Festival

vendors selling various chocolate specialties, including chocolate caramels, cakes, chocolate bars, truffles, fudge, cookies, candies, hot chocolate, brownies, bob buns and more. Expect to find some high quality chocolates including: small batch bean to bar, vegan, kosher, non-gmo, organic and gluten free options.

New this year, you can stop by the Harwood Hammond House on the way to the festival for their Chocolate History event or Chesapeake Brewing for a Chocolate Liquor Tasting event. At the festival there will be a chocolate and wine tasting area at Luna Blu Restaurant, fresh roasted churros outside El Toro Bravo, a cool VW Blue Photo Booth and a after party at Tsunami.

You can also complete your holiday shopping at the holiday market at the Annapolis Chocolate Binge Festival featuring dozens of local crafts people with a wide range of handmade items including jewelry, pottery, candles wood turnings, glass ornaments and more. Plus visit the galleries and shops in the Annapolis Arts District along West Street for other unique gifts and chocolate samples.

The entertainment starts off at noon on two different stages on West Street with a grand finale at 5 p.m. with the grand illumination of the BGE Holiday Light Canopy over West Street

Admission is just a \$5 suggested donation for adults (kids under 12 are free with parents). While supplies last, everyone making a donation will get a complimentary Hot chocolate from the PoPo at the Dunkin Doughnuts tent.

For more information, visit: www.annapolischocolatefestival.com

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The Washington, DC Joint Steamfitting Apprentice Committee (Steamfitters Local 602) will accept applications for the 2019 first year class as follows:

Applications must be made in person. There will be a \$50.00 non-refundable application processing fee at the time of application which is payable in cash or money order only made payable to HPRTF. Applicants must apply in person at the UA Mechanical Trade School (8509 Ardwick Ardmore Road, Landover, MD 20785) on the following dates from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.:

Monday, January 7, 2019
Wednesday, January 9, 2019
Friday, January 11, 2019

OR
Applicants must apply in person at the UAM Steamfitters Local Union 602 (7552 Accotink Park Road, Springfield, VA 22150) on the following dates from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.:

Monday, January 14, 2019
Wednesday, January 16, 2019
Friday, January 18, 2019

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High School Graduate by June 30, 2019
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Presentation of the Following Original Documents must be made at Time of Application:
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4. DD214 (for veterans of military service only)
5. Official Transcript of High School Grades (must be in a sealed envelope from the school and have a raised seal affixed)

OR
High school seniors must present a letter on school letterhead from a high school official verifying graduation before June 30, 2019 with an Official Transcript of Grades (Sealed and Certified by School)

OR
GED Scores and certificate (only GEDs that are American Council of Education accredited will be accepted. Visit www.acenet.edu for further information)

Upon completion of your application, you will be eligible to take a math and/or aptitude test the same day starting as early as 11:00 a.m.

Any and all foreign documents must be accompanied by a translation of that document and a letter from your embassy stating its authenticity. If the document is a diploma and/or transcript, the letter must also document the equivalency of said diploma and/or transcript.

Please visit our website for more details at
www.steamfitters-602.org.

The Apprentice Committee selects students of any race, color, sex, age, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The Apprenticeship Committees are actively recruiting applicants including minorities and females.

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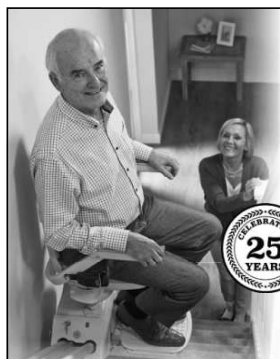
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