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‘It’s not your usual bike ride,’ say patrons of Rides Around Lake Montebello



Rides Around Lake Montebello is a program sponsored by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks and has been around for seven years. Riders can take advantage of the bike program from May through October each year. The city's outdoor recreation team is on hand to assist people with finding the right bike and helmet. Ethan Abbott, director of the program says that his team also gives lessons on how to properly ride and brake. (Above): Riders stop to get their bikes calibrated before heading out to Lake Montebello on Saturday, September 7, 2019. (See article on page 11) Photo: Eryn Johnson, Morgan State University SCOM student

Exciting News!

The Baltimore Times is excited to announce that we have received a Community Network grant from the #FacebookJournalismProject!

You can learn more about our project and what it means for our readers on Facebook at:

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PNC Bank prepares for informative 'Mind Your Business' workshop

By Stacy M. Brown

Chris Rockey has worked for PNC for two decades and leads the PNC Community Development Banking team, which works to improve the quality of life for individuals, families, and businesses in low and moderate-income neighborhoods.

The team accomplishes its mission through affordable housing, community development lending, economic development, financial education, and customized business solutions.

They also assist groups working with governmental agencies and help locate other sources for technical, financial, or investment support.

When Rockey transferred to the Baltimore area, unrest had taken hold of the city in the aftermath of the tragic incident involving city police officers and Freddie Gray.

"That was a very profound moment for all of us. Being relatively new to the market, it hit hard," said Rockey, PNC's senior vice president, Territory Executive, National Expansion Markets, Community Development Banking. "The day after the unrest, we contacted the Baltimore Development Corporation and provided them with seed capital for a small business recovery grant pool.

"You had to get the businesses opened back up so that people could access their services. So, we initiated a program that



**Chris Rockey, Senior Vice President
Territory Executive
National Expansion Markets
Community Development Banking
PNC Bank
Courtesy Photo**

would provide capital and one where others could follow up."

Following the unrest, Rockey says the PNC team spent a year listening to community members and leaders to understand better what was going on.

"What we heard was the [financial] cancer is the lack of access to capital, so we began as a team working with

Baltimore to be the landing port for these financial needs," Rockey said. "We've been intentional in trying to find partnerships and organizations that share the same values and vision that we do. That is bringing opportunities to marginalized communities."

For example, in 2015, PNC partnered with T. Rowe Price to launch KIVA, which is the crowdsource social capital. This program doesn't underwrite credit scores.

"These are underwritten by people who are supporting your business and business plans," Rockey said. "The next challenge to address was creditworthiness of borrowers.

"When it comes down to applying for a loan there's the denial issue, where people can't get a loan to start a business or to run a business.

"So that led us to that whole concept of how do we create partnerships. Banks are limited and are governed based on regulations. You can't make risky loans based on certain criteria from underwriting. We have community development financial institution partners and other organizations that we can provide investments and capital, that can in turn make the loans to borrowers who don't qualify for bank loans."

Another program PNC launched, "Mind Your Business," has been a big success. It aligns the PNC with several organizations to provide financial education to creative business owners and entrepreneurs. The businesses are a part of what PNC identifies as the new econ-

omy that will produce jobs, goods, and services in the community.

Mind Your Business workshops are designed to help local business owners to navigate cash flow, income, expenses, profit and savings. Additionally, the workshops help businesses apply copyright law and consider insurance plans.

The next Mind Your Business workshop will be held on Saturday, October 5, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Coppin State University.

"We developed this format and provided access to capital in a very intentional way," Rockey said.

The workshops quickly spun off into other programs.

PNC and Community Development Banking projects with direct ties to the Mind Your Business program include KIVA Zip Baltimore; Coppin State School of Business/Openworks; Baltimore Business Lending; Small Business Technical Assistance Fund; and PNC Women Business Advocates.

"PNC Women Business Advocates program also shows the bank's huge commitment for women in business," Rockey said. "We have a formal certification program for our bankers that they can be certified as women business advocates.

"We have an initiative in a department that focuses on helping women entrepreneurs and women in business to either start or grow their business.

"Through great partnerships and collaboration we see first-hand how the bank has become more than a service, but a trusted community partner."

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Back to School Healthy Habits: Meal Prep Tips for Kids and Parents

Baltimore— It's easy to slip out of your fitness routine during the summer months. Invitations to backyard cook-outs, fairs and festivals along with sampling delicious foods on vacations makes it easy to add on a few pounds during the summer months.

That's why 'back to school' season can be a great time to realign your schedule and get back on track to meet your fitness goals. Preparing meals for the week is just one way to keep the momentum going.

Below are three tips about the benefits of meal preparation:

1. You will save money
2. Adds variety to your meals
3. You will learn portion control

"The best thing to keep in mind when meal prepping is to do what works best for you," said Sarah McDonald, RD, Clinical Dietitian, Saint Agnes Healthcare. "The goal is make sure you have the convenience of grabbing healthy snacks and meals while you're on the go during the week."

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Americans age 18 and over spend about 37 minutes in food preparation and cleanup.

This is time worth spent considering that lack of time is a top reason why people don't cook at home.

Meal prepping allows busy individuals to walk through the door of their home and have a delicious dinner or lunch within a matter of minutes.

Taking the time to plan your meals in advance is an effective way to avoid purchasing fast food and other quick meals that may contribute to extra calories and weight.

We love to hear from our readers!

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Guest Editorials/Letters

American-Made Excellence

By Derek "Fonzworth Bentley" Watkins
Chevrolet Discover the Unexpected Program Road Trip Advisor

My grandfather instilled in me the idea of the excellence of American automotive engineering. That was then passed down to my father, and I remember when he brought home the Pontiac 6000. He stressed how American-made cars were built to be stronger and more efficient. That impressed me and gave me an understanding of how spending my dollars on American-made products supported our economy.

My uncle is a retired GM engineer. My father-in-law was an engineer local to the Detroit area. GM has a rich history of automotive innovation. For 20 years, Innovating Connected Emergency Services has proven to be an asset to all automobiles. When GM debuted

OnStar in 1996, it was the first in-vehicle technology in the industry that automatically connected to a live person when a vehicle's airbags deployed. That advisor works with first responders to provide assistance.

Along with access to industry-leading technology, OnStar's emergency advisors receive innovative training that allows them to be prepared for all situations—from vehicle crashes to mothers giving birth to helping during natural disasters. As a new father, knowing that OnStar advisors receive this training gives me another layer of comfort as I raise my family.

OnStar also has implemented Emergency Medical Dispatch, which uses set protocols to help advisors assess each situation and provide pre-arrival information to first responders. Together, OnStar's technology and advisors give first responders the information they need even before they arrive on the scene.

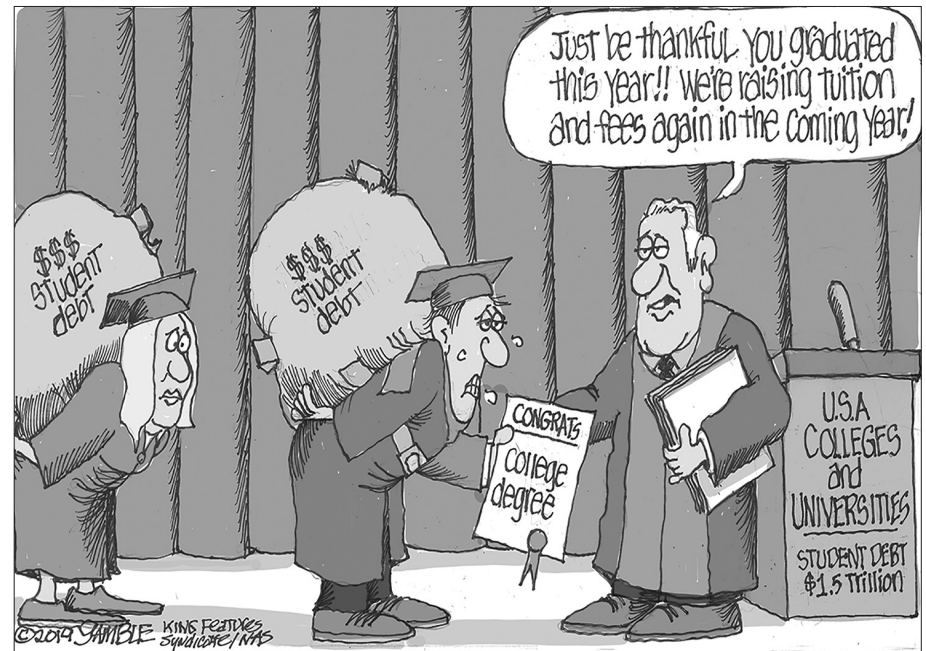
Electronic Stability Control is one of my favorite innovations of this new generation. The system offers significant improvements in performance by sensing when a vehicle is about to lose control, then intervening to keep the vehicle stable.

When I get into the cockpit of the new Chevrolet Blazer, it's steeped in technology that makes not only the driving experience more enjoyable, but also more efficient. From the ease of climate control to the mirror rearview camera and its impressive camera angles, and, of course, the vehicle's sleek design and performance, American automotive engineering has continued to innovate and uphold the vision my grandfather and father imparted to me as a teenager.

Derek "Fonzworth Bentley" Watkins is a Road Trip Advisor for the Chevrolet Discover the Unexpected Program



Derek "Fonzworth Bentley" Watkins beside the new Chevrolet Blazer. Courtesy Photo/NNPA



Letters to the Editor:

Editor:

Re: Trade War Hurting Farmers

President Trump is trying to attain trade equity with China but his trade war is having a devastating impact on U.S. farmers, which could lead to long-term losses of the Chinese market for our agricultural products since they are being replaced by competing countries.

The \$12 billion farmers subsidy is just a temporary reprieve for farmers.

China typically imports large quantities of U.S. fruit, pork, cotton, soybeans and other farm products. It imports 60 percent of U.S. soybean exports, about 30 million tons per year. Although the European Union agreed to import more soybeans—the 14 million tons falls far short of the 30 million tons to China.

Brazil is the largest exporter of soy-

beans to China. It has increased its soybean exports to China by 27 percent to 71 million tons, and it is clearing large swaths of the Amazon Forest for soybean production.

Unfortunately, the forest is being cleared with set fires that are out of control, and the clearing has a huge adverse impact on the world since the rain forest absorbs millions of tons of carbon emissions each year; along with trees throughout the planet.

Note: My wife's father, Alton Jones, was a cattle farmer.

Donald Moskowitz
Londonderry, NH



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For-profit colleges handed \$11.1 billion over 10 years

By Charlene Crowell
NNPA Newswire Contributor

Most consumers would likely agree that consumers should get what they pay for. If a product or service fails to deliver its promises, refunds are in order. That kind of thinking guided the Obama Administration decision to address false promises to address false promises made to student loan borrowers.

A rule known as the “borrower defense to repayment,” came on the heels of successive for-profit college closures that left thousands of students stranded educationally and financially. The federal rule provided a way for snookered students and borrowers to apply for and secure loan forgiveness. Its premise was that both borrowers and taxpayers were assured that the Department of Education was looking out for them.

However with a new administration and Education Secretary, rules that made sense and brought taxpayers financial

fairness have been repealed and replaced with other rules that favor for-profit colleges, loan servicers, and other business interests.

Just as many people were about to begin their Labor Day holiday, the federal Department of Education announced it was changing a key rule that provided a pathway to federal loan forgiveness. Instead, a new rule puts in place a process that will be cumbersome, lengthy and nearly impossible for consumers to successfully secure relief.

Commenting on the rule that will now apply to all federal student loans made on or after July 1, 2020, Secretary Betsy DeVos said, “We believe this final rule corrects the wrongs of the 2016 rule through common sense and carefully crafted reforms that hold colleges and universities accountable and treat students and taxpayers fairly.”

Excuse me Secretary DeVos, the rule was promulgated due to the thousands of wrongs resulting from less than truthful recruitment practices, false advertising and targeting of vulnerable populations: low-income, first-generation college students who were often people of color, and veterans seeking new skills in a return to civilian life. For-profit colleges largely remain financially solvent by their heavy dependence upon taxpayer-funded student loans.

For black America, the effects of predatory student lending at for-profit colleges comes with severe consequences. According to research by the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL):

- Only 21 percent of all for-profit students in four-year programs graduate within six years;

- Four years after graduation, black students with a bachelor’s degree owe almost double the debt their white classmates owe;

- While for-profit college enrollment represents 8.6 percent of all college students, these schools generate over 34 percent of all students who default on their loans.

While this new rule may make sense to Secretary DeVos, education advocates had an opposite reaction, quickly and emphatically detailing how the rule change is as negative as it is costly.

“After the collapse of Corinthian College and ITT Tech, two of the largest for-profit education companies in the country, the Obama Administration created the Borrower Defense rule to protect students and taxpayers from deceptive practices that could jeopardize the future of thousands of students and our economy,” said Ashley Harrington, a CRL Senior Policy Counsel, and a primary negotiator during the Education Department’s negotiated rule-making process.

With DeVos’ new rule, both the automatic discharge of federal loans that took effect after a school closed and another provision that allowed group claim relief are now eliminated. Anyone seeking redress on student loans must also bear the full burden of documenting their alleged “harm” before a claim can be reviewed.

The new rule also removes states from opportunities to defend their own constituents. State laws, many enacted before the 2016 Obama-era rule took effect, provided another route to legal redress. But with the new DeVos rule, no state-level claims can be pursued.

“That’s problematic for us,” added Harrington. “The federal standard should be the floor, not the ceiling, for relief.”

Over the next decade, the Education Department projects an \$11 billion cost-savings from denying loan forgiveness.

But for student loan borrowers, denying \$11 billion in loan forgiveness adds an unwieldy and costly burden for an education, and earnings that were never realized.

“The new ‘borrower defense rule’ does anything but defend students,” said James Kvaal, president of The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS). “In fact, it makes it almost impossible for students who are lied to, defrauded, or otherwise abused by their colleges to get a fresh start. ...By leaving students on the hook for colleges’ illegal actions, today’s rule sends a clear message that there will be little or no consequences for returning to the misrepresentations and deceptions that characterized the for-profit college boom.”

A similar reaction came from Abby Shafroth, an attorney with the National Consumer Law Center, and like Harrington, participated in the Department’s rulemaking meetings.

“There are over 170,000 pending applications with many borrowers held in limbo for years,” continued Shafroth. “The new rules reflect an ongoing shift to protect the multi-billion-dollar for-profit education industry at the expense of students and taxpayers and come amid concerns about conflicts of interest raised about the rule of former for-profit executives hired by the Department.”

Rather than saving taxpayer dollars, it seems that this new rule is guaranteeing a taxpayer-funded revenue stream for the benefit of for-profit colleges— not students.

Charlene Crowell is the Center for Responsible Lending’s Communications Deputy Director. Crowell can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsible-lending.org.

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Joy Bramble

Managing Editor
Joy Bramble

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Website

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Photographers

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Gar Roberts

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Mailing Address

The Baltimore Times
2513 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: 410-366-3900- Fax 410-243-1627
www.baltimoretimes-online.com

Want to comment on the editorials or any other story?

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Mindfulness and yoga over suspensions and detention at Baltimore City schools

By Stacy M. Brown

Black high school students remain twice as likely to be suspended as white or Hispanic high school students, according to a 2018 study commissioned by NPR.

A June 2019 University of Kentucky doctoral graduate's comprehensive research on the subject found that African American students receive discipline the most by detention, suspensions, and expulsions.

"The results showed robust evidence of persistent discrepancies in disciplinary practices across ethnic and racial groups, with African American students and students indicating two or more races found to be at increased risk for being suspended and expelled compared to white students in both middle and high schools," said Albert Ksinan, the principal investigator on the University of Kentucky's study which was published in the *Journal of School Psychology*. "Further, the risk for African American students and students indicating two or more races were higher in schools with higher poverty rates and a greater ethnic/racial diversity of the student population."

"Schools with students characterized by higher poverty and ones smaller in size reported higher rates of school disciplinary actions."

In what has proved successful, two Baltimore schools have implemented a unique program, thanks in part, to the Holistic Life Foundation, a local social services nonprofit.

Patterson High School and the Robert W. Coleman Elementary School have instituted the "Mindful Moment Room."

The room was initially for students who got into trouble.

"Now, we rarely see children [there] for disciplinary issues anymore," Coleman Elementary School Principal Carlillian Thompson told CNN in an earlier interview. "It's made a huge impact."

Most importantly, in the four years since instituting the room, Thompson says there have been no suspensions.

Andres Gonzalez, Holistic Life Foundation's co-founder and director of marketing and communication, told the PTA that he saw the impact that yoga and



Patterson High School and the Robert W. Coleman Elementary School have instituted the "Mindful Moment Room." (Above) Students at Robert W Coleman elementary school participate in breathing exercises during a Holistic Life Foundation program. Photo Credit: Colby Ware/Open Society Institute-Baltimore

meditation had on what were previously seen as "problem kids" in the school.

"Instead of us picking up ten kids from detention, we were picking seven, then we were picking up five, and soon, we weren't picking up any kids," Gonzalez said.

At Coleman Elementary, the day begins and ends with a 15-minute guided meditation over the intercom. Students also receive an opportunity to practice yoga during and after school.

Although the room remains a place to re-focus, a student who might be disruptive most looks forward to utilizing it as "an oasis of calm," according to school officials.

Students are assigned a mindfulness instructor who engages them in a targeted discussion. Five minutes of active listening and discussion takes place before 15 minutes of what is referred to as mindfulness practice. That includes breathing exercises and even yoga.

"Since we've been doing [the Mindful Moment Room] here at Patterson, it doesn't take away from what we're trying to do, and the students are better able to get their work done," Patterson High School Principal Vance Benton told the national PTA magazine, *Our PTA*.

In the first year of implementing the Mindful Moment Room at Patterson

High School, suspensions and verbal and physical altercations all decreased by more than half. At the same time, attendance rates increased by three percent and grade promotions increased by 19

percent and average student GPA increased by a half percent.

"The mindful moment program has had a very positive effect on Patterson High School. Students are conscious of the need and are open to the Mindful Moment practice," Benton said.

With the success of the program, the Holistic Life Foundation has planned a silent yoga party at the upcoming district-wide back-to-school night on Monday, September 16, 2019.

"They will be one of the many vendors at the event," said Abigail Lane, a district spokesperson.

The 6 a.m. to 8 a.m. event is scheduled to take place at the Maryland Science Center where more than 2,000 City Schools students and parents will explore interactive learning demonstrations, experience what learning will be like in school this year, and enjoy student performances.

"District staff will also be available to talk about the many programs and initiatives happening this school year," Lane said.

The Caribbean American Organizations of Baltimore

have launched a fundraiser to help to alleviate the suffering in the islands in the Bahamas caused by

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Liberty Elementary School staff 'granting' brighter futures for their students

By Ursula V. Battle

Under the leadership of Joseph Manko, Liberty Elementary School #64 located on Maine Avenue in Northwest Baltimore has received an estimated \$6 million dollars in grant money to support students, staff and the community. Quite an amazing accomplishment given the fact that Manko and his staff have been able to do it without a paid professional grant writer.

"Because of our experience here, and because we love the kids, we can write grants from the heart in a way that a paid grant writer might not capture," said Manko. "Those are our credentials. We don't have the professional grant writing expertise, but we counteract that with our relationship with the kids and the community."

According to Manko, approximately 500 students attend the school.

"We are always trying to look for ways to expand opportunities for our students," said Manko. "We have been fortunate to receive a lot of grants and are in contact with organizations that help us to do that. We have the largest field trip program in Baltimore. Last year, we took our kids on 93 field trips. A lot of those trips were grant-supported. The Baltimore Museum of Art scheduled 12 trips for our fourth-grade students to go to the museum and study art.

"We also have a grant through Pearlstone, which is an organic Jewish farm in Westminster. The kids go there three times a year to learn about farming, and in the spring, they prepare a full harvest meal. This is a unique experience for urban kids who don't have a lot of experience in gardening."

Manko talked about the school's many grant awards and the services they provide.

"We receive a yearly \$250,000 Community Schools Grant through the Fam-



Liberty Elementary School Principal, Joseph Manko and Assistant Principal, Sarah Krauss opening doors of opportunity for their students. Under their leadership, the school aggressively goes after funding support for their students.

Photo by Ursula V. Battle

ily League of Baltimore," he said. "That grant allows us to provide after-school programming for 135 students. The children receive hours of additional academics, and also get to select enrichment activities they are passionate about such as Cub Scouts, drama, art, and karate.

"Another large grant is a \$300,000 yearly grant from a lot of different sources who have pulled together to support a Judy Center program to support early learning. It provides activities and programming for kids even before they step foot in the school door. By the time they get here, they are already advanced. Though this program, we also offer parenting and GED classes and parent support groups."

Judy Centers serve children, birth through age five and their families in an effort to increase the number of children entering school ready to learn.

According to Manko, the Liberty Judy Center program also hosts an annual Community Baby Shower.

"We invite new parents in the community to participate, and then we connect them to the program we have in the Judy Center," said Manko.

Manko also talked about programs supported by some of the school's smaller grants.

"The last five years, we have written a \$50,000 grant through the Summer Funding Collaborative," he said. "This year, that collaborative supported a five-week summer camp at zero cost to families."

According to Manko, grant awards have made it possible for the school to offers its student an iPad or Chromebook; hire additional social workers; and offer trauma counseling. The school also oversees Liberty Recreation Center, which offers space and a variety of pro-

grams to the community. Other offerings include a community food pantry and produce drop program.

"Ms. Gomez works with the pantry team to let parents know about it," said Manko referring to PTO President Juliette Gomez. "We also have a wonderful partnership with the Maryland Food Bank. We give away 16,000 pounds of food a month."

Manko has served as principal of Liberty Elementary for 10 years, and has worked in education for 18 years.

"Funders want to make investment in longevity and stability," he said. "We have a track record of success, and people are willing to support our initiatives."


However, Manko was quick to point out that he shouldn't be credited with the school's grant success. He highlighted the efforts of many, including Assistant Principal Sarah Krauss.

"My only role is to empower the staff," he said. "They will ask if it's something they can do, and I say 'yes.' They care a lot about getting as much as we can for our students to help their learning. We also have a very active PTO.

"We want to provide our kids with the same opportunities kids in elite, prestigious Maryland schools would get. Rather than putting up our hands and saying, 'that's impossible,' we look at the barriers that prevent us from reaching those goals, and move or work around those barriers. Our kids deserve the best."

PTO President Gomez says Manko gets an 'A+' grade in her book.

"My granddaughter goes there, and I wanted to be involved," she said. "Mr. Manko is so humble and is never too busy to hear what even the smallest person has to say. He even rolls up his sleeves and picks up the trash. Liberty is very blessed to have Mr. Manko."




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138th Maryland State Fair did not disappoint this year according to foodies

By Cheyanne Gordon
Morgan State University SCOM student

If you didn't make it to the 138th Maryland State Fair this year, then you missed an epic battle between French fries and fruit.

Fairgoers who are into staying fit, and avoiding sweet treats had to navigate acres of temptation during this annual summer-ending ritual that took place August 22 to September 2, 2019.

Kimberly Gover of Baltimore was there. "I come for the funnel cake of course. The food experience is definitely memorable."

However, fans of the Maryland State Fair said that there were lots of great fresh options other than fried foods and sugary sweets and most of it was locally grown like honey dew melons, grapes, cantaloupes, and watermelon.

Stan Dabkowski, also known as "Farmer Stan" said, "The Maryland State Fair is the eleven best days of summer. Everyone is happy to be here. It's a



Chair of The Maryland Foods Pavilion Stan Dabkowski displays healthy food items that were available The Maryland State Fair Saturday, September 7, 2019.

Photo: Cheyanne Gordon

lot of fun." He said he enjoys promoting Maryland products.

Dabkowski is the chair of The Maryland Foods Pavilion. He has been with the Maryland State Fair for over 36 years. He represents the fruit and veg-

etable growers. Dabkowski said corn and other veggies are big hits with fairgoers, even if the veggies don't get the same top billing as funnel cakes.

Alan Schmidt of Monkton, Maryland known as "Cowboy Al" is also a vendor. He sold his own line of premium custom-blended spices that can also help to dress up healthy treats.

According to Dabkowski, 50 food vendors offered up freshly grown fruits and vegetables from Maryland farmers. Lamb, seafood, beef, and pork were also available.

Some fairgoers expressed that being healthy is not just about what you eat, but also about the portions. Small servings of even the most decadent foods can help when you are watching what you eat.

"This is actually my first time at the fair. I got the barbeque pork sundae, and it was actually really good. It's pulled pork and coleslaw," said Ryan Howard of Baltimore.

Although there were lots of options, a few fairgoers said they had to look closer to satisfy their taste buds.

"It has been a challenge for me to eat here because I am dairy-free, gluten-free, and have a lot of food allergies. But my kids are so excited. They love the food," said Melissa Pfisterer of Baltimore.

Dabkowski said the garden salad was a big hit at the pavilion. It featured Maryland grown tomatoes, lettuce, and cucumbers. Eleven-year-old Cayden Johnson of Baltimore is a fan. "It is good. I like salads. I think they are good and they are healthy."

Vendors said eating healthily at the fair is also easy on your wallet. They said fairgoers satisfied their appetites for healthy foods this year spending a little as two dollars.

Dabkowski admitted that although he enjoyed promoting healthy options to appeal to all audiences this year, he said the most popular choice in the pavilion was the Maryland Peach Sundae. The fresh corn on the cob was a close runner-up, according to Dabkowski.

Sports enthusiast serves up some African American history at Maryland State Fair

By Justus Hawkins
Morgan State University SCOM student

Long-time baseball enthusiast Rayner "Ray" Banks brought black history to the Maryland State Fair in Timonium through his Negro Leagues Baseball exhibit.

"I am trying to keep the legacy alive of those players who played in the Negro Leagues," said Banks who is known as the Negro Leagues Goodwill Ambassador.

Banks has been in love with Negro Leagues Baseball since 1996.

"I found out about the Negro Leagues after meeting the late Geraldine Day," said Banks. Day was the widow of Negro Leagues Baseball Hall of Fame player Leon Day. Day's widow donated some of the memorabilia he now uses as part of his exhibit. Banks promised her he would keep her husband's legacy alive.

Banks credits his daughter Tonya Thomas for leading the charge to preserve the history of the Negro Leagues players. In 2002, Thomas created B.A.L.L. (Black Athletes & Lost Legends), an organiza-



(L-r): Elmira Thornton, The Baltimore Orioles Mascot, and Ray Banks pose for photos at The Maryland State Fair, Saturday, September 7, 2019. Thornton and Banks are promoters of The Negro Leagues Baseball legacy in Maryland.

Photo: Justus Hawkins

tion dedicated to preserving the history of African Americans who played in the league.

"My daughter planted the seed, and we're just piggybacking on what she has stated," Banks said.

A few years later, he remembered that he saw a sign for the Maryland State Fair. He wanted to bring an exhibit about historic black players for everyone to see. So, after making the pitch to fair organizers and getting the nod from

them, he has been exhibiting ever since.

Hundreds of fans walked by three tables of history in Exhibition Hall. But fair visitors experienced something even better—a history lesson with a real live Negro Leagues player.

"Well, we come because a lot of kids come here to take in history. This is the place kids can learn about Negro League baseball," said former Negro Leagues player Luther Atkinson. Atkinson played second base and shortstop for the Satchel Paige All Stars in the late 1950s.

"I think it is very important to show these very important items to see how African Americans are represented in baseball, especially from the past and present," said Lochearn resident Monyette Boatwright. She hopes more African Americans will get excited about baseball again and grow the sport.

Legendary baseball fan Linda Warehime Butcher was also there. She is well-known in Baltimore as the young person

Continued on page 11

'It's not your usual bike ride,' say patrons of Rides Around Lake Montebello

By Eryn Johnson
Morgan State University SCOM student

As the summer season comes to an end, you have six more weeks to have some fun in the sun while taking a ride around Lake Montebello.

Rides Around Lake Montebello is a program sponsored by Baltimore City Recreation and Parks. People who come to the lake for the program said it is a place to start off your workout, no matter how old or young you are.

"Biking is very common in the city, but how often do you see a program that gives people access to bikes who may not be able to afford them, or who want to ride with other people without feeling intimidated," said Ethan Abbott, director of Rides Around Lake Montebello.

According to the city, the program has been around for seven years. Riders can take advantage of the bike program from May through October each year.

Abbott said more than 60 people come each time to pedal the track around the reservoir which is just a little over a mile long. The city's outdoor recreation team



Riders and pedestrians enjoy their Saturday morning at Lake Montebello. Saturday, September 7, 2019.

Photo: Eryn Johnson

is on hand to assist people with finding the right bike and helmet. His team also gives lessons on how to properly ride and brake.

Organizers said Rides Around Lake Montebello is easy to get involved with and all you need is a photo ID. While technically free, Baltimore City Recreation and Parks said it accepts donations to help the program maintain the bikes and provide safety equipment for riders.

"When we found out we can ride bikes out here, it drew more and more of my family. We started to come every Saturday for family outings," said K. Simpson from Baltimore. Simpson said she devotes a lot of her time helping her young granddaughter learn how to ride.

While some participants said they show up to get some exercise, others said they come to enjoy the weather, the lake, and each other.

"I got started with this program because of my hunny. We do this every week for fun, for exercise, and staying healthy. It's free. It's a great thing. Everyone should be doing this," said Charles Lowder of East Baltimore.

Abbott said whatever the reason people come, he is glad they do. "This is a staple in this area. This is about community."

Sports enthusiast—

Continued from page 10

who swept the bases at the old Memorial Stadium back in the 1970s where the Baltimore Orioles once played.

"This is history. It brings together everybody. I mean it's baseball. That's when baseball was baseball," said Warehime Butcher.

Banks said many people do not know there were two Negro Leagues teams in Baltimore: The Baltimore Black Sox and The Baltimore Elite Giants. Players back then paved the way for modern day success for black players. They weren't paid a lot. Most historians agree they played for the love of the game.

When Banks is not taking his exhibit on the road several times a month, he's at the Hubert V. Simmons, Museum of Negro Leagues Baseball in Owings Mills at the Baltimore County Public Library. He is a museum official.



Former Negro Leagues player Luther "Luke" Atkinson of The Satchel Paige All Stars stares out into the crowd as he looks over his Negro Leagues memorabilia at The Maryland State Fair, Saturday, September 7, 2019.



(L-r): Linda Warehime Butcher and Ray Banks share a moment at her photo stand at The Maryland State Fair.

Photos: Justus Hawkins

"Many doors were open for a nation that was struggling to live out the precepts of the 14th Amendment. I want

people to feel that it was totally wrong to not accept people of color because of the color of their skin," stated Banks.

"We now realize that we are all equal under God and live together in fellowship whether we are on or off the field."

Sickle Cell Disease Association making strides in blood disorder awareness

By Stacy M. Brown

About one out of every 365 African American births in the United States results in a baby with sickle cell disease (SCD).

Despite its prevalence, the medical community still has difficulty understanding the illness. Experts say most people lack essential awareness of the inherited blood disorder that affects approximately 100,000 people in the United States.

African Americans and Hispanic Americans are most commonly affected, according to researchers.

Beverley Francis-Gibson, president and CEO of the Baltimore-based Sickle Cell Disease Association of America (SCDAA), knows the devastating impacts of sickle cell disease, particularly end-organ damage. As a child, Francis-Gibson witnessed her cousin struggle with chronic anemia, the slow destruction of his vital organs, and constant pain.

As part of Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month, Francis-Gibson served as host of the 8th annual Sickle Cell Disease Therapeutics Conference on September 10, 2019 at the Westin Washington, D.C. hotel. Rep. Robin Kelly (D-Ill.) served as the keynote speaker.

The event was designed to provide the SCD community with an opportunity to gather and address critical issues facing patients, as well as the latest developments in care access and the many strides made by research, and development of possible new treatment options were also topics of discussion.

"We don't have any new drugs on the market for sickle cell patients, but we anticipate that in the next decade or so,



As part of Sickle Cell Disease Awareness Month, Beverley Francis-Gibson, president and CEO of the Baltimore-based Sickle Cell Disease Association of America, Inc. served as host of the 8th annual Sickle Cell Disease Therapeutics Conference on September 10, 2019 in Washington, D.C. Courtesy Photo/SCDAA

we're going to have amazing options," Francis-Gibson said. "I think it's important that we all stay engaged."

Remaining engaged is something SCDAA has always done.

Francis-Gibson said sickle cell disease awareness month isn't the only time SCDAA and others in the SCD community actively seek to make a difference for patients and caregivers.

"It's not something that we focus on just in September. We have many events that happen throughout the year," Francis-Gibson said. "And it is important for patients, individuals, caregivers, and just the general community to be aware of what's happening around the United States."

The goal of SCDAA, which will hold its annual convention in Baltimore in October, is to raise awareness about sickle cell disease. The nonprofit accomplishes its

mission through several venues, campaigns, conferences and workshops, according to Francis-Gibson.

"Because we know that the information changes rapidly. And things are moving fast in terms of new therapies for sickle cell patients," Francis-Gibson said. "And we want to make sure that we're bringing everyone along at the same time so that no one is left behind, or they don't have the information that they need to make an informed decision."

The SCD community has historically been underserved, and many SCD patients lack access to adequate resources and care. Against that backdrop, some of the subjects tackled at the conference included patient advocacy and educating caregivers about the need for pain med-

ication for SCD patients.

"This conference is a unique opportunity to bring together the community. And so we have patients, we have caregivers," Francis-Gibson said. "We have industry leaders; we have students who come together to learn and hear about new solutions, and share information about new knowledge that has been gained.

"We also celebrate some of the successes of the previous year. And so it was a great collaboration, if you will, everyone coming together just to learn and be in the same space one day."

The conference also helped to provide caregivers with the message that they're not alone.

"We encourage the caregivers to get help for themselves as needed, and to take breaks and respite as needed, but also to call on other friends and family to help support them," Francis-Gibson said. "Their loved one living with sickle cell disease is a giant task. And we recognize that the burnout rate is pretty high. So we're encouraging them to care, and to take care of themselves as well."

Another vital message Francis-Gibson says she wants all to know is that SCD isn't contagious.

"It's an inherited disorder," Francis-Gibson said. "And, if they don't know if they have the sickle cell trait, they can easily be tested for that so that they know what their status is. Our goal is to help raise awareness. We're fighting the good fight for them. We need them to join us."

For more information about SCD or the SCDAA, visit <https://www.sicklecelldisease.org>.

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A family of four is shown in a new home. The father and mother are standing together, smiling and looking towards the right. The mother is wearing a striped shirt and jeans, and the father is wearing a maroon t-shirt and jeans. Two young children are sitting on the floor in the foreground, looking at a cardboard box. The room is filled with moving boxes, some labeled 'BOOKS' and 'BATHROOM'. A wooden ladder is leaning against the wall on the right. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

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Ravens Cyrus Jones hosts backpack giveaway in his hometown Baltimore

By Tyler Hamilton

Baltimore Ravens defensive back Cyrus Jones has always wanted to give back to the community that was a part of his youth. A Gillman High School product, Jones wanted to give back to back his hometown during the back to school season.

"Being back home, going into my fourth year has given me an opportunity to be in the community a lot," said Jones.

His organization, the Cy. Jones Foundation partnered with Walmart and Catholic Charities of Maryland to host a backpack giveaway for 25 students in Baltimore.

Jones' ties to Baltimore go beyond his high school years. He attended elementary and middle school at Leith Walk Elementary/Middle School in northeast Baltimore.

His mother, Tomika Jones who is the president of his foundation, spoke to the students about how Cyrus growing up in Baltimore. She said she raised him as a scholar-athlete. Jones is an example of how anyone who takes education seri-

ously can be successful.

The kids were excited to meet Jones and took pictures with him after he spoke to them. Like his mother, Jones wanted to make sure the students understand the importance of being a scholar in addition to being an athlete. That's why he made sure the backpacks were filled with the necessary school supplies for the students to use during the school year.

Unfortunately, some parents are unable to provide backpacks and supplies necessary for school. Organizations, like The Cy. Jones Foundation help to make sure that underprivileged students have the school supplies needed to help students to be successful.

The Cy. Jones Foundation (CJF), is a "community service and empowerment organization that offers hope and motivation to diverse, multi-ethnic, youth populations by creating innovative enrichment programs in education, sports, health, and wellness." The foundation is dedicated to building self-confidence and instilling self-sufficiency in the lives of children and their families.



Baltimore Ravens defensive back Cyrus Jones (center black cap) with some of the recipients of backpacks and schools supplies, thanks to The Cy. Jones Foundation in partnership with Walmart and Catholic Charities of Maryland.

Courtesy Photo/The Cy. Jones Foundation

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Local Businessman Enters 2020 Baltimore City Mayoral Race

By Charlene Mayo

"I am honored and delighted to announce that after careful consideration with an exploratory committee and residents, I am entering Baltimore's 2020 Mayoral race," Rikki Vaughn said.

Vaughn says that Baltimore is in need of aggressive and immediate actions to turn the city around.

"Baltimore does not need this on-going, repetitive leadership, it needs up-to-date leadership. We need a real vision, real direction, and real action to make our City better for all. Each campaign cycle, we are promised positive change while only settling for more of the same. It is now time to empower the people of Baltimore to restore our dignity, our hope, our collective family," Vaughn said.

Born and raised in Baltimore City, Vaughn was a minimum wage worker at McDonald's, a high school dropout at 16, and father at the age of 17.

"Today I am the CEO of my own company, operating national brand restaurants in eight states across the nation. I am a Magna Cum Laude graduate from a HBCU, honors graduate with my MBA, and now, a candidate for PhD," Vaughn explained. "As you can see, I did not let how I entered the race determine how I was going to finish it. It is the values of Baltimore that propelled me to my success and my commitment to serving."

Vaughn didn't like that the President of the United States tweeted about Baltimore.

"He called our city, rat and rodent infested. He called it disgusting. He absolutely did his best to embarrass us, and our leadership. However, I know Baltimore is so much more. The greatest city in America deserves more respect, more credibility and more dignity on a national



Rikki Vaughn
Courtesy Photo

level," Vaughn said.

Baltimore City is a crucial and significant part of the American legacy and heritage, according to Vaughn.

"For me, I am proud of Baltimore's contribution to the nation and to the world. But I know we can do better. Aim for higher heights," said Vaughn who as a Democratic candidate vows to uphold Baltimore's values and maintain its integrity.

"I will listen and represent all. We are one family, united by our beautiful city. We succeed when we work together and understand that one person's success is the success of us all. If I can turn my life around, with the help of God, family, and community, there is no limit to what our city can accomplish when we understand that our best days are ahead of us. The time for the same leadership, the same approaches, and the same mottos is over. If we did it before, we will do it again," Vaughn said. "My platform will be completely based on creating a better Baltimore that uplifts us all, empowers us all, and reinstates the dignity that we deserve. I ask that you humbly join me on my mission to serve Baltimore, as it has served me. I know that Baltimore is great. It is time that we remind the world of that greatness. I am running to give Baltimore City what it deserves— respect, love and peace."

Get Ready! Get Set! Get Fit! 5K Run/Walk/1 Mile Walk

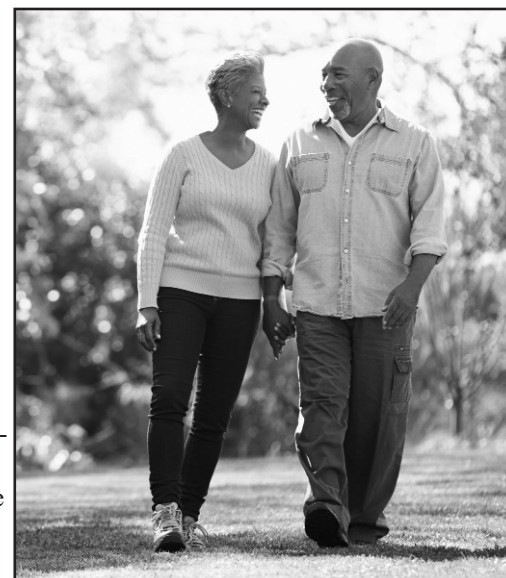
Towson— The Baltimore County Department of Aging invites you to participate in its 13th annual Get Ready! Get Set! Get Fit 5K Run/Walk 1 Mile Walk fundraiser, which benefits health and wellness programs for older adults. The race will be held Sunday, September 22, 2019 at 8 a.m. at the Community College of Baltimore County Essex campus.

This multi-generational fall event which draws people from all over the region to run or walk the equivalent of 3.1 miles. For those who aren't up for the 5K challenge, there is a one mile walk.

The Essex Campus 5K course includes, both hills and flats, a challenge to those who are looking for an energizing workout on a Sunday morning. One mile walkers can enjoy strolling around a flat area separate but close to the racecourse. Participants will also enjoy visiting vendor tables and displays, as well as a variety of free falls prevention and health and wellness screenings.

All proceeds from the event go directly back into keeping many of Baltimore County's older adults healthy and active; as well as enhance the fitness centers and exercise programs in the Baltimore County's 20 Senior Centers.

This year, as part of the agency's "Social Isolation" initiative, we have developed "Don't Walk Alone" which encourages participants to invite their families, friends, and children to walk



along with them. We hope this will give seniors and others the opportunity to live connected.

There will be a Team Spirit award, trophies for the largest team, most money raised by a team and most money raised by an individual. 5K Medals to the top three men and women overall and to top the three men and women in each age category. New this year, a commemorative pin will be provided for race day participants. Race day participants will also be entered into various door prizes including (5) \$100 Fitness Pays gift cards (must be present to win). Amenities include a technical long sleeve moisture wicking T-shirt (Guaranteed to first 1,150 registered participants. Size not guaranteed.

Online registration is available now at www.getreadygetsetgetfit5k.com.

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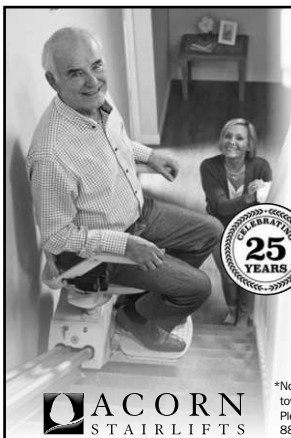
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