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Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School Wins BGE's Natural Gas Safety Contest



Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School in Baltimore was announced as the winner of the third annual “Adventures of Captain Mercaptan,”SM BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge” at an all-school assembly on Wednesday, May 11, 2016. Captain Mercaptan teaches kids how to recognize a natural gas leak and what steps to take when you smell gas. Captain Mercaptan’s name is derived from the safety additive mercaptan that BGE and other utilities put in natural gas to give it a distinctive “rotten egg” odor that makes gas easier to detect. The superhero and his safety sidekicks, Sunny and Piper, were designed by elementary school students through the BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge. (Left to right) Christie McMullen, Vice President of Gas Distribution for BGE; Third grader Genesis Bobadilla (student with winning illustration) with Captain Mercaptan; Claudette McLish (third grade teacher); Steve Woerner, President and COO of BGE; Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School Principal Dr. Faith Hibbert and BGE Senior Engineering Tech Specialist Marc Haines. (Story on page 10) Courtesy Photo

African-Americans and Stroke Risk

By John W. Cole, MD, MS
and Steven J. Kittner, MD, MPH
University of Maryland Comprehensive
Stroke Center, Department of Neurology,
University of Maryland School
of Medicine

Stroke is a very common medical problem throughout the United States and worldwide. In the United States there are typically about 800,000 new or repeat strokes each year. Stroke is the fourth highest cause of death in the United States and the leading cause of long-term disability. Although certain risk factors for stroke, such as genetics or family history cannot be controlled, others such as high blood pressure or diabetes can go unrecognized. Knowing your risk factors for stroke and controlling them is the first step in preventing a stroke.

African Americans are more impacted by stroke than any other racial group within the American population and the statistics are staggering. African-Americans are twice as likely to die from stroke as Caucasians and their rate of first strokes is almost double that of Caucasians. Strokes among African-Americans also tend to occur earlier in life. Further, as stroke survivors, African-Americans are more likely to become disabled and experience difficulties with daily living and activities. So why are African-Americans at higher risk? Unfortunately the full explanation is unclear; however, research points to hypertension and diabetes as major reasons for the excess risk among African-Americans. High blood pressure is the



John W. Cole, MD, MS
Courtesy Photo

number one risk factor for stroke, and one in three African Americans suffer from high blood pressure. African Americans are more likely to develop hypertension at a younger age and less likely to have it under control than other Americans. People with diabetes have a higher stroke risk and diabetes also is more prevalent among African-Americans.

Fortunately, there are some clear steps that one can take to reduce risk of stroke. The American Heart Association outlines these steps for lowering risk of heart disease and stroke in a program called "Life's Simple 7." This program gives detailed instructions to help people learn how to manage their blood pressure, control cholesterol, reduce blood sugar, get active, eat better, lose weight, and stop smoking. For example, there is



Steven J. Kittner, MD, MPH
Courtesy Photo

information about how to be an active partner to your doctor in achieving blood pressure control, including how to select and use inexpensive home blood pressure monitors. Having multiple medical problems greatly enhances a person's risk, so eliminating even one of them can markedly reduce risk of stroke. With respect to stroke—this old adage certainly is true—prevention is the best medicine!

Now that we know how to prevent a stroke, what is a stroke anyway? It is probably easiest to think about a stroke as an interruption of blood to some part of the brain. Blood is pumped by your heart up through a series of blood vessels in your neck and into your brain. If a blood vessel in the brain gets blocked no blood gets to some part of the brain and we call that an ischemic stroke. If a blood vessel in the brain bursts, we call that a hemorrhagic stroke. In either case,

not enough blood gets to some part of the brain. As such, we can simply think of stroke as a 'blood vessel plumbing problem' that we want to avoid. Unlike the heart, which does only one thing, which is to pump blood, the brain is responsible for everything we do—talking, walking, moving, seeing, thinking, feeling, speaking. If some part of the brain doesn't get blood with oxygen and blood sugar, even for a short time, that part of the brain doesn't work correctly and people experience stroke symptoms.

A useful way to think about stroke symptoms and what to do is the American Heart Association acronym "FAST." "F" is for face drooping: Does one side of the face droop? Ask the person to smile to see if it is very uneven.

"A" is for arm weakness: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

"S" is for speech difficulty: Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand?

"T" is for time to call 911: If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 911 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Even transient symptoms are an emergency since they can be warning signs of a severe stroke in the next hours or days. Check the time so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

There are now treatments that can reduce stroke severity if given quickly enough. Every minute that the brain does not get blood, millions of brain cells die. Calling 911 is the most effective way to get this treatment.

For more information on the "Life's Simple 7" program visit www.heart.org.

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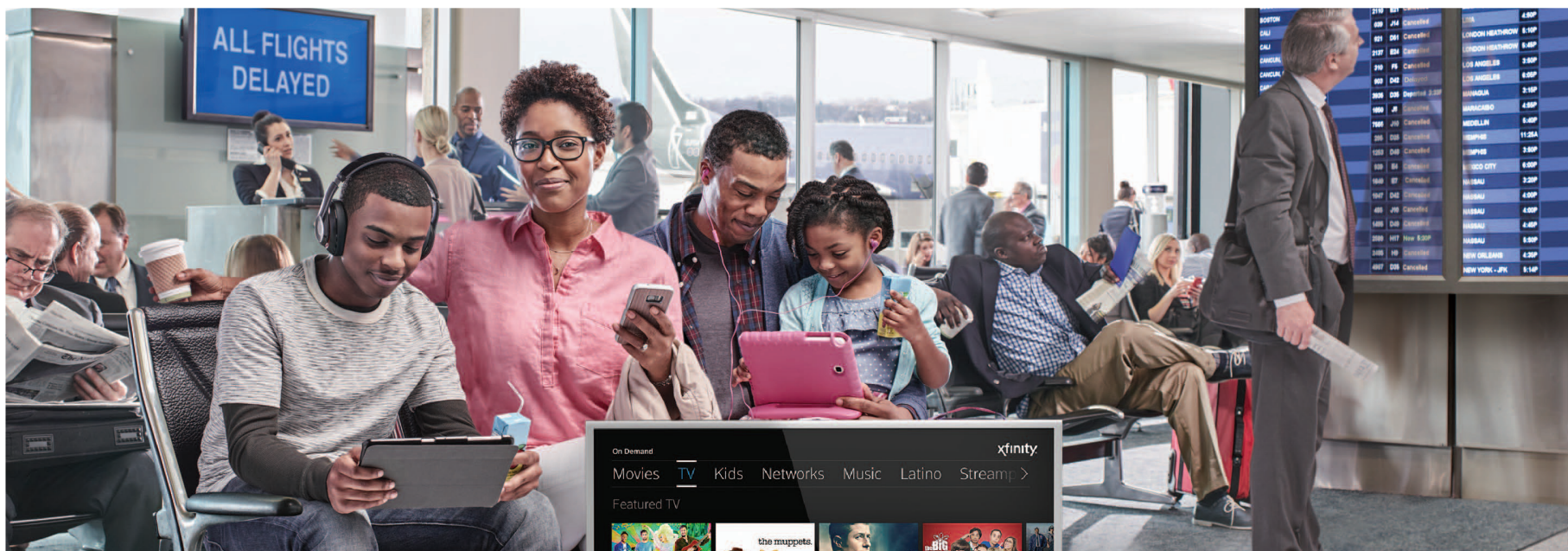
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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Restoring America's Naval Dominance

By J. Michael Barrett

The U.S. Navy faces a new threat on the high seas: As potential adversaries spend lavishly to boost their maritime capabilities, we're outgunned for the first time in modern history. The Pentagon has wisely sought to rectify this imbalance with \$2 billion to upgrade and increase to 4,000 the stockpile of Tomahawk anti-ship cruise missiles. The new investment will reestablish U.S. naval dominance over all potential comers.

Skeptics, though, are urging the Navy to abandon this plan and instead develop an expensive new weapons system.

America long dominated the high seas. During the Cold War, the Navy invested in the most cutting-edge anti-ship missiles on the globe. The Tomahawk reigned—a missile capable of reaching a target as far as 1,000 miles away. Hostile enemy ships didn't stand a chance—and they knew it. However, they were not happy about it. China has been increasing its military spending by 11 percent annually for the past two decades, especially focusing on sea power.

Russia, likewise, is posing a renewed threat, especially under Vladimir Putin. The Office of Naval Intelligence recently concluded that Putin seeks nothing less than a restoration of Soviet-era sea power over the next five years.

Iran, meanwhile, has spent years building up anti-ship missiles, with U.S. warships their unannounced targets. This year, the Iranian Revolutionary Guard detained American sailors whose boats strayed off course in the Persian Gulf, broadcasting video propaganda of the ordeal.

Erratic North Korea's naval ambitions are also worrisome. Last year, Pyongyang released details of a new high-speed hovercraft armed with missiles capable of targeting ships within a 100-mile range. Overall, more than 70 nations now own a total 75,000 anti-ship missiles.

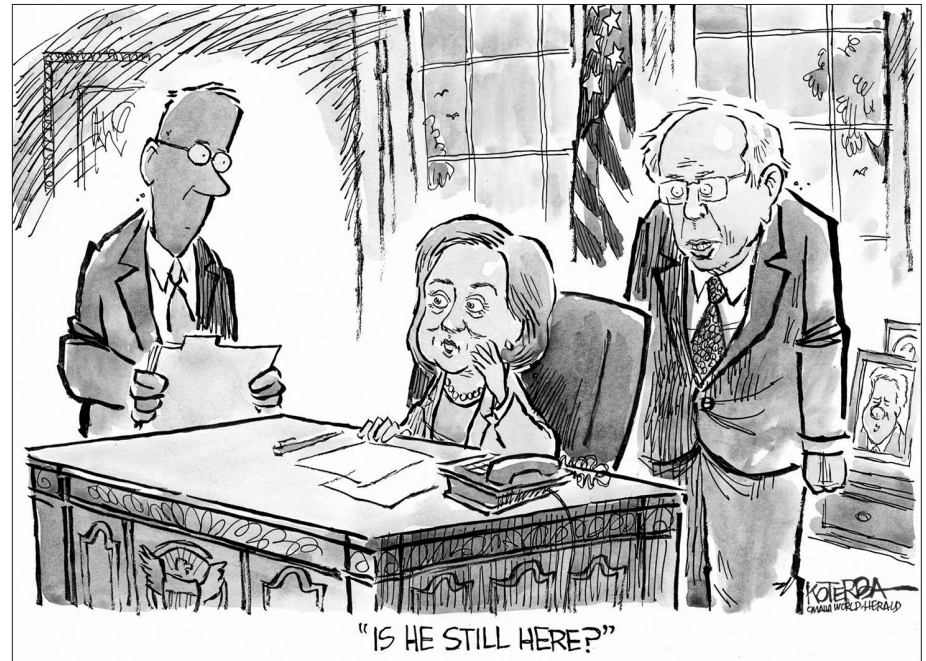
The Tomahawk is the only weapon that can restore American deterrence at sea. The GPS-powered system boasts 90 percent reliability. It's been used more than 2,000 times in combat, including in 2011, where it played a pivotal role in the NATO-led effort to depose Moammar Gadhafi in Libya. More recently, U.S. forces have fired Tomahawk missiles against ISIS. The latest Tomahawk can also receive in-flight target updates to reflect evolving available intelligence. Given the historical difficulty of identifying vessels and determining the level of threat they pose, this cutting-edge technology diminishes the risk of error.

That technology, paired with more precise tracker and seeker capabilities to focus on a moving target, means the latest iteration of the Tomahawk is a "game-changer," as the deputy defense secretary recently said. The missile is so versatile that "it can be used by practically our entire surface and submarine fleet."

Yet some defense analysts are pushing for a new weapons system. However, the major potential alternative to the Tomahawk under consideration—the Long-Range Anti-Ship Missile system (LRASM)—is vastly more expensive and offers only half the range of a Tomahawk. The LRASM can also only be fired from the air, meaning the Navy would need a nearby runway to use the missile. That's impractical for the western Pacific. Aircraft carriers could work but equipping a ship for such a weapon can cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Considering that a timely upgrading of the Tomahawk will restore our dominance at sea, this push isn't wise. The Pentagon's Tomahawk proposal is an appropriate way to reestablish American dominance at sea. The most effective approach to preserving freedom of movement on the high seas is to reinforce our deterrent capabilities.

J. Michael Barrett, a former Naval Intelligence Officer, Fulbright Scholar, and Director of Strategy at the White House, is currently the Director of the Center for Homeland Security and Resilience.



Community Affairs

Light City Baltimore Announces Economic Impact, Calls for Entry Open for 2017

The inaugural festival had \$33.8 million impact on Baltimore City, Drew more than 400,000 people

Baltimore—The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts announced that Light City Baltimore, the first large-scale, international light festival in the United States, had a total impact of \$33.8 million for the seven-day festival. Light City increased the local business volume by \$19.9 million in direct impact and \$13.9 million in indirect impact. The inaugural festival took place March 28 through April 3, 2016 and drew more than 400,000 attendees in its first year.

A study was conducted by Forward Analytics, a Pennsylvania based market research firm whose clients include festivals and events throughout the United States. The study shows that of the 400,000 attendees, 176,800 people traveled from outside the Baltimore

Metropolitan area to experience Light City. The direct impact of non-local visitor spending was \$17,769,000. Of that revenue, \$6,807,000 was spent on food and alcohol at bars and restaurants in Baltimore City; \$1,830,000 was spent on retail/souvenir purchases; \$1,340,000 was spent on tourist attractions and entertainment and \$4,356,000 was spent on accommodations at Baltimore City hotels. Each out-of-town visitor spent an estimated \$100 while enjoying Light City. In addition, the 2016 Light City festival generated an estimated \$566,300 in tax revenues for the City of Baltimore and \$1.09 million for the State of Maryland. Seven percent of operating expenses were with businesses and services in Baltimore County and five percent were spent elsewhere in Maryland.

The second annual Light City Baltimore is set to take place Friday, March 31 through Saturday, April 8, 2017. The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts is now seeking proposals for Light City 2017. The Youth Conference will take place on Saturday, April 8, 2016. A list of available calls for entry can be found on www.lightcity.org.

The Black Community is Bleeding to Death

By James Clingman
NNPA News Wire Columnist

There is a crisis of monumental proportion in our so-called “black communities.” A crisis that if not checked will prove to be our demise. We are bleeding so badly that we are in a comatose state and on life support right now. However, we still have a strong heartbeat so, we can be revived by those who have the financial and intellectual talents and the willingness to make the requisite individual sacrifices necessary to restore us to a more healthy state.

A cadre of individuals, not featured in the dominant media, is devoted to leading the charge for economic empowerment among black people. These brothers and sisters are not afraid. They are not ashamed of being black. They are not hiding behind organizations and in corporations; they are strong and unwavering in their message of economic empowerment. They are our Emergency Medical Technicians, the first ones on the scene to stop the bleeding and to take us to a place where we can be

treated and recover from our wounds.

Yes, we are bleeding profusely brothers and sisters, and we must stop the bleeding, not with a Band-Aid but with stitches. Our life-blood—our dollars are flowing out of our neighborhoods. The professionals call this phenomenon “float” or “expenditure leakage,” which translates into what the experts at the Brookings Institution called a “market opportunity to provide competitively priced goods and services to inner-city consumers.” A 1999 report issued by the Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, written by Robert Weissbourd and Christopher Berry, cited some glaring and, quite frankly, embarrassingly stark statistics that portray Black people as nothing more than “economic opportunities” for others.

Please note the report was not casting aspersions on black folks, rather it was simply pointing out some facts about inner-city neighborhoods and their consumers and suggesting ways that businesses and government entities could better serve the residents as well as their own interests. It stressed investment opportunities within under-served neighborhoods, and was positive in its approach to suggesting ways to effect much needed change.

Nevertheless, my take on this issue conjured up visions of massive hemorrhaging and it very strongly suggests that we need to stop the bleeding. The report compared one of Chicago’s Southside neighborhoods to the affluent northern neighborhood of Kenilworth.

The report stated, “...Urban neighborhoods like South Shore in Chicago have more buying power than the wealthiest of suburbs. South Shore’s median family income was \$22,000 back then; Kenilworth’s was \$124,000. But South Shore had \$69,000 of retail spending ‘power per acre,’ nearly twice that of Kenilworth’s \$38,000.” That means inner city residents, despite their tremendous resources, are virtually bleeding to death.

Literally millions of dollars are leaving our neighborhoods, which in turn also negatively affects our employment opportunities. It continued, “For business, this translates into lost sales, or what marketers call ‘float dollars.’ For inner city residents, these are ‘float jobs,’ as crucial dollars that could employ local residents and fuel the neighborhood economy are spent elsewhere.”

The only thing that has changed during the last sixteen years is our collective annual income, which is much higher. The problem is that we don’t learn from information like this and use it to improve our situation.

We are bleeding, brothers and sisters, and our blood, Type O, the “universal donor”—everybody benefits from it. We have EMT’s ready, willing, and able to apply the tourniquets and even to stitch up our wounds. It’s up to us, however, to access their expertise, to follow their instructions, and to take the prescriptions they write for us. If we are going to stop the bleeding, if we are going to put an end, once and for all, to the preventable loss of life-blood—our dollars—from

our neighborhoods, we must make the changes being recommended by our true economic leaders.

We must consider our “spending power per acre” as cited in the Brookings Report, just as others are considering it and gaining a stronger economic foothold in the billions black people earn and spend each year. We must redirect a greater portion of our \$1.2 billion aggregate annual income back to ourselves via our own businesses, and we must develop a culture of wealth retention, a culture of collective economic empowerment among our people, regardless of where we reside.

In the book “Going Local: Creating Self-Reliant Communities in a Global Age,” Michael Shuman wrote: “Being poor doesn’t always mean being without resources. Anacostia is one of the poorest neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., yet the total income of all its households is \$370 million per year. The principal affliction of poor communities in the United States is not the absence of money, but its systematic exit.”

So, put the Band-Aids away; we need sutures. Let’s stop the bleeding, black people. If we fail to do so, our words are merely “sound and fury, signifying nothing.”

James Clingman is the nation’s most prolific writer on economic empowerment for Black people. His latest book, Black Dollars Matter! Teach your dollars how to make more sense, is available on his website: Blackonomics.com.

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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?

Please contact: The Annapolis Times

2513 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21218

Phone: 410-366-3900 Fax: 410-243-1627

email: btimes@btimes.com

Economic Inclusion Conference Proves Successful at Coppin State

By Stacy M. Brown

The first economic inclusion conference and business showcase held at Coppin State University proved a hit with organizers and stakeholders alike.

It also promises to lead to more such conferences and hopefully, a stronger West Baltimore, said Dr. Ronald C. Williams, the interim dean at the Coppin State University College of Business.

“It was a positive step in the right direction,” Williams said about the April 27 conference. “It exceeded our expectations. We thought it would be a success but it also brought together various groups into the room including the governor’s office, the mayor’s office, the banking sector, the legislature, private sector and young people.”

The conference began with the theme “Economic Inclusion: Entrepreneurial Progress through Meaningful Participation,” which was aimed to provide community members with important information related to banking and small business access.

The morning group session was sponsored by the FDIC.

“Economic inclusion is a term used to describe a variety of public and private efforts aimed at bringing underserved consumers into the financial mainstream,” Williams said.

In one of the April 27 sessions, discussion centered on the number of partnerships and initiatives focused not only on expanding the availability of safe, affordable financial products and services, but also on education consumers about ways to become fully integrated into the banking system.

“One of the issues we can help solve is the financial institution, the banking institution which have trust



*Dr. Ronald C. Williams, Interim Dean
Coppin State University College of Business
Courtesy Photo*

issues not just with urban communities, but in general,” Williams said.

“A trusted institution like Coppin State is closer to the community and can help bridge the relationship between the traditional financial community and the community such as the one in West Baltimore.”

The conference pulled together stakeholders from the community, community development corporation and neighborhood associations as well as the financial services industry acted as prime sponsors with PNC Bank,

the FDIC’s 60 member banks in the region, Innovative Advisory Group, HireElexis, and others.

Among the speakers were Scott Lilly, the vice president of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund; Herbert Jordan, the deputy secretary of the Maryland Governor’s Office of Minority Affairs; and Stephen Auvil, the senior vice president for technology transfer and commercialization at the Maryland Technology Development Corporation.

“We also had participation from Carver High School and our students here had their own session that they attended,” Williams said. “I believe the students should take away from this that they have a role in revitalization and the economic future and their pathway is through education. Entrepreneurial education in particular.”

As interim dean of the business school, Williams entered the conference with three objectives. First, he has been working to get specialized accreditation and second, he is trying to grow enrollment at Coppin State. His third objective was to reach out to the external community, something he says the business school hadn’t previously done.

“People need to know that we have a business school at Coppin and in light of the unrest that we had last year, we need to play a real role in West Baltimore’s revitalization efforts,” he said. “We can be a space where stakeholder groups can come and have the kind of conversations like we had at the conference. We’ve been identified by the mayor’s office as an anchor institution, so we need to provide a space to have dialogue.”

The conference will be followed by smaller sessions later this year, Williams said.

“We’ll also be holding the conference annually,” he said.

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PRESS SERVICES

Marylanders encouraged to prepare for severe weather during Hurricane Preparedness Week

Reisterstown, Md.— Maryland Hurricane Preparedness Week is May 15-21. This week, the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is teaming up with the National Weather Service (NWS) and local emergency managers to promote citizen awareness and preparedness. Hurricanes can cause strong winds, heavy rain, and flooding. These storms occur most often in the summer and fall during the Atlantic hurricane season and have wide-ranging and severe effects.

“As we approach hurricane season, we are committed to ensuring the safety of our citizens,” said Governor Larry Hogan. “Hurricane Preparedness Week is a reminder that there are steps that Maryland citizens can take now to ensure they are prepared before, during, and after a severe storm.”

“Residents should determine the risk of flooding and other hazards caused by hurricanes for their area and take action to prepare,” said MEMA Executive Director Russ Strickland. “Know your evacuation route, assemble a disaster kit,

and review your homeowners or renters insurance ahead of time. If there is a hurricane in the forecast, listen to emergency officials and keep lines of communication open with your friends, family, and neighbors.”

The NWS notes that it is not only the eastern shore of Maryland that can be affected by hurricanes.

“Every part of Maryland can see devastating impacts from hurricanes. While less frequent than our southern neighbors, when hurricanes or remnants of hurricanes come through, torrential flooding rains, devastating high tides, damaging winds, and even tornadoes can be serious threats to our state,” said NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Chris Strong.

Residents can take the following actions now in order to prepare for hurricane season:

- *Clear out rain gutters so water doesn't back up and end up in your house.

- *Around the dinner table, talk to your family about where you would meet in the event of an emergency.

- *If you have pets, identify some pet-friendly hotels in case you have to evacuate.

- *Program “In Case of Emergency” contacts into your phone.

- *Teach friends and family members to text on their cell-phones, text messages can often get through when phone calls can't.

- *Make copies of important documents for your emergency kit. (Medications; medical information; proof of address; passports; birth certificates; and insurance policies, etc.) Consider putting them on a secure flash drive, as well.

- *Get an extra set of house and car keys made for your emergency kit.

- *Download the free MARYLAND Prepares mobile app, which includes weather and emergency alerts, at mema.maryland.gov/Pages/mdprepares.aspx.



- *Teach everyone how to turn off the utilities in your house (electricity, gas, water, etc.) so they can do it in case of an evacuation.

- *Pick up canned goods when your store has a sale, they will last a long time and ensure you will have something to eat if you can't go out to the store.

Additional information can be found on MEMA's website: mema.maryland.gov.

WE HAVE A CAPTAIN'S CHOICE WINNER!



This safety sketch submitted by **THE THIRD GRADE CLASS** at **FALLSTAFF ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL** is the “Captain's Choice” winner in The Adventures of Captain Mercaptan, a BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge. For its winning drawing of Captain Mercaptan and his safety sidekicks, Sunny and Piper, teaching kids about natural gas safety, Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School was awarded \$10,000 to use for an enrichment project.

BGE would like to congratulate the winners and thank all of the schools that submitted entries into this year's Captain Mercaptan contest. You played an important part in promoting natural gas safety in your school community.

To learn more about the annual contest, and to see all of the entries, visit BGEGasHero.com.



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NAVY grants Keenan Reynolds permission to play for Ravens

By Turron Davenport

The Baltimore Ravens have always made a point of showing appreciation for the military. Under Coach John Harbaugh, the team has held a practice at the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium during training camp, as well as Military Appreciation Day during their camps.

Keenan Reynolds was the Ravens sixth round selection in the 2016 NFL Draft. Reynolds was a record setting quarterback at Navy, but will be asked to change positions in the NFL. One of the issues that came with his draft status was being able to play football while having to honor his military commitment.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus gave Reynolds the green light to pursue his dream of playing in the NFL. In Mabus' mind, Reynolds will shine a bright light on the Naval Academy.

"I'm confident that we can work something out for Keenan to do both, to serve his country and to play professional football. I can't think of a better ambassador for the United States Navy or for the United States military than Keenan Reynolds," Mabus told the Dan Patrick Show recently. "When we have guys coming out of the Naval Academy who go on and play professional sports, or go on and do other things that are high profile, it gives us a chance to show who we are and show the type of people that we attract and recruit."

Graduates from the Navy Academy are required to serve a five-year term in exchange for a free education. The term is supposed to start immediately after the



Navy quarterback Keenan Reynolds celebrates with a Navy officer after a victory in the 2015 season. Reynolds was selected by the Baltimore Ravens in the sixth round of the 2016 NFL Draft. Courtesy Photo/<http://www.navysports.com/>

graduates receive their degree.

Obviously, that would prevent Reynolds from being able to start his NFL career.

Reynolds was prepared to serve his term if that was what was asked of him. The commitment is still a requirement, but Reynolds will be allowed to do so in increments rather than a straight five-year term.

Being able to make arrangements to still fill his obligations while playing football mirrors the many things he will be asked to do on the football field.

Reynolds will be asked to play running back, wide receiver and contribute on special teams in Baltimore. The all-purpose player just wants to be able to contribute to the Ravens success.

"Whatever I can do to get the ball in space, because that's where I succeed and excel," Reynolds said. "Whatever positions this team sees me able to do that and be successful, I accept that role."

Reynolds wouldn't be the first college quarterback to do multiple things in an NFL offense. His role will likely be similar to Hines Ward, a former University of Georgia quarterback and all-purpose player. Ward excelled as a wide receiver and return man for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Reynolds reached out to Ward for advice and it turns out that Ward was a star for the Ravens archrival.

"Ward gave me some tips and tricks to work on to perfect my craft," Reynolds said. "It's like a cardinal sin, but we talked before the draft."

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Who Owns That Trademark?

By Eric Easter, Urban News Service

Names Behind Some Words May Surprise You

When he died, the rock star, Prince, left not only a vault containing a treasure trove of music and videos. He also left behind the ownership of a highly valuable trademark for the right to exploit his name for multiple uses. But that trademark wasn't filed until 2014.

Paisley Park Enterprises' seemingly late registration of the "Prince" trademark actually makes sense. When Prince recovered the rights to the masters of his early music from Warner Brothers Records in 2014, he also regained the legal right to use and profit from his own name, a key point of contention in his fight against Warner, and one that sparked his use of the famous "love symbol" and made "The Artist Formerly Known as Prince" a household phrase.

That's just one of the many surprises on the website of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, which maintains a public database of millions of trademark regis-

trations— who filed them, who owns them and who has let them expire.

As social media sites proliferate, the ownership of black culture has sparked a hot-button issue: Trends grounded in the African-American community rapidly go viral and become popular and often profitable, but rarely for the originators.

Owning trademarks is key to securing the rights to those concepts.

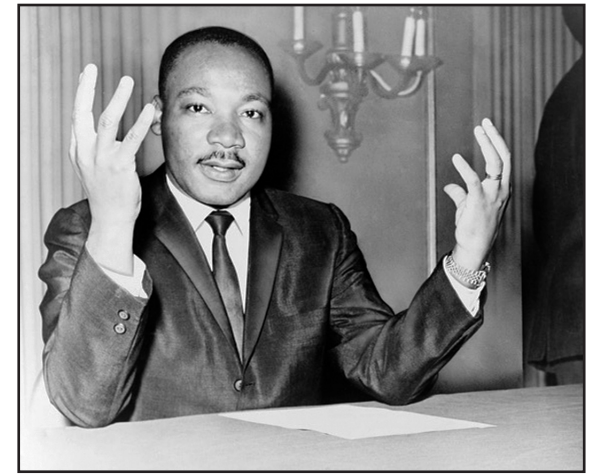
There are other gems in this data mine: "Barack Obama" At least twice, individuals who are not President Barack Obama have tried to trademark his name. Both attempts failed soon after his 2009 presidential inauguration. Yet, the current active trademark reveals an interesting clue as to how the president intends to spend his time after leaving office.

A trademark application filed in January 2016 for the "Barack Obama Foundation" in Chicago, details its anticipated uses for charitable activities in "arts, education, human and social services," as well as conferences and programs "in the fields of poverty elimination, health security, economic empowerment and investment, leadership development, world governance, climate change, citizen service, and racial, ethnic, and religious reconciliation."

"Black Lives Matter"

There are two ways to consider the fact that the Black Lives Matter organization has not trademarked—nor seems to have attempted to trademark—the phrase that represents both their name and protest identity. That is either a missed fundraising opportunity or a sign that Black Lives Matter's leaders are more concerned with action and change than with profit.

Whatever the correct answer is, this has not stopped at least a few others from trying to cash in. According to Patent Office records, a Michael South-



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Photo: Dick DeMarsico/Urban News Service

ern of Crazy4tshirts, a Chicago company, filed a trademark application for "Black Lives Matter" six months after protests erupted in Ferguson, Missouri in August 2014. But the trademark expired in September 2015.

Perkins, Inc. a California company, filed for a Black Lives Matter trademark for use on greeting cards and stationery in April 2015, but the trademark expired in January 2016.

Trademarks can be considered "dead" soon after applications are submitted if registrants fail to respond to government queries about such filings. Also, some people simply abandon their applications once related expenses emerge. Still active, however, is "Bulletproof: #Black Lives Matter," owned by Damon Turner of Lawrenceville, Georgia, for use on t-shirts, sweatshirts, hoodies and other apparel.

"Bud Billiken" The name "Bud Billiken" means a lot in Chicago. A fictional character created by the Chicago Defender newspaper, he represented the city's collective black conscience. Since 1929, the spirit of black Chicago has been brought to life by the huge Bud Billiken Day Parade— America's second largest annual parade, after Macy's Thanksgiving Day celebration. That means tons of money in sponsorships, and presumably a valuable brand to protect. But parade organizers might want to check the paperwork. The trademark for "Bud Billiken," filed for and held since 1991 by Sengstacke Enterprises, the Defender's former owners, expired in January 2016.

"Martin Luther King, Jr."

Dr. King's heirs have been famously litigious about the use of their late father's name and image. This has been a source of great consternation for filmmakers, researchers and a host of others who think the King name and legacy should be public domain, and that the family's licensing fees can be prohibitive.

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Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School Wins BGE's Natural Gas Safety Contest

By Ursula V. Battle

Electrifying Win Brings \$10,000 Top Prize

Students at Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School were "electrified" with excitement after learning their school was the winner of the third annual "Adventures of Captain MercaptanSM," BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge. The students received the surprise announcement during an all-school assembly, and also learned that the school would receive \$10,000 as the top prizewinner.

The contest challenged public and private elementary school students at schools in BGE's service area to illustrate a gas safety message featuring Captain Mercaptan, BGE's fictional natural gas safety superhero, for a chance to win the \$10,000 top prize toward a school enrichment project.

Overall, \$35,000 is being awarded by BGE to area schools as part of the contest. Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School third grader Genesis Bobadilla created the winning illustration, which will be featured in a BGE natural gas safety advertisement in the spring. Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School plans to use the funding towards educational murals along with educational enrichment activities during the summer such as reading sessions and field trips. The school also plans to purchase computers.

"One of the great things about this contest is that it gets the kids talking about gas safety," said BGE Senior Communications Specialist Justin Mulcahy. "We have seen that children take the message back home to their parents and community."

"Captain Mercaptan" teaches kids to recognize a natural gas leak and what steps to take if they smell gas. Captain Mercaptan's name is derived from the safety additive mercaptan that BGE and other utilities put in natural gas to give it a distinctive "rotten egg" odor that makes gas easier to detect. The superhero and his safety sidekicks "Sunny" and "Piper," were designed by elementary school students through the BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge.

Captain Mercaptan teaches children that they can be a hero if they follow simple safety tips including using their nose to detect a rotten egg smell, their ears to listen for the hissing sound of escaping gas, and their eyes to look for dirt being blown into the air, and dead plants or grass in otherwise green areas.

"This contest allows us to grab children at an early age, and to get them thinking about safety topics," said Mulcahy. "When the students found out that Fallstaff had won, they were so happy, and it was fun to be a part of it. You could tell how much this meant to them. The top prize money allows the school to be able to purchase new things. They were very grateful. BGE is very happy to play our small role and to do our part in the community."



Created by Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School third grade student Genesis Bobadilla, this illustration was the winner of the third annual "Adventures of Captain Mercaptan,SM BGE Natural Gas Safety Hero Challenge. The contest challenged public and private elementary school students at schools in BGE's service area to illustrate a gas safety message featuring Captain Mercaptan, BGE's fictional natural gas safety superhero, for a chance to win the \$10,000 top prize toward a school enrichment project. Courtesy Photo

Claudette McLish teaches Pre-K through eight at Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School, and is Bobadilla's teacher.

"I found out the school had won a week earlier," recalled McLish. It was extremely difficult to keep the secret, but also fun at the same time. It was very exciting. We have some broken computers, and this will help us to get new computers, which will help enhance the teaching experience. I am so happy we were able to pull this off, and Genesis' concept was very relatable."

She added, "We thank BGE for this great program. Some focus on the money, but I look at the safety in the home, which this program promotes. The money put the icing on the cake."

Area schools submitted 29 drawings and descriptions of Captain Mercaptan in March before public voting

and a panel of judges selected the winners. Nearly 50,000 votes were cast online.

In addition to the first place prize, a top entry was chosen for grade levels kindergarten through fifth. The schools were presented with the \$5,000 BGE "Hero Award." The winners were: (kindergarten) Jarrettsville Elementary School; (first grade) Our Lady of Mount Carmel; (second grade) Perry Hall Christian School; (third grade) Fallstaff Elementary/Middle School; (fourth grade) North Bend Elementary School; and (fifth grade) St. Stephen School.

BGE provides natural gas service to more than 650,000 gas customers in central Maryland. Customers are reminded to immediately contact BGE at 800-685-0123 from a safe location if they have any questions or concerns about natural gas.

Bahari Sisters Non-profit Help Women in Kenya

By Stacy M. Brown

In the rural parts of the East African nation of Kenya, waterborne illness is a leading cause of death for young children, and untreated water is dangerous to people of all ages. Reportedly, many Kenyans have to make a daily choice: to use polluting woodstoves to purify their water or risk serious ailments.

That is where Baltimore resident Vicki L. Jones stepped in. Jones, the founder and director of Bahari Sisters, a nonprofit that supports Kenyan women and children by providing funds for micro-businesses, health and nutrition initiatives and scholarships, is currently leading a campaign called “The Bahari HabiHut,” a water filtration project that will provide clean and running water.

“Our first annual fundraiser, “Sisters StateSide,” which was held at my church last September introduced the HabiHut project,” said Jones, who is also a costume designer, writer and producer with a bachelor’s in Clothing Design from Drexel University and a master’s from Johns Hopkins University.

Jones has worked in theater and video designing at the New Federal Theatre, Negro Ensemble Company and Billie Holiday Theatre in New York.

“The board is currently reviewing a lease for land in Nairobi, which may be a suitable location to place the structure,” Jones said, noting that Bahari has partnered with HabiHut, a Montana-based company that specializes in the design and manufacture of a rigid modular shelter that is secure and strong, and Water-Step, a Kentucky-based organization that provides safe water to communities in developing countries.

The project is still welcoming financial and medical partners to support the development in Kenya’s capital city.

Jones first visited Kenya on a mission trip in 2005 and she said it was a realization of a life-long dream.

The experience ignited a desire to work in Kenya on an on-going basis and, when that desire turned into passion, she took the next step to establish Bahari.

“I think the necessity to visit Africa began when I was in my 30s— thirty years ago,” Jones said. “I was living in



Jones about two years ago when she was adjunct Fashion Design professor at Baltimore City Community College. Courtesy Photos



Vicki L. Jones with two Book Shine students. Jones visited the school and made a financial presentation. Bahari is establishing a "email pen pal relationship between Book Shine and a Baltimore high school.

New York at the time, working in theater. I started getting involved in social outreach activities and as a member of the House of the Lord Pentecostal in Brooklyn I was introduced to community issues and politics.”

“A few years later as a member of Riverside Church, I began to volunteer in their men’s shelter and I realize now that this was God introducing me to another side of myself.



Vicki L. Jones presenting community leader Jane Muthoni and the New Twendelee Group support for their Waste Clean-Up/Disease Prevention project.

“Several years later after I’d moved back to Baltimore, a co-worker asked me to donate to the travel expenses of her pastor for his mission trip to Nairobi. I did, telling her that I was in fact seeding into my future trip. I made my first trip a couple years later,” Jones said.

With little expectation and the unknown lying ahead, Jones recalled approaching Dulles Airport and thinking “is this really happening. I’m now on my way to Africa.”

Touching down in Africa proved surreal and Jones would meet women she described as living in dire situations and conditions— those who had no means of support for themselves or their children, but women who had “God-given joy.”

“It was an honor, as a total stranger, to be treated with the love and respect that they showed us. I returned with a new appreciation of the privileges and benefits that we take for granted living in the States,” she said. “I returned having begun lasting friendships with several of the ladies.”

After another trip, Jones says she prayed about what she could do to provide ongoing assistance. The answer was to form a nonprofit, she said.

“I began the process of establishing Bahari Sisters Inc. It took a while to decide on the name. Bahari means ocean in Swahili. That is our channel of connection, across the ocean,” Jones said.

The mission of Bahari, includes strengthening women in Kenya economically, spiritually and physically, Jones said, noting that Bahari puts every dollar to good use and a little goes a long way in Nairobi.

“Bahari supports (Kenyan activist) Jane Muthoni in her work as a community leader, cleaning up raw sewage in the Gatina slums. These efforts prevent disease and death,” Jones said. “The HabiHut will provide clean water impacting the outbreak of cholera and malaria. Most recently during the flooding in this month, Jane was able to purchase medicine for an ailing 90-year-old woman who was stranded in her tin home, surrounded by water.”

For more information, visit www.baharisters.org.

All hairstyles are not created equal

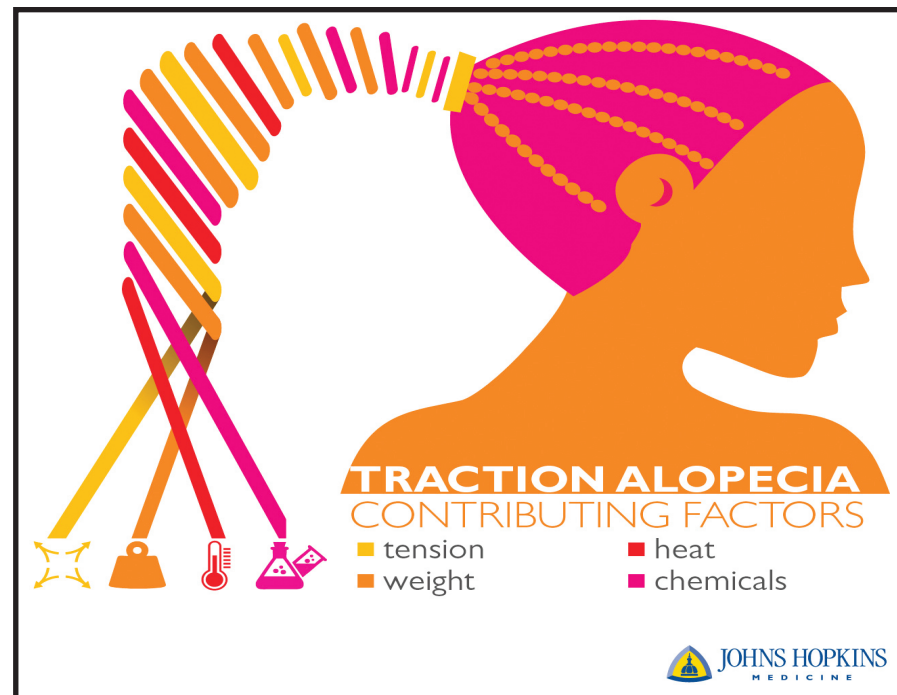
What dermatologists need to know about African-American hairstyling practices and the risk of traction alopecia

Baltimore— In a review of 19 studies, researchers at Johns Hopkins say they can confirm a “strong association” between certain scalp-pulling hairstyles—many common among African-Americans—and the development of traction alopecia, gradual hair loss caused by damage to the hair follicle from prolonged or repeated tension on the hair root. An estimated one-third of African-American women suffer from traction alopecia, making it the most common form of hair loss among that group.

In a report on their analysis, published ahead of print in the *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, the investigators urge dermatologists to better educate themselves about the damaging hairstyles— which include tight ponytails, braids, knots and buns— and advise patients of risks and alternatives.

“Hair is a cornerstone of self-esteem and identity for many people,” says Crystal Aguh, M.D., assistant professor of dermatology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, “but ironically, some hairstyles meant to improve our self-confidence actually lead to hair and scalp damage.” Traction alopecia, she adds, is entirely preventable, and early intervention can stop or reverse it. “We have to do better as care providers to offer our patients proper guidance to keep them healthy from head to toe,” she says.

In their research review, Aguh and her colleagues categorize hair practices into low-, moderate- and high-risk styles based on the degree to which follicles are exposed to tension, weight,



and hair-altering chemicals, such as straighteners.

Moderate-risk styles, the authors say, include some of the same styles noted to be high risk, but because they are performed on natural, unprocessed hair, they are less likely to result in hair loss. Low-risk styles generally included low-tension styles, such as loose buns, and loose-hanging styles, such as wearing the hair down, as well as practices that decrease the amount of friction on the hair and scalp and avoid chemical relaxers. Aguh and her colleagues say the highest-risk styles include braids, dreadlocks, weaves and extensions, especially when applied to chemically straightened hair. These styles are popular among African-Americans, she says, because they are low maintenance and chemical-free, but the constant pulling of the hair in one direction, the tight-locking patterns and added weight can result in sig-

nificant breakage and eventually traction alopecia.

Damage can also be done if extensions are affixed with adhesive glue put directly on the scalp, especially when the glued-on hair is removed. Chemical straightening weakens the hair shaft, causing breakage.

In the more moderate risk category are thermal straightening, permanent waving and use of wigs. Temporary thermal or heat-related straightening of the hair, such as the use of flat irons and blow drying the hair— while not by itself significantly associated with traction alopecia— can weaken shafts, leading to “significant” hair loss when traction is applied, the researchers conclude. Permanent waves made with ammonium thioglycolate to create or alter curl pattern, together with added tension from chemical treatment, do the same. And wigs attached with clips and adhesives

to keep them in place can cause significant breakage.

Aguh also noted that cotton and nylon wig caps that rub the hairline may also weaken hair shafts, while satin ones are less likely to do so. Observations among clinic patients reported in the reviewed studies, Aguh says, found that loose, low-hanging styles or even updos are low risk for traction alopecia. So are natural styles that avoid chemicals and the use of frequent moisturization with conditioning agents.

Untreated and unprocessed hair, she says, can withstand greater traction, pulling and brushing, and overall decreases the risk of traction alopecia, regardless of styling.

In their review, the investigators also offered guidelines for dermatologists and other care providers to prevent and manage hair loss from traction alopecia. The first line of therapy, they say, is to loosen braids and other high-tension styles, as well as weight on the follicle permanently or periodically. Braided hairstyles should be in place no longer than two to three months, they say, and weaves and extensions should also be removed for a period of time after six to eight weeks.

The investigators also recommend people alternate styles, mainly reducing or avoiding updos, to allow follicles to recover from stress.

“Dermatologists need to be conscious of the fact that many high- and moderate-risk hairstyles greatly improve hair manageability, and simply telling patients to abandon them won’t work for everyone,” says Aguh. “Instead, physicians can educate themselves to speak with patients about making the best hairstyling choices to minimize preventable hair loss.”

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Beyonce and United Way of Central Maryland turning lemons into lemonade



Baltimore— United Way of Central Maryland is recruiting Beyoncé fans to volunteer throughout the summer. Starting immediately, fans can register to become a United Way of Central Maryland volunteer for summer opportunities that will help change the odds for young students who are struggling in school.

Those who register will automatically be entered to win two tickets to Beyoncé’s Baltimore concert on June 10, 2016, which will feature songs from her new album, “Lemonade.” Three pairs of tickets will be awarded and winners will be announced on June 3, 2016.

Part of a nationwide effort to strengthen communities, United Way of Central Maryland has aligned with Beyoncé’s #BeyGOOD initiative. Throughout the course of the tour, fans are coming together across the country to make a difference in their communities.

To register, individuals must text the keyword “LEMONADE” to 51555 or visit www.uwcm.org/lemonade and submit the form. Registrants are encouraged to invite friends to be their “+1” and sign up to volunteer together. If an individual you refer adds your name as a referral in their registration, United Way will sweeten the deal by adding your name into the drawing twice.

Beyoncé’s #BeyGOOD initiative will support local United Way programs nationwide, and the work of United Way of Genesee County, which continues to respond to the water crisis in Flint, Michigan.

Rambling Rose

Concerts and Stage Plays



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello everyone, I hope everything is well. I have had an interesting week with my book signings and the wonderful show at the Avenue Bakery featuring live entertainment with John Wesley.

"I had a great time kicking off the 2016 Jazz at the Avenue Bakery on Pennsylvania Avenue and Baker Street last week," said John Wesley. "Thank God for all of the beautiful sunshine last Saturday that came out just before the show began at 4 p.m. Kudos to sister Rosa Pryor for a great event and of course the owner, CEO of the Avenue Bakery, James W. Hamlin and Eloy Hamlin, for the great barbeque food."

The event was held in the outdoor courtyard of the Avenue Bakery and it was packed with supporters. The camera crew from the University of Maryland filmed and video taped the event for their project, "Rebirth of the Avenue."

The Avenue Bakery's new large stage pavilion in the Courtyard Garden was a beautiful setting for all the bands that will perform throughout the spring and summer.

We spotted a few people I knew by name who came to support the event, such as Griot Grandmother Edna Lawrence, Daniel P. Henson, and Donald "Duck" Welling who stopped by for a while before heading over to Caton Castle to see Greg Hatza and his group. I am so sorry I couldn't make that, but in addition to booking the group at the Avenue Bakery, I was the mistress of ceremony for the event. Other guests included Councilman Carl Stokes; muralist and installation artist, Stuart Hudgins; and Upton Neighborhoods Executive Director Wanda Gibson Best. It was a very nice event.

"Jazzway 6004" is doing it again with soul singer, Akua Allrich performing live music from her freshman album, "A Peace of Mine" and second album, "Uniquely Standard, Akua Allrich Live!" The "Jazzway 6004 Lounge, located at 6004 Hollins Avenue in Baltimore is known for booking the best of best entertainment. Check it out. For ticket information, call 410-952-4528.

Coming up next week on Sunday, May 29, 2016, at the Frederick Douglass High School Performing Arts Center located at 2301 Gwynn Falls Parkway in Baltimore is another dynamite play called "From the Pulpit to the Runway" (To God Be the Glory) produced & directed by our one and only Travis Winkey. There will be two shows: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. For ticket information, call 410-669-1220.



Akua Allrich presents her new newest release "Soul Singer." The District of Columbia native will perform live at "Jazzway 6004," which takes place at 6004 Hollins Avenue in Baltimore. Show time is 8 p.m. Tickets include drinks and a post-concert buffet of deserts, fruit and cheeses. For ticket information, call 410-952-4528.



Michael Leroy Harding is the founding director of "OnTheRoad Theater Company." He is also the stage director with Niah Harding Kiongozi is the Playwright & Executive Producer, Raleigh Gillyard, and Kevin Lotharp as Senior Producer. The production "Marriage & Beer" will be held at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church located at 3050 Liberty Heights Avenue in Baltimore on Saturday, May 21, 2016 at 7 p.m.



Well my friends, I am out of space, but remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. If you want to mail me information of photo, please send it to 214 Conewood Avenue, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



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Affordable Mortgage Program Launched to Help Low, Moderate Income Homebuyers

Baltimore— Bank of America, in partnership with Self-Help Ventures Fund and Freddie Mac has announced the launch of its new Affordable Loan Solution™ mortgage, a conforming loan that provides low and moderate-income homebuyers access to a responsible lending product with counseling at affordable entry prices.

“There is a need in today’s marketplace for more responsible mortgage products that enable creditworthy homebuyers, who meet certain income limits and other requirements, to become homeowners at an affordable entry point with comprehensive counseling,” said D. Steve Boland, Consumer Lending executive, Bank of America. “Affordable Loan Solution combines Bank of America’s wide distribution network of mortgage professionals with the borrower support expertise of Self-Help and market liquidity provided by Freddie Mac to provide a new affordable loan option.”

The mortgage will be available through all of Bank of America mortgage sales channels, including mortgage loan officers in offices across the country, 4,700 financial centers, bankofamerica.com and mortgage experts by phone. Bank of America mortgage loan officers, based in home loans offices and financial centers across the country, will work directly with homebuyers to originate the loans.

The bank will sell the loans, including servicing rights, to Self-Help, which will provide post-closing counseling for any borrowers who might be experiencing payment difficulties. Loan servicing will be immediately transferred after origination to Self-Help’s designated specialty servicer, who will handle all loans regardless of future performance.

Freddie Mac collaborated with Self-Help and Bank of America to define credit terms and recently approved



Self-Help as a seller/servicer to facilitate the rollout of this offering to borrowers. Freddie Mac will purchase all of the eligible affordable mortgages originated via the Self-Help and Bank of America partnership.

Affordable Loan Solution will allow down payments as low as three percent on the purchase of a primary, single-family residence, with no reserve funds required in most situations.

Borrowers may use secondary financing, such as an affordable second loan, grants, or even cash they have on hand. The program will also consider non-traditional forms of credit to demonstrate credit history.

Loan amounts will be within conforming loan limits (up to \$417,000), and applicants’ income cannot exceed 100 percent of the HUD area median income.

Applicants must occupy the property, and first-time buyers will need to participate in homebuyer education through Bank of America’s Connect to Own® nationwide network of counselors.

Bank of America has a long tradition of providing information and access to homeownership opportunities to a wide

variety of homebuyers. In fact, one of every three mortgages the company finances is to a low- or moderate-income homebuyer.

In addition, 30 percent of its loans are to multicultural borrowers, according to 2014 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data released by the Federal Reserve.

Last March, the bank launched the Bank of America Down Payment Resource Center, an online resource of more than 1,000 down payment and closing cost assistance programs. Taking a couple of minutes to answer fewer than five questions, prospective homebuyers can find out immediately which federal, state or local down payment and closing cost programs they may be eligible for.

The Affordable Loan Solution mortgage program includes an extensive quality control routine with Freddie Mac that promotes responsible underwriting and reduces potential risks to Bank of America and Freddie Mac.

For more information about the Affordable Loan Solution or other home loans options, consumers can speak with a mortgage expert at 1-800-781-0242.

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