

Madison Park North Construction Hits Home for Developers



On Friday, December 9, 2016, Governor Larry Hogan announced awardees for demolition funds through Project C.O.R.E., or Creating Opportunities for Renewal and Enterprise, a multi-year city-state partnership to demolish vacant and derelict buildings in Baltimore and replace them with green space or create the foundation for re-development in Baltimore City. The governor was joined by Baltimore City Mayor Catherine E. Pugh and Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Secretary Kenneth C. Holt, as well as Baltimore City officials and community stakeholders at the demolition site in West Baltimore. The demolition site, which is the former Madison Park North apartments, is the first of more than 200 units that will be demolished as part of this project. It will serve as the future site of an Innovation Center in West Baltimore – a hub for the city’s first designated “innovation district.” Photo: (Left to right): Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Secretary Kenneth C. Holt; Richard May, founder of Mount Royal Community Development Corporation and chairman of Innovation Village; Mayor Catherine E. Pugh; awardee P. David Bramble, managing partner at MCB Real Estate; and Governor Larry Hogan. (See article on page 11) Photo: Dennis Roberts

Mother, daughter team up for cosmetic line

By Stacy M. Brown

A mother-daughter team are making innovative moves in field of cosmetics— at least in Baltimore, and part of their strategy is to offer products that are friendly to the skin.

“When using fragrance free, hypo-allergenic cosmetics it is more compatible with the different skin types such as normal, oily, dry or combination where I have found less problems and more satisfaction with my clients,” said Moniette S. Laury, the CEO of Totally for You, LLC and Sara Sara Cosmetics, a Parkville-based Christian and black-owned small business.

Laury runs the business with her daughter, Monet Horton, who serves as the company’s president.

“Having the opportunity to partner with my mom is very special and dear to my heart and it’s been both inspiring and rewarding,” said Horton, who in 2008 founded the mentoring program, D2: Daddy’s Daughter’s.

Laury, an evangelist who has spent more than 30 years as a senior cosmetologist says that Sara Sara Cosmetics, along with the company’s new Botanical Skincare, is a light weight, fragrance-free line of products for all color, skin types and whether you’re a male or female.

The “Sara Sara” line evolved from a lineage and legacy of amazing women, trailblazers who have all been integral in Laury’s life, according to Laury.

“I was inspired to name my line after my grandmother, Sarah Perez Wallace who not only lead her family, but was an entrepreneur and woman of much beauty, grace and style,” Laury said, adding that “Sara” is a variant spelling of Sarah, which means pure and excellent in its Persian and Arabic origin. In



Mother and daughter team Moniette S. Laury (right) and Monet Horton (left) of Totally for You, LLC and Sara Sara Cosmetics, a Parkville-based Christian and black-owned small business. The company’s new Botanical Skincare, is a light weight, fragrance-free line of products for all color, skin types for both women and men.
Courtesy Photo

Hebrew Sara means princess and lady.

“Thus, you are assured to embrace your full femininity and beauty wearing Sara Sara Cosmetics,” Laury said.

The new line was launched a year ago, and Laury says her most popular products include the Botanical Facial Wash, Protect Moisturizer, BB Cream Tinted Moisturizer, Lip Gloss, Liquid Lipstick and High-Def Full Coverage Foundation.

Like many small, minority-owned businesses, Laury and Monet have faced their share of challenges, including financial and marketing.

“I received funding through Kiva

[crowd funding] which provided us an interest-free loan,” Laury said. “They’ve been a great support team and I highly recommend them. When it comes to marketing, I use social networking, referrals and vending opportunities.”

“Although social media is a great marketing tool, it’s not hands-on, and I find

most people like to sample and find what products are best for them. When the product is pleasing, and has great presentation, it sells itself. From my experience this has been wonderful, clients love it,” Laury said.

Some of the newer cosmetic trends her customers seek are for the company’s long lasting Mascara Lash Ware, which is eyelash lengthen mascara, she said. Also, there is a demand for products like Brow Fixx, Concealers liquid, and Five Well eyeshadow palette, which offers a variety of colors that blends well.

While business is beginning to boom, Laury says that she is most pleased she is operating it with her daughter.

“What an honor and joy to share this journey of entrepreneurship, branding and growing the business together as a mother and daughter team. It’s amazing how we use different strategies and ideas back and forth, having an open mind about things concerning the business. It works for us,” she said.

Over the years, Horton has watched Laury work long days and nights building the business but not understanding the ins and outs of what it took to hold it all together.

“Now as an adult, I am fully aware and that alone has inspired me to pursue my goals aggressively with determination,” Horton said.

For more information about the company and its products, visit: www.sarasaracosmetics.com.

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Guest Editorials/Commentary

Why are so many of us hiding behind our smartphones?

By Bill Fletcher, Jr.
NNPA Newswire Columnist

It hit me the other day that there is a new protocol involved in walking down the street. I never really thought about it before, but I suddenly realized that people who text while walking, expect that those of us not texting while walking will simply get out of their way.

Forgive my naiveté, but I grew up with the strong instruction that when you walk, you look where you are going. When you cross the street, you look both ways to ensure that you are not run over. You know, little things like that. However, something has happened and these rules are being thrown up in the air.

There are two related, though different, examples of this new protocol. One involves texting and the other involves, well I am not sure what else to call it but being oblivious. In the case of texting, I have actually tested out my theory. Individuals will be walking towards me texting completely ignoring their surroundings or that they are approaching me. I will then say, fairly loudly, "Watch yourself!" The response that I have received is intriguing. The individual tends to look completely discombobulated and act as if it was somehow inappropriate for me to notify them that they were on a collision course.

This absent-minded, unconsciousness seems to be very widespread. People walking down the street are either talking on their cellphones, texting on their cellphones or listening to music with their ear buds, completely out of touch with their surroundings. Such individuals cross the street in the face of on-coming traffic, apparently making the assumption that the traffic will avoid them. While they may get out of the way of oncoming pedestrian traffic, they also seem to take their time walking, ignoring that there might be a line of people behind them a half block in length.

What are we to make of this? The easy part is that it is a form of self-centeredness. Individuals are acting as if the world exists to serve them and frankly, the hell with the rest of us.

Yet, the deeper problem seems to reflect the way that increasing numbers of us are retreating into various self-generated bubbles. These are the same bubbles that lead us to narrow what we read to only things with which we agree; to believe that our "friends" on Facebook and Twitter are an actual sampling of global opinion; these bubbles lead us to not wanting to be bothered with social interaction with many others, including our ACTUAL friends; and for some, to live in guarded and gated communities cut off from much of the rest of the world.

Yes, texting while walking and thinking that the rest of us will get out of the way is rude; and being oblivious to your surroundings while walking is stupid, but the problem is deeper and seems to reflect the retreat of so many of us from the reality of a thriving global village.

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is a talk show host, writer and activist. Follow him on Twitter @BillFletcherJr, Facebook and at www.billfletcherjr.com.

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Community Affairs

MTA to work with Vehicles For Change to give ex-offenders a second chance

Automotive technicians are among the positions to be filled at the MTA

Baltimore— The Maryland Department of Transportation's Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the non-profit organization Vehicles for Change that will allow some ex-offenders with proper automotive training backgrounds to be considered for employment at the MTA as bus mechanics.

Governor Larry Hogan was joined by MTA Administrator and CEO Paul Comfort, Baltimore Mayor Catherine E. Pugh and Vehicles for Change President Martin Schwartz at a ceremony to officially recognize the agreement.

"Our administration has been working tirelessly to create an environment of economic opportunity for every Marylander," said Governor Hogan. "Through this new partnership between Vehicles for Change and the Maryland Transit

Administration, individuals who have paid their debt to society will get a second chance, and the MTA will be able to meet their demand for qualified mechanics."

Candidates for the positions received training in automotive technology from the Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) Correctional Education Staff while incarcerated. Upon their release, they receive more advanced automotive technician training from Vehicles for Change while being paid.

Vehicles for Change will refer participants from their program to the MTA for employment consideration for mechanical positions and MTA will interview and potentially hire candidates based on their suitability for open positions.

"This agreement is a win for the MTA and for the community," said MTA Administrator and CEO Paul Comfort. "MTA has a need for qualified mechanics and Vehicles for Change will help us fill that need by connecting men and women to jobs that will transform their lives with a second chance at meaningful employment."

The MTA and Vehicles for Change will monitor the program and track its successes.

Black folks need to stop drinking the 'fool-aid'

By James Clingman
NNPA Newswire Columnist

"Negroes...sometimes choose their own leaders but unfortunately they are too often the wrong kind. Negroes do not readily follow persons with constructive programs. Almost any sort of exciting appeal or trivial matter presented to them may receive immediate attention...and liberal support."

— Carter G. Woodson

The term "Drinking the Kool-Aid" has been taken to a new level among many of our people. In many circles we have become so intellectually lazy that we will believe just about anything from anyone, that is, as long as we don't have to do anything except trumpet a utopian message, and if we never have to sacrifice for the collective benefit of one another. The Kool-Aid cliché, as far as I am concerned, has now become "fool-aid," and black folks are gulping it down by the barrel.

There are so-called black leaders who, despite their unseemly tactics, their por-

trays of themselves as "honest" brokers, and their shadowy deal-making and sellout prowess, seem to be exempt from exposure by our people. While black folks have always had to deal with these scoundrels, we have been reluctant to call them out and to expose them for what they really are.

On the other hand, we have leaders among us who are totally dedicated to the collective economic advancement of

for choosing the "wrong kind" of leader.

I have seen folks stroll through our communities and be held up as paragons of black liberation, all while filling their pockets with the 'filthy lucre' from their sell-out deals with the powers that be. They have their hands in every deal, every program, every transaction, and every scenario that involves black people, making certain that they will be the first in line to be paid. They rob the

So, while the "Drinking the Kool-Aid" cliché has become sort of comical and caricature-oriented in its connotation, "Drinking the fool-aid" gives a much more enlightened description of the dangers that lurk in actualizing the phrase.

I contend that black folks are far too intelligent to be reduced to a bunch of voluntary "fool-aid" drinkers, lapping up every word spoken by anyone, without doing our homework and making sure that what they say is true and illustrated by their subsequent actions.

In other words, don't believe everything you hear or read on the Internet. Don't be a sycophant for a shyster or a puppet for a prevaricator. Hold their feet to the fire after they speak, and use your own discernment to ascertain the wealth of their words— or the lack thereof.

As Woodson intimated, black folks have authentic leaders who have "constructive programs," but who are seldom followed. Unfortunately, we have more folks drinking the fool-aid of hucksters than we have those who refuse it or at least read the label before they are willing to take a drink, but to borrow a verse from Matthew 7:13 "...For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it."

Think for yourself, and be willing to accept the consequences thereof. Fool-aid may taste good, but it will make you very sick.

James Clingman is the nation's most prolific writer about economic empowerment for black people. His latest book, "Black Dollars Matter! Teach Your Dollars How to Make More Sense," is available at: Blackonomics.com.

***"They have their hands in every deal,
every program, every transaction and every
scenario that involves black people, making certain
that they will be the first in line to be paid.
They rob the community and blame the same
community for not moving forward.
How can we move forward with crooks
like these among us?"***

African Americans. These are the ones who are usually sacrificed by black people— thrown out because they are a threat to the establishment or because they are "too black." That frightens some people and, sadly, we play into that fear by participating in the demise of the very people who would help pull us out of our economic problems.

We willingly drink the fool-aid of those whom are only interested in themselves, only to end up in the same place or even further behind than we were before we took the first sip. That must change. But it won't change simply because it ought to change; it will only change when we change our behavior and our penchant

community and blame the same community for not moving forward. How can we move forward with crooks like these among us?

Many people, black, white and otherwise have drunk the Fool-Aid of folks like Jim Jones in Guyana; David Koresh in Waco, Texas; Marshall Applewhite in San Diego (Hale Bopp Comet); Warren Jeffs in Eldorado, Texas (Yearning for Zion Ranch); and many other cult figures. We have been mesmerized and captivated by individual preachers, politicians and leaders who have absolutely no interest in anything other than their own selfish interests and advancement— usually economic.

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Joy Bramble

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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

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Volunteer barbers give free haircuts

By Andrea Blackstone

Robert Cradle, founder of Rob's Barbershop Community Foundation (RBCF), knows that a neat and clean appearance can give job seekers, children, students and homeless individuals who are getting back on their feet an extra confidence and image boost.

Through RBCF, a total of 23 projects have been completed to make grooming accessible to people in need of free service. For example, in late August, RBCF installed an on-site barber/beauty shop within Family Recovery Program, Inc.'s new transitional housing facility serving families in Baltimore.

With the help of the Wahl Clipper Corporation—an international industry leader in the manufacture of consumer personal care appliances and products for the professional beauty and barber salon trade—Cradle is taking an innovative step to spread help to additional individuals within the demographic he assists.

Wahl Clipper Corporation has teamed up with RBCF to launch a new project called "Clippers for a Cause." The program will encourage current barber and beauty school students or recent graduates of these schools, to volunteer their time to provide no-charge haircuts to people who lack access to regular personal care products and grooming services. Prospective volunteers who would like to apply to receive a free pair of Wahl tapering clippers may access a brief online request form via RBCF's website, www.therbcf.com.

"This program [Clippers for a Cause] was created for recently graduated barbers and stylists who have trouble affording a new pair of clippers. This gives them the opportunity to perfect their craft, give back to the community, and receive a Wahl tool for their hard work. The program started in October," Aaron Flick, marketing associate for the Professional Division at Wahl Clipper Corporation said. "In order to apply, you must be a recent graduate of barber school (within 12 months), as well as provide a minimum of five haircuts (no-charge) to the local homeless population or college students. Barbers are



Edgar Gutierrez, (left) provided volunteer grooming services to children at the St. Vincent's Center, a facility that cares for children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect. Gutierrez received tapering clippers free of charge from the Wahl Clipper Corporation's "Clippers for a Cause" project in collaboration Robert Cradle (right), founder of Rob's Barbershop Community Foundation (RBCF) who oversees the initiative. Courtesy Photo/RBCF

encouraged to fill out an application and will be carefully selected from Robert Cradle. Awardees are selected in the beginning of every month by Robert."

Flick says that the entire concept originated from Cradle, a master barber and

response to discovering that residents of a local homeless shelter lacked access to affordable grooming products and services.

Cradle further explained that he made a professional connection with Wahl



former barbershop owner who created RBCF in 2000. He started RBCF in

Clipper Corporation, after the company discovered his nonprofit's website

online. Initially, some merchandise was donated to him. An additional offer was made to partner on a project that Cradle would oversee. While establishing plans, Cradle suggested that Wahl Clipper Corporation should target barber and beauty school students, because those individuals may not have too much equipment. Cradle also included college students in the targeted demographic served by barbers and stylists who may participate in Clippers for a Cause, because he imagined that college students may cut each other's hair. Like homeless individuals, they too may also lack access to grooming service. Cradle even hopes to his install barber/beauty shops at Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) someday.

According to Cradle, the retail price of the Wahl hair clippers is estimated at \$45 per unit. Five free tapering clippers have been awarded to barbers so far. Cradle added that barber and beauty school students who travel to homeless shelters on a monthly basis to volunteer to cut hair free of charge, or who may opt to have people come to them, can qualify for the program. Others may commit to serving the homeless and college students for no-charge haircuts, as a part of an upcoming event. Cradle said that he will personally deliver clippers, or ship them to selected applicants who are located any place within the U.S.

Cradle is optimistic that Clippers for a Cause will promote more volunteerism in the barber industry beyond just what he can do on his own.

"For me it's another way to get make grooming services accessible," Cradle said. "Up to this point, I've put together projects that were installed..., and I did do the case management, and I did do the pop-up shop, but I added this kind of promoting volunteerism type of method, because I have to think of ways to sort of expand what I do in a most cost effective way. So it's more of like an incentive-based project."

To find out more about the Clippers for a Cause program requirements or to apply for free tapering clippers, visit: <http://therbcf.com/clippersforacause/>. Applications will be reviewed until December 31, 2017.



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Ravens have to run the table to win AFC North

By Turrion Davenport

After losing a close game in New England against the Patriots, John Harbaugh and the Baltimore Ravens find themselves behind the Pittsburgh Steelers in the AFC North standings. With only three games left in the season, time is running out for the Ravens to retake the top spot in the division and make a play-off appearance after missing out in 2015.

The Steelers have a road game against the Bengals while the Ravens host the Eagles this week. The two teams face each other in Pittsburgh in two weeks.

Pittsburgh wraps up the season at home against a Browns team that may still be searching for their first win. With Marvin Lewis on the hot seat, the Ravens conclude their season with a trip to Cincinnati against a Bengals team that may be playing their last game for their head coach.

The week 15 clash between the Ravens and Steelers will have a huge impact on who ends up being the AFC North champion. If the Ravens beat the Steelers, they would have the inside track towards winning the division. Baltimore would hold the tiebreaker because they will have won both games over Pittsburgh.

Harbaugh has a simple plan for the remaining games this season— win them all. It starts on Sunday, December 18, 2016 with the final regular season



Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco walks off the field after the week 13 loss to the New England Patriots.
Courtesy Photo/NFL.com

home game for the Ravens.

Fortunately for Baltimore, a struggling Eagles team will be their next opponent. Harbaugh cut his teeth in the NFL as a defensive backs coach as well as a special teams coordinator in Philadelphia.

Ravens offensive line coach, Juan Castillo also coached for the Eagles before coming to the Ravens. Castillo was

an offensive line coach in Philadelphia

before being named their defensive coordinator.

With the big game coming against the Steelers next week, Baltimore has to make sure they don't look past their next game. It shouldn't be difficult for Harbaugh to keep the Ravens focused on this week's game, as he faces his former team.

The Ravens have rebounded from a tumultuous season last year. Having Terrell Suggs and Steve Smith Sr. back to lead them on defense and offense has made a major difference for Baltimore.

Mike Wallace and Eric Weddle have both proved to be excellent free agent additions. Wallace has given the team the deep threat they desperately needed. Weddle has solidified the back end of the defense.

Baltimore has not been an active team in free agency in the past. Their two big free agent acquisitions were done with a Super Bowl in mind.

They know their window is closing for another championship. For that reason, the 2016 season is one in which they have to make a run.

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An advertisement for "Xquisite Transportation". The background is a dark, starry night sky with a city skyline silhouette at the bottom. The company name "Xquisite Transportation" is written in a large, stylized, orange and yellow font. Below it, the text "BWI • DULLES AIRPORT • AMTRACK REAGAN NATIONAL • CAR SERVICE" is written in a bold, red font. At the bottom left, there is a black SUV. To the right of the SUV, the phone number "443-992-2844" is displayed in a large, red, outlined font.



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Busy Week for Mayor Catherine Pugh

Community Leaders Optimistic About Leadership

By Ursula V. Battle

The past few days have been a whirlwind of a week for Catherine Pugh.

Baltimore City's 50th mayor was sworn in on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at the War Memorial Building on Gay Street in Baltimore. Later that day, Mayor Pugh attended several inaugural events, which concluded with a celebratory party at the Hilton Baltimore.

The days that followed included several meetings and events, and on Saturday, December 10, 2016, the Democratic mayor gave Republican President-elect Donald Trump a letter describing the city's need for federal money at the Army-Navy game held at M&T Bank Stadium. These were among the many activities that were all in a week's work for the city's newest mayor.

"We must work together because what happens in Baltimore happens to the rest of the state," said Mayor Pugh in her inaugural speech. "To the 7,221 folks who emailed me that I didn't get to answer your emails, to the 4,188 people who texted me, who I didn't get to respond to your texts, and to all the Facebook people I want to say, that I am your mayor too. I will be mayor for all of Baltimore. I recognize we do have some shortcomings, but we do have some great things going on in this city."

The former state senator won the mayoral election with 57 percent of the vote. She defeated the Republican and Green Party nominees and former Mayor Sheila Dixon, who ran a write-in campaign.

Mayor Pugh also took the opportunity to highlight her predecessor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake.

"I have always said that the glass is half-full as opposed to half empty," said Mayor Pugh. "Every mayor who follows that mayor should want that mayor to be even greater than they were.

I commit to you Stephanie Rawlings Blake, that the work you have done will not be forgotten—that when we talk about the 40,000 boarded up houses that



Catherine Pugh was sworn in as Baltimore City's 50th mayor on Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at the War Memorial Building on Gay Street in Baltimore. Photo: Gar Roberts

were here when you got here, that is down to 15,000 that the city owns, that your progress has been made."

Pugh's plans include addressing crime, homelessness, and blight in Baltimore City.

"I know the mayors before me faced even greater challenges, but we are so prepared," said Pugh. "I am so grateful for the team I have begun to assemble."

Pugh named Tisha Edwards as her Chief of Staff, and Delegate Peter Hammen as Chief of Operations. Former Baltimore County Executive Jim Smith will serve as her Chief of Strategic Alliances. Pugh named Anthony McCarthy as her Director of Communications, while Karen Stokes will serve as her Director of Government Relations.

"Mayor Pugh is really poised to realize her vision," said Smith. "She has a strong, healthy, vibrant vision for all Baltimoreans in all communities. She cares about these communities and she is going to make a difference in these communities. That's very exciting."

Sixth District Councilwoman Sharon

Green Middleton is also optimistically looking forward to Mayor Pugh's leadership.

"It's all about moving Baltimore forward," said Councilwoman Middleton. "Mayor Pugh has already started bringing hope back to Baltimore City. "She is talking about all the right things such as focusing on jobs, and on communities other than downtown Baltimore. Everyone knows the importance of downtown, but now our outside neighborhoods need to be addressed."

She added, "I represent a major area, which is Park Heights, and she is the first mayor since my tenure that has specifically talked about the needs of Park Heights, and has worked for improvement. I am so elated that she is a mayor that has focused on housing. The city has acquired over 15,000 homes in the city, and a number of those are in Park Heights. I look forward to working with her, and for getting development going in Park Heights."

Robert Stokes, Sr. is among the many new faces on the Baltimore City Council,

and represents the city's 12th district.

"The City Council, the state legislators, and the new mayor, have a lot of work to do," said Councilman Stokes. "But we have to work together to tackle some of the ills we have here in Baltimore City like crime and unemployment. I look forward to working with Mayor Pugh. We have a great working relationship, and the same vision. I have confidence in her."

Mayor Pugh has been a public servant for over 15 years. She served as a member of the Baltimore City Council, representing the 4th district.

In 2005, she was appointed to the Maryland General Assembly, House of Delegates, where she served for one year before running for her Senate seat in 2006. Mayor Pugh holds an MBA from Morgan State University and has received qualification from the University of California as an Economic Development Specialist.

Madison Park North Construction Hits Home for Developers

By Stacy M. Brown

When Governor Larry Hogan and Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh joined a host of other dignitaries and officials on Friday, December 9, 2016 to announce a multimillion, redevelopment plan for Madison Park North in West Baltimore's Reservoir Hill, those working on the project were taken by more than just the dollar signs attached and the media attention the design brought.

For P. David Bramble, Richard May and Adrian Harpool, the personal and sentimental value far outweighs the cost, benefits and any financial gain they might receive from the planned demolition and construction of a mixed-use sight in west Baltimore.

"I'm super excited about this because I don't do a lot in Baltimore, but this is my neighborhood," said Bramble, the managing partner at the Baltimore-based MCB Real Estate whose portfolio includes the former PEMCO property in East Baltimore.

The demolition of the Madison Park North Apartments, which along with the planned new construction is being conducted by MCB, is a process that will take several months to complete as it involves asbestos removal and the recycling of brick and concrete, according to Bramble.

"It's a process, and once the demolition is done and construction begins, it'll be another 18 to 24 months before things are completed," he said, noting that the construction will be done in multiple phases.

Once completed, the neighborhood will be home to a new town center that will include a grocery store, restaurant, retail shops, medical and office space and 300 to 500 apartments.

Governor Hogan says the project will provide an anchor for a \$16 million innovation swath of Baltimore that runs from Coppin State University to MICA and north from Mondawmin Mall to King Boulevard.

The governor said it would leverage an additional \$285 million in private-sector money in 10 different neighborhoods to "really amp up the transformation and redevelopment of this city."

The project also reportedly includes the \$31 million renovation underway for the John Eager Howard School where, across the street, a planned 50,000-square-foot in-



Banner with architects' rendering of Madison Park North redevelopment.



Photos: Dennis Roberts



P. David Bramble, managing partner, MCB Real Estate.

novation village will provide space for new and existing companies with job-training opportunities.

"We believe the Madison Park North redevelopment represents a transformational opportunity for the surrounding communities to connect residents to jobs as well as provide much needed amenities and neighborhood level retail for the area. West Baltimore is a food desert, retail desert, and lacks jobs for residents," said Richard May, the founder of Mount Royal Community Development Corporation and chairman of Innovation Village, a community partnership aimed at

leveraging technology to help fuel a wave of job creation and business startups to support retail and new housing developments.

"We have already started connecting minority and women-owned enterprises to the construction related opportunities for this project and are also identifying residents in West Baltimore looking for construction jobs on the site," May said.

Ultimately, the project is anticipated to provide a significant number of construction and permanent jobs as well as become a home to entrepreneurs growing new businesses in the community, he said "Over the past 18 months, the Neigh-

borhood Coalition for Madison Park North Redevelopment has organized seven different neighborhoods surround the site to provide a platform for communities to determine our collective needs," May said.

The project conceivably could lead to creating the next Tesla or Google "right here in West Baltimore," May said, noting what he sees as unlimited possibilities for the area.

"We can't fix every problem or turn back the hands of time," Bramble said. "But, we can work with everybody here."

Matthew Henson students 'star' in their own Christmas Story

By Ursula V. Battle

Thomas Burk, a teacher at Matthew Henson Elementary School gave his second-grade students an assignment.

"We read the book 'Cinderella,' said Burk. "Through the Hippodrome Foundation, the students also went to see a musical version of Cinderella at the Hippodrome. They would later have to compare the similarities between the book and the play versions of Cinderella using a Venn diagram."

Burk would later email Olive Waxter, executive director of the Hippodrome Foundation, expressing his gratitude to her for providing an opportunity for his students to see the show.

"Mr. Burk followed-up by sending a very sweet appreciative email the same day they attended the matinee performance of Cinderella," recalled Waxter. "In the email, Mr. Burk told me how much it meant to the students to come to the Hippodrome to see the show. For Mr. Burk to take the time to send that email, meant a lot to me."

What followed was a real life "Christmas Story." Burk and his class were invited to the Hippodrome for a special workshop on December 8, 2016.

During the workshop, Burk and his students had the opportunity to meet some of the cast members from "A Christmas Story, The Musical." The hit Broadway show played at the Hippodrome December 6-11, 2016. The students were also taught a song and dance routine for "When You're a Wimp," and were taken on a backstage tour. The workshop concluded with a Q&A session.

"To me, Mr. Burk is a hero," said Waxter. "This guy really nailed it. Hats off to Mr. Burk and his class. I wanted the students to know that when you do a good job it goes a long way. I said, 'let's do something for them during the run of A Christmas Story, The Musical.'"

She added, "This is all about kids doing great things, and a teacher who cares. This is exactly the type of school the Hippodrome Foundation loves to partner with."

The Hippodrome Foundation, Inc. (HFI) is a non-profit organization established in Baltimore in 1976. The mission



Second-grade students from Matthew Henson Elementary School and their teacher Thomas Burk on the set of "A Christmas Story, The Musical" at the Hippodrome made possible by the Hippodrome Foundation, Inc. Photos by Ursula V. Battle

of HFI, in addition to presenting the Broadway series at the Hippodrome, is to maximize community access to the France-Merrick Performing Arts Center, and through free outreach and education programs, increase understanding and appreciation of all aspects of theater.

"We do programs all year long to provide access to the Hippodrome theatre," said Waxter. "We give students free programs that are connected to our Broadway series, which is especially exciting. The kids can really feel the warmth when they come here. We are always happy to share the building with the community."

The workshop received "rave reviews" from the students.

"Amazing!" said seven-year-old Derrick, pointing out that he wants to be a dancer and go to college to be an artist. "This was the best day ever. I liked everything about it, especially the singing and dancing."

Eight-year-old Adrianna, also gave the outing "two thumbs up."

"My favorite part was when we were on stage looking at the house," said the



Dance captain/ensemble cast member Brooke Martino talking to the students backstage at the Hippodrome.

second-grader who wants to be a veterinarian when she grows up. "That was a lot of fun."

Barb Wirsing is the education director for the Hippodrome Foundation.

"It is our belief that theatre can be life changing," she said. "Matthew Henson Elementary School has done such

incredible work. This was a great way to reward them for all of their hard work. Not many people get the opportunity to experience a backstage tour of a Broadway show."

Burk, whose efforts received a rousing "standing ovation" from the Hippodrome Foundation, was elated about the "Happy Ending."

"I am always theatrical in some way when I read, and always tell my students to use their imagination," said Burk who also serves as House Manager for the Hippodrome. "I also tell them that education can take them anywhere they want to go. The invitation to bring the students here for this workshop was such a wonderful opportunity."

Burk who has been teaching since 2003 added, "I have high expectations of my students, and like to push them to their limits. The kids might think I'm mean, but I mean business when it comes to learning."

For more information about the Hippodrome Foundation, visit <http://www.hippodromefoundation.org>.

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Rambling Rose

It's time to say 'Happy Holidays!'



Rosa Pryor Trusty

Hello, my dear friends, happy holidays to you. This is one of my favorite times of the year. The lights, the smell of pine in the Christmas trees, the decorations in the neighborhoods and even the hustle and bustle in the department stores with folks trying to find the right gifts for their family members and friends. Then there are the office christmas parties and especially the shows and concerts designed just for the Christmas, Kwanzaa, Yom Kippur and Hanukah holidays. Just stop and look around you, then feel blessed that you made it to the end of the year.

Before I get started, I want to thank everyone who bought tickets and came to the last Jazz Expressways Foundation event for the year. It was a great success and almost a sell-out! The members of the Jazz Expressways Foundation, Howard and Cynthia Easley, Avon Mitchell, my husband, Shorty Trusty and I appreciate your support. Thank you for helping keeping music alive. We could not have done it without you.

Now, let's talk about what's coming up this weekend. Bilal Ali Productions will host a Motown Holiday Concert on Sat., Dec. 17 to celebrate with smooth jazz and the best of R&B featuring Steve, DJ Fresh, Vivian Owens and Dem "Bmore" Katz at the Quality Inn located at 1800 Belmont Avenue in Windsor Mills, Maryland.

The Kuumba Ensemble Heritage House Community Theater invites you to see a dynamite musical play by Roz Gaines called, "Low Down Dirty Blues." It's the story of the jumping juke joint competition for a national recording contract between six blues singers. The experience lures them into scandal, betrayal, and forbidden love and more. They play will premiere Saturday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m. in the Randallstown High School auditorium, 4000 Offutt Road, Randallstown, Md. For more informa-

tion, call 443-413-1470.

Marianne and Howard, the owners of Jazzway 6004 are hosting a "Jazzway Holiday Show" with Craig Alston, Vince Evans on piano, Warren Wolf on Vibraphone, Tom Baldwin on bass, Eric Kennedy on drums, doing vocals are Micah Smith, Irene Jolenti and Nina Anderson also Marianne M-K will sing a song or two on Sun., Dec. 18 at 5 p.m. Jazzway 6004 is located 6004 Hollins Avenue in Baltimore. For more information, call 410-952-4528.

Celebrating the holidays and birthdays, are DJ Mike Jones and KF Sugar Chris—cabaret style on Fri. Dec. 16, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. at Diamondz Hall, 9980 Liberty Road in Randallstown, Md. This event is BYOB and BYOF with free set ups. For ticket information, call 410-262-6604 or 443-525-5016.

In closing, I want to let everyone know that my sister, Maxine Pryor passed away on Monday, December 5, 2016, after fighting a very long time with heart cancer. Her funeral was held at Joseph Brown, Jr. Funeral Home on Fulton and Reisterstown Rd. on Wednesday, December 14, 2016. Maxine celebrated her 65th birthday on October 2, 2016. It has not been easy losing yet another sibling; Maxine makes three in the past couple of years from cancer. I want to thank all my readers, friends for your love and support during this time of sorrow. I appreciate your sympathy and love. Maxine was a very special person in my life. Please keep me and my family in your prayers.

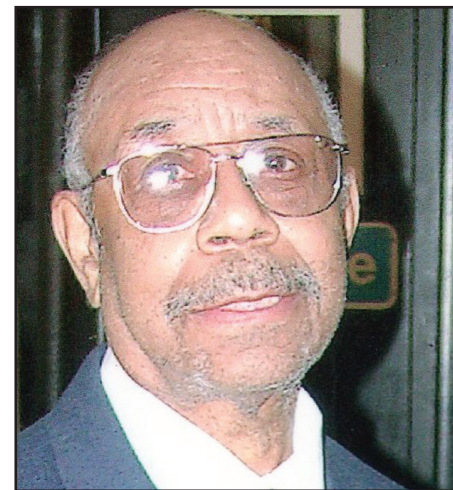
Well, my dear friends, I am out of space, remember if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. You can send me your photos, letters, cards and press releases to 214 Conewood Avenue, Reisterstown, Maryland 21136. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



The most popular DJ Chris "Sugar Chris" Tittle, an icon with his music at the Corinthian Restaurant & Lounge located at 7107 Windsor Mill Road every Wednesday. He married his partner, the beautiful Scotta, last week. Congrats! My dear friends— Mr. & Mrs. Chris Tittle.



Renowned saxophonist Craig Alston is back with a dazzling Holiday Show for Jazzway 6004 located at 6004 Hollins Avenue in Baltimore on Sunday, December 18, 2016 at 5 p.m. with a top notch instrumental and vocal line-up and swinging tunes.



Happy Birthday to Larry Washington, the oldest member of Arch Social Club who will celebrate his 92nd birthday on Sunday, December 18, 2016 at Arch Social Club on Pennsylvania and North Avenue in Baltimore from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. with live entertainment, cash bar and food for sale. The celebration is open and free to the public.

Rambling Rose's sister Maxine Pryor passed away on Monday, December 5, 2016, after fighting a very long time with heart cancer. Her funeral was held at Joseph Brown, Jr. Funeral Home on Fulton and Reisterstown Rd. on Wednesday, December 14, 2016. Maxine celebrated her 65th birthday on October 2, 2016.



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Marylanders cautioned as extremely cold temperatures expected

Find fact sheets, emergency plan on state health website

Baltimore— The National Weather Service is calling for bitter cold winds across Maryland with a potential for wintry precipitation Saturday and Sunday. A wind chill advisory, issued when wind chill temperatures are forecast to range from -5°F to -20°F , was issued for Garrett County on Thursday, December 15, 2016. While other areas of the state are not currently included in this advisory, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is cautioning residents to guard against frostbite, hypothermia and other related issues.

Health and Mental Hygiene monitors temperature conditions and incidences of cold-related illnesses and deaths. The site also includes the department's Extreme Cold Emergency Plan and fact sheets on cold weather health issues, carbon monoxide, driving tips for extreme cold weather and the warning signs of a heart attack.

"With wind chill temperatures dropping below zero in the coming days, it is important for residents to dress warmly and to have a cold weather emergency kit at home and in their vehicle," says Secretary Van T. Mitchell. "Knowing how to prepare can help keep Marylanders healthy and safe."

Hypothermia occurs when the body temperature falls below 95°F . In the 2015-2016 winter season, there were 20 hypothermia-related deaths in Maryland. Frostbite is the freezing and subsequent destruction of body tissue that is likely to occur any time skin temperature gets much below 32°F . The body parts most likely to freeze are toes, fingers, ears, cheeks and the tip of the nose.

Health and Mental Hygiene offers these safety tips:

- Cover your head. You lose as much as 50 percent of your body heat through your head. Also cover your mouth with a scarf to protect lungs from direct cold air, as well as your ears and lower part of your face.



- Wear several layers of lightweight, loose-fitting clothing. The air between the layers acts as insulation to keep you warmer.

- Wear mittens rather than fingered gloves. The close contact of fingers helps keep your hands warm.

- Wear warm leg coverings and heavy socks or two pairs of lightweight socks.

- Wear waterproof boots or sturdy shoes to keep your feet warm and dry.

- Be alert to such common winter hazards as carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning and injuries from heat sources. CO is produced by small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns and gas ranges or by the burning of charcoal and wood. This colorless, odorless gas can cause severe illness and death. Heating sources can also cause fires, electrical injuries and burns, if not properly installed, operated and maintained.

- Review your family emergency communications plan and emergency supply kits for homes and vehicles. Each family member should know what to do and how to contact others in an emergency. The home emergency supply kit should include unexpired food items, medical supplies and batteries. Vehicles should contain such items as heavy blankets, water, nonperishable food, a flashlight and a snow shovel.

For more information on emergency preparedness, visit: <https://goo.gl/Dnygie>.

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