

# Barrio de Langley Park

A neighborhood planning newsletter published by Action Langley Park  
Issue #222, November 2011

## Health Check 2011

November 6th was the date for the health fair called "Health Check," held annually at the Langley Park Community Center and open to all comers for free.



Sister gets oral health check. Siblings help.

Hundreds of area residents (and a few from a distance) came to the event to have their oral health and blood sugar and HIV status and other STDs and spine and hypertension and facial skin and much more to be checked. And there were expert nurses, doctors, and others to answer questions about nutrition, body weight, pregnancy, WIC,

and much more.

The co-organizers, Action Langley Park and the Langley Park Community Center, wish to thank all the health professionals for their enormous contri-

*"Health" continued on Page 2*

## POVERTY IN THE USA

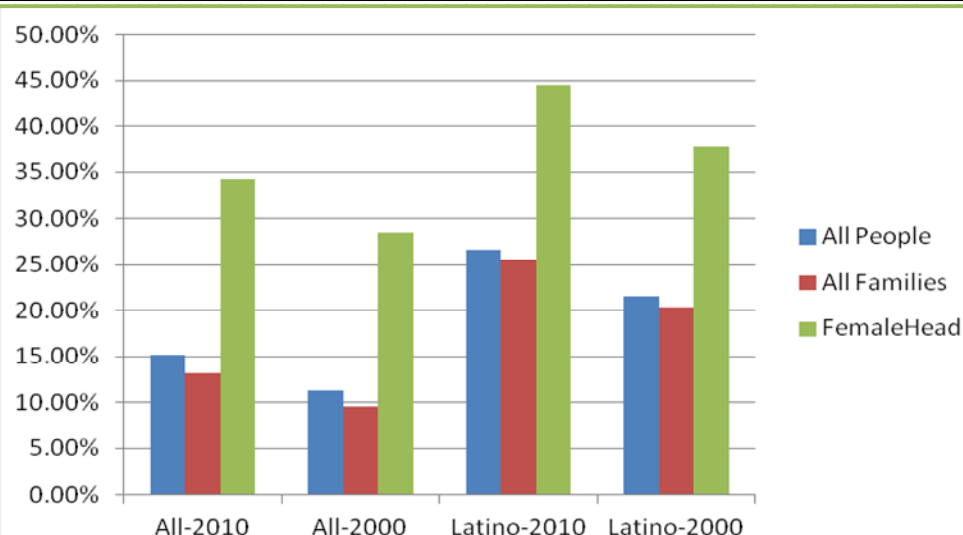
"Over a ten-year span, the country has seen the poor population grow by 12.3 million, driving the total number of Americans in poverty to a historic high of 46.2 million. By the end of the decade, over 15% of the nation's population lived below the federal poverty line—\$22,314 for a family of four in 2010—though these increases did not occur evenly throughout the country." (*Brookings*, 3 November 2011)

In our country, poverty does not visit families and individuals equally. From the Census data, it is clear that being in a two-adult family reduces the poverty level. And it is painfully clear that being Latino or Latina dramatically increases the poverty rate. (See the graphic.)

So we know that having two or more adults who are potential earners is better than one. No surprise. And we also learn that across the board, poverty has increased over the 2000-2010 decade. Also no surprise given the recession and the post-recession jobs recession.

Latino/as have been especially impacted. One major reason of late is that so many have worked in sectors of the economy that have been hard hit—especially construction; many men have worked as roofers, carpenters, brick layers, etc. With many formerly owned houses on the market, construction's pace is slow, Women have worked as child-care specialists and in other service

## POVERTY IN THE USA, 2000 AND 2010



work; alas some families have cut back in child care and domestic work. In addition, some worker enforcement to remove undocumented Latinos and Latinos from their job has added to poverty.

Some other poverty patterns are of interest. For instance:

- Poverty is slightly higher for the young and the old compared with those in the middle (18-64) age bracket—the worker bracket.
- Latino/as have the highest rate of poverty, but Blacks are not far behind. At the low end are Euros with Asian-Americans a bit higher.
- The country's western region has the highest rate of poverty.
- Those living in metro (urban) areas have a higher poverty rate than those outside metros.

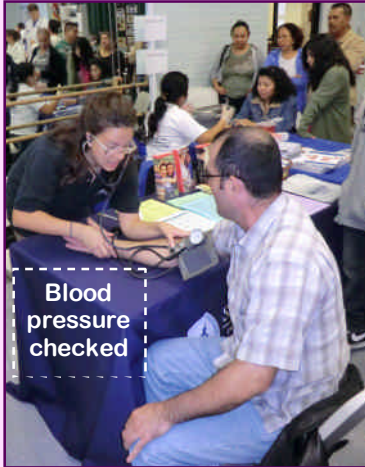
Alas, unemployment around 9% will be with us for some time, and its impact is not evenly felt.

See also 'UNEMPLOYMENT' Page 2

\*The above graphic is based on the year 2010 Census definition of poverty. In 2011, there has been a slight revision of the method of calculation. Thus the figure for all people in poverty, when food stamps and other support are added, drops about 1.5% points. Thus the situation is awful, however measured.

"Health" continued from Page 1

butions to the health of many people. Thanks to



Blood pressure checked

those from the Maryland Schools of Dentistry and Medicine, Suburban Hospital, the Montgomery College Nursing Program, the National Association of Hispanic Nurses, Adventist Health, Priority Partners, Identity, the Bilingual Counseling Center, TAYA, Sims Chiropractic, Kaiser Permanente, CCIWIC, CASA de Maryland, and others.

Thanks too for the help of the LPCC staff and of course its Director, Lourdes Sulc, who got out of a sick bed to help. Muchas gracias!!!



Babies wait while mommy is checked

**Students:** They helped a lot. ALP's thanks to the Montgomery College students in its Latino Student Union for helping out—especially for

getting the word out about the event. They are Karina Velasco, Belen Bonilla, Daniel Torres, Mauricio Ventura, and the student who made the LSU-ALP connection, Joanna Perez.

Thanks too go to UMCP graduate students Vanessa Kirn and Deborah R. Sward. They helped to oversee the providers so that all went smoothly.

**Next:** The next health event organized by ALP and LPCC takes place as part of "Langley Park Day 2012" on May 6th starting at noon. In addition to a health fair, the event has food and other vendors, performers of song and dance, children's activities, and much more. Mark your calendar right away!

### Neighborhood Problem or Suggestion? Let Government Officials Know! Send It to the "Daily Gripe"

It is often hard to find the right person to contact about a neighborhood problem or a way to suggest improvements. But thanks to the *Washington Post*, that process has become easier. Go to [washingtonpost.com/dailygripe](http://washingtonpost.com/dailygripe) and use the online tool for your message. The Post will deliver it.

The Langley Park neighborhood has lots of problems and possible improvements. Let 'em know.

# UNEMPLOYMENT

## UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

### Not For All!

Perhaps the reader thinks that people who have lost their job get unemployment benefits from the government so that they can purchase food, pay the rent, et cetera. Well some do, but some don't. Many have been cut off from the benefits because they have been unemployed for more than a year—that's about one-third of the unemployed. More than a year! Congress is considering a bill to raise the weeks to 99, but even if that takes place, many workers will be desperate because they have been unemployed for



100 weeks for more. Millions of people are in deep poverty, of course including many children. Some long-term unemployed can be found sleeping on the street. And there are some who sleep out in the open very near Langley Park. (They have been chased away from their small camp, but not given proper shelter.) In America!

## EVEN OUR SOLDIERS

From the *Washington Post* (5 November 2011): "Former Army sergeant Arnold Bradley has been living in an unheated GMC van since he was laid off from an automotive parts company four months ago. Every night, he finds a street that seems safe and settles down in his van, which is filled with his clothes and household items." And the article adds this shocking statistic: "In 2009, on any given night, about 75,609 veterans nationwide were homeless, according to the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs." Probably more now. Our soldiers! In America!

## AND THE UNDOCUMENTED

It is estimated that there are about 11 million undocumented people living in the United States. Many of them are construction workers or domestic workers, and these jobs have dried up thanks to the lingering economic problems. At least one thousand residents of the Langley Park area fall into this category. And when they can no longer find work, what do they do? Unemployment benefits are not available for them, and so they try to live off of the generosity of neighbors. Some are homeless. Many do not have proper nutrition. But they stay here still holding onto the American Dream. May that dream not turn to ashes.



# HAPPENINGS

## IMMIGRATION

**= Inequality?** How much has immigration contributed to the dramatic rise of economic inequality in the U.S. in recent decades? Much inequality is caused by non-wage income, meaning that immigration likely explains less of the increase in income inequality than of the increase in wage inequality. Most estimates indicate that *less than 5%* of *income* inequality is attributable to immigration. The fairest conclusion is that immigration likely increases income inequality on the bottom half of the income distribution by a small amount, but doesn't come close to explaining the past few decades' explosion in inequality. (Remember the 1%/99%!)

**Legal Counsel for Detainees:** The vast majority of detainees, including children, must represent themselves in immigration court. How unfair: to be without legal counsel. However, there are some court cases in process that will challenge the prevailing no-lawyer rule. Studies have found that immigrants with lawyers are five times more likely to win their cases than those without. Five times! Legal counsel helps! So let's achieve that right. Soon! Now!

Retired Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens has said that the need for legal representation for immigrants has grown so acute and the consequences so drastic that something must be done. (Drawn from the *LA Times*, 8 November 2011)

**Ugly Treatment:** The case of a Queens woman who suffered a miscarriage last month as she was about to be deported to Ecuador is being held up as a symbol of gaps in President Obama's new immigration policy. (*New York Daily News*, 2 November 2011) Julia Casares, 36, was in the process of being expelled under new policies meant to target violent criminals and fresh arrivals while giving a temporary pass to longtime undocumented residents who pose no threat and have strong ties to the U.S. Casares has a 10-year-old shoplifting conviction, but she has no record of violence, and her two kids and four siblings are all American citizens. But it wasn't until she lost her baby in federal custody that Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials decided to allow her to stay, her family said. "She fainted, and she started bleeding," said Casares' partner, Marco Guartan. "They couldn't force her onto the plane in that state—she's a human being."

Immigration advocates say that what happened to Casares reveals that ICE is not properly implementing Obama's plan to review 300,000 deportation cases to identify violent criminals who should be booted immediately. And that improper implementation is very widespread.

## SPEED CAMERA

There are now, reportedly, speed cameras along the 7600-6900 blocks of Adelphi Road and more on Baltimore Avenue. They are the nearest "threats." So slow down there (and be sensible everywhere) unless you want to donate money to the county.

Note: As an act of generous helping, the BLP editor tested the Baltimore Avenue camera. It works: 42 mph in 30 mph = \$40!

## RIGHT-WING SPEAKS ABOUT TEACHERS

*Gazette.net* (10 November 2011) begins an article as follows: "A first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree in Prince George's County Public Schools receives a \$44,800 salary. Ten years later, that teacher would make about \$56,500. ..."



"There is this widespread perception that teachers are underpaid," said Jason Richwine, one of the study's authors and a senior policy analyst for the Heritage Foundation. "Teachers are not underpaid in salaries, and may, in some cases, be overpaid."

What's the source of this counter view? Two Washington, D.C.-based right-wing think tanks, American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation, say that's too much.

The problem with the report is that the authors have probably not been in a challenging classroom. To be an effective teacher working with children who do not have the advantages of middle-class families is a very challenging job. That's why a very high percentage of young teachers leave the profession after a few years. Maybe the report's conclusions deserve a good test: the authors should take an entry-level teaching job for \$44k lasting at least three years; then they should update the report.

## MOBILE DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Some time next year, a mobile doctor's office from Children's National Medical Center (located in DC) will begin to roam Prince George's County providing basic health care to children who have limited health care options. Good! Let's hope that the route will include Langley Park, where the children are underserved by medical personnel.

Children's National mobile vans are made possible with support from the Children's Health Fund, the nation's leading provider of mobile-based health care for homeless and low-income children and their families. CHF currently has 50 mobile medical clinics serving hundreds of locations across the country. Children's National operates four of these mobile vans. Bring one weekly to Langley Park!!!



## INFESTATIONS

What's it like to live in an apartment with bedbugs, mold, electrical stoppages, and other affronts that should never be tolerated by the management of an apartment house? The answer can be supplied by tenants at two Langley Park apartment houses: Bedford Station and Victoria Station. Thanks to the initiatives of the tenants and lawyers associated with CASA de Mary-

"Happenings" continued from Page 3

land, escrow cases were filed. The company that took over the management of the apartment houses early this year, Laramar Specialty Services, asserts that the problems have been addressed. If not: shame! If so, then the power of legal action is to be praised; livability is the goal. Thanks, CASA.

Note: A third apartment house involved, Newbury Square, was located by some seemingly ignorant news outlets as being in Langley Park. Too bad so many people don't know where the Langley Park neighborhood is. Ignorance? And/or ethnic prejudice and stereotyping? (If the residents have brownish skin and speak Spanish, they must live in Langley Park? Ugh.)

## GOVERNMENT

**Maryland Incompetence?** From *MarylandReporter.com*: "The beleaguered Developmental Disabilities Administration, with thousands on its waiting list for care, left \$25 million in state funding unspent over the last two years, and wound up having to return the money to the state's general fund. The agency also had a \$12 million surplus in its federal Medicaid match, meaning there was a total \$38 million left over. The surpluses had apparently been going on for some time, leaving millions in the kitty that were supposed to be spent on people with some of the most severe physical and mental disabilities, many unable to care for themselves." Was this "incompetence" really a way to get \$25 million into the general fund? Hey, Governor O'Malley, take action, manage this unit.

**Iowa and Maryland:** An Iowa-based foundation headed by a Republican former speaker of the Iowa House is financing a federal lawsuit filed by nine African-Americans linked to a local political action committee that seeks to overturn Maryland's new gerrymandered congressional map on the ground that it unconstitutionally splits minority communities. Well, it sure is drawn as if an insane person had been at work. But is it constitutional? And hey, Iowa: stay out of our affairs.

**Takoma Park—Fred Again!** Fred Schultz has been reelected to the Takoma Park City Council from District 6, the district adjacent to Langley Park. Congratulations!

## THE RIGHTS OF DAY LABORERS

Many jurisdictions, including some in suburban Maryland, have used police to force day laborers away from locations near busy streets as they wait for work. The jurisdictions apparently haven't read the U.S. constitution's rights of assembly and speech. The good news is that in September, the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down as unconstitutional an ordinance in a southern California town that

prevented day laborers on public sidewalks from soliciting work from passing drivers.

Thomas A. Saenz, MALDEF President and General Counsel: "Today's en banc Ninth Circuit opinion resoundingly vindicates the First Amendment rights of day laborers. ... The dozens of similar ordinances throughout the region that purport to prevent day laborers from speaking

on sidewalks are now even more plainly violative of the Constitution. Each municipality with such an ordinance should immediately suspend and repeal its law. The long-standing principle that the right of free speech belongs to everyone has been significantly bolstered by this decision."

Pablo Alvarado, Executive Director of National Day Laborer Organizing Network: "[The] decision is an outcome of a struggle in the courts and in the streets that began in the early 90's. The ordinances were intended to render day laborers invisible; but the struggle against these ordinances has made day laborers more visible, more powerful. For the past two decades, the ordinances have stigmatized day laborers as criminals; now they are civil rights leaders. So this victory is not just for them; it is for every American—a victory achieved by humble people for everyone."

## A SCHOOL HORROR STORY

Received via email: "A child got injured in her school, she lost the tip of her finger. She is only five years old. When the mother told the principal that she had no way of paying the medical expenses because her child had no insurance, the principal told her 'I noticed that in the school paperwork that your daughter was born in Mexico and that she does not have a Social Security number, is she here illegally?' The mother at this point felt that, because she did not write down a number, he had evidence against her. So she 'confessed.'"

## HOPEFUL SIGN?

Roger Algase is an immigration lawyer in New York City. Here is a portion of his commentary published in *Immigration Daily* via ILW.org on 9 November 2011.

"Tuesday, 8 November 2011 will go down as an historic day for the forces of decency and tolerance in America. Arizona Republican State Senate leader Russell Pearce is an ally of Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio, who is notorious for locking Mexican immigrants up in desert tents, abusing and humiliating them. Pearce is the author of that state's infamous *Wo sind Ihre Papiere?* ("Papers, please") law, which has served as a model for similar hate laws directed against Latino, Asian and other non-white immigrants in Alabama and other states. Pearce lost his seat on Tuesday in a recall election. ...

"Those of us who call ourselves pro-immigration advocates cannot just look at immigration as a separate issue, unrelated to what else is going on in this country. If we do so, we are going along with the strategy of divide and conquer which the forces of privilege and power are using to maintain their control of our political and economic system.

"The question is now whether the politicians who are trying to use hate, not only against immigrants but also against other minorities and ordinary people, as a means to gain or keep power, will heed the message from yesterday's election. This includes not only the Republican presidential candidates ... who are outdoing each other in shamelessly trying to demagogue the immigration issue, but also President Obama and his ruthless, unthinking ICE steamroller machine, which is deporting more people not convicted of serious crimes, breaking up more families and ... leaving more American children without parents, than any other administration in recent history."



## Who Are Our Legal Permanent Residents?

In 2010, there were just over 12 million legal permanent residents (LPR) in the United States, two-thirds of them eligible to naturalize. These figures held steady through the 2008-2010 period.

LPRs are required to meet a five-year residency requirement for naturalization. Spouses of U.S. citizens are eligible to apply in three years. There are several other exceptions to the five-year residency requirement, most of which affect small numbers of immigrants.

Most LPRs are family-sponsored immigrants—mostly immediate relatives of U.S. citizens. About one-sixth of the LPRs had employment-based preferences.

About half of the LPRs have been in the 25-44 age bracket, and about 55% have been female.

Mexico was, not surprisingly, the main heritage country, accounting to about one-fourth of the LPRs. The Central American countries that contribute the most to the USA—and to Maryland—are El Salvador and Guatemala.

Also not surprisingly, the main receiving states are California followed by New York, Texas, and Florida. Maryland is far down in 12th place with a total of 230,000 LPRs.

Note: The undocumented immigrants in the country number about 10.5 million.

### Country of Birth of Legal Permanent Resident Population: 2010

Country of birth	Legal permanent residents		Legal permanent residents eligible to naturalize	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	12,630,000	100.0	8,070,000	100.0
Mexico . . . . .	3,290,000	26.0	2,600,000	32.2
Philippines . . . . .	560,000	4.4	300,000	3.7
China, People's Republic . . . . .	550,000	4.4	220,000	2.7
India . . . . .	500,000	4.0	220,000	2.7
Dominican Republic . . . . .	440,000	3.5	280,000	3.5
Cuba . . . . .	370,000	2.9	240,000	3.0
Canada . . . . .	330,000	2.6	260,000	3.2
El Salvador #2 in LP . . . . .	320,000	2.5	240,000	3.0
Vietnam . . . . .	310,000	2.5	190,000	2.4
United Kingdom . . . . .	290,000	2.3	230,000	2.8
Korea, South . . . . .	270,000	2.2	160,000	2.0
Haiti . . . . .	240,000	1.9	140,000	1.7
Colombia . . . . .	230,000	1.9	110,000	1.4
Jamaica . . . . .	230,000	1.8	150,000	1.8
Germany . . . . .	180,000	1.4	150,000	1.8
Guatemala #1 in LP . . . . .	180,000	1.4	110,000	1.4

### State of Residence of Legal Permanent Resident Population: 2010

State of residence	Legal permanent residents		Legal permanent residents eligible to naturalize	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total . . . . .	12,630,000	100.0	8,070,000	100.0
California . . . . .	3,330,000	26.3	2,370,000	29.4
New York . . . . .	1,560,000	12.4	950,000	11.7
Texas . . . . .	1,240,000	9.8	880,000	10.9
Florida . . . . .	1,210,000	9.5	710,000	8.7
New Jersey . . . . .	570,000	4.5	320,000	4.0
Illinois . . . . .	540,000	4.3	350,000	4.3
Massachusetts . . . . .	320,000	2.5	180,000	2.3
Washington . . . . .	270,000	2.1	170,000	2.1
Virginia . . . . .	260,000	2.1	140,000	1.7
Arizona . . . . .	240,000	1.9	170,000	2.1
Georgia . . . . .	230,000	1.9	120,000	1.5
Maryland . . . . .	230,000	1.8	120,000	1.5
Pennsylvania . . . . .	230,000	1.8	120,000	1.5
Michigan . . . . .	210,000	1.6	120,000	1.5
Connecticut . . . . .	150,000	1.2	90,000	1.1
North Carolina . . . . .	150,000	1.2	80,000	1.0

Source of above data: Department of Homeland Security.

## International Populations Network of Prince George's County

This organization, orchestrated by Dr. Marlene Cohen of Prince George's Community College's International Education Center, meets twice a year at PGCC to hear and interact with an interesting speaker and also to network with many professionals (and some students) who work on immigrant issues.

The meeting has become part of PGCC's international week that includes a session on Muslims in the USA, samba lessons, and so much more.



Cohen

Dr. Cohen is contributing significantly to the efforts to help immigrants, both at her home PGCC institution and more widely, thanks to her meeting organizational skills. And she has connections: At an earlier meeting, the special guest was Rushern Baker.)

On November 9th, the featured speaker was Alisa Glassman of Action in Montgomery (AIM), a non-partisan alliance of 30 congregations and neighborhood organizations in Montgomery County. Its primary goal is to develop local leadership to organize the people power to create a more just county. A more just county! (That must be a goal in Prince George's County too. Sometimes, we wonder.)

AIM is affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation, the nation's first and largest network of multi-faith coalitions. One of its foci is affordable housing; let's hope they look in the direction of Langley Park.

After briefly introducing her organization, Ms. Glassman focused on the importance of defending the Maryland Dream Act against those who want to overturn the legislation by a referendum vote next November.

A special guest was County Council President Ingrid Turner. In a brief conversation with the ALP representative present, Ms. Turner did not seem to have a valid understanding of the devastation to Langley Park enabled by the Takoma-Langley Sector Plan. Perhaps that is due to councilman courtesies: if the representative from one area advocates a particular plan, others defer unless it is viewed as a hot and controversial topic. Clearly, bulldozing affordable apartments in Langley Park to clear the way for upscale residences and businesses is not controversial in some county government circles. It is to Langley Park residents!!



Turner

Among the other special guests were Nina Smith of the County Executive's office and Ms. Kristen Urtola of the student organization Kaleidoscope. Some other students were at the event, and they were very impressive. Most are heading to the U. Maryland.

Thanks, Dr. Cohen, for contributing significantly to the efforts to provide good lives to the many immigrants at PGCC and throughout the county.

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## WHAT AND WHEN

Here we list upcoming ALP activities and other events that come to our attention. Have an event to list? If so, send information well in advance to [actionlangley-park@yahoo.com](mailto:actionlangley-park@yahoo.com).

### 2011

**November 12—Day of the Dead** is an event from young people ages six and up at the Langley Park Community Center. There will be "frightening tours" and entertainment and more. From 7 to 10 p.m. (Yes, Dia de los Muertos is usually celebrated on November 1.)



**November 16—A town hall meeting** hosted by Senator Victor Ramirez with County Executive Rushern Baker as one of the guests. Many agencies will be present, e.g., Dept. of Environmental Resources and Dept of Housing and Community Development. From 7 to 9 p.m. at Rollingcrest Recreational Center, 6120 Sargent road, Hyattsville. Information: 301.858.3745.

**November 19—Pottery show and sale** at the Langley Park Community Center, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Good art, good bargains!

**November 19—Free Community Dinner & Food Distribution** at the St. Michael and All Angels Church, 8501 New Hampshire Ave. in upper Langley Park. From 5 to 6:30 p.m. This is a regular event; it takes place every third Saturday of the month. For information, call 301 434-4646.

**December 8—Action Langley Park Meeting** takes place at the Langley Park Community Center from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Everyone welcome! Let us know how the area can be improved, and let us try to help with the improvement. But ALP has to know the needs! So please participate! (The first 2012 meeting will be on February 9th.)

### 2012

**Physics is Phun**—in the physics department, University of Maryland: January 5, 6, 7: The Atom; March 8, 9, 10: Color; May 3, 4, 5: Great Physics Demonstrations. Information: 301.405.5994. Get young people to these events.

**April 28—Maryland Day** at the University of Maryland. Lots to see and do!

**April 28-29—Science and Engineering Festival:** "Our mission is to re-invigorate the interest of our nation's youth in science, technology, engineering and math by presenting the most compelling, exciting, educational and entertaining science gatherings in the USA." It's free! Information: <http://www.usasciencefestival.org/>

**May 6—Langley Park Day 2012** from noon to 4 p.m. at the Langley Park Community Center. There will be music and dance performances; a major health fair checking vision, HIV status, blood pressure, and more; food and craft vendors; children's art and games; and more.

## PROHIBITION 2011

Prohibition against alcohol was instituted in the USA in 1920, finally ending in 1933. Did it help to prohibit alcohol? Maybe a few people changed their drinking habits. But prohibition was a failure because illegal sales were widespread and organized crime took control—often violently—of the distribution of alcohol.

Prohibitions as currently practiced focuses on marijuana and sex work. It's no surprise that the current prohibitions lead to more gangs and crime—and thousands of deaths in Mexico. That's why some experts call for decriminalization plus health care. Let's talk about it!