

Barria de Langley Park

A Neighborhood Planning Newsletter Published by Action Langley Park—Issue 225, December 2011

Happy Holiday, Christmas, Hanukkah, New Year, and More!

Headline of the Month

Latino Neighborhoods Becoming New Tourism Hot Spots

What a headline! It appeared in *Cultura: LatinoVoices*, a Huffington Post publication. An the first paragraph: “Latino immigration is reshaping entire neighborhoods throughout the country, and sparking new community trends. The vibrant culture of many of these neighborhoods— their rich music, art and traditional food from all over Latin America—has become a lure for thousands of tourists.”

What about Langley Park as a tourist destination? First, we have to restore the food trucks and sidewalks



vendors so that authentic and affordable Central American and Mexican foods are available within the neighborhood. It might help if near some if not all the food trucks we could have a musician; but that perhaps will come later. (Quite a few residents play instruments and/or sing. This is a somewhat untapped resource.)

Note that there are good “conventional” restaurants in Langley Park, especially Woodlands. But we can extend the range to the entire Maryland’s International Corridor with scores of restaurants. At the least, Irene’s Pupuseria, Tiffin, and Samantha’s should be part of the tour. And for those with the time, we can offer a special trip to Little Mexico where very authentic Mexican food is available.

Also a short distance are Indian, Jamaican, and Middle Eastern restaurants. And there are many international grocery stores.

Great architecture: Of course, there is the Goodhart-McCormick mansion. It won a national architectural award in 1927, and it has been modernized by CASA de Maryland. CASA will have to agree to organize tours for a small charge.

Nature area: The Northwest Branch is a wonderful nature area along the north and east borders of Langley Park. To escape from urban crowding and fast-pace, the tourists can stroll along the creek surrounded by lovely trees and bushes.

Latino/a schooling: We can arrange for visitors to see ongoing classes at Langley Park McCormick Elementary

“Tour” continued on Page 7

HOMELESS CHILDREN In the Langley Park area

In BLP issue #224, there was an article about homeless children—and the increase in their number thanks to the recession and the “post-recession recession” that has had such a harsh impact on children, including children in the Langley Park area. We received the following commentary:

Dear Action Langley Park,

I have a great number of homeless students in my classroom, going by the definition of not having homes of their own. Many are living with extended families in 2-bedroom apartments with adults and children sharing the same bedroom. They share the lower bunk with a brother, or a full size bed with two others. Parents and older children watch TV or play video games loudly while the younger children are trying to sleep.



Elementary age children need 10 hours of sleep, but they’re getting far less. My students are falling asleep in class, cannot focus, misbehave or are cranky— for good reason.

I’ve provided children, through parent conferences, with earplugs to help them sleep. But then there’s the bright light, the lack of heat, the shortage of blankets.

And then there’s the girl who asked me to retape her shoe because the sole was coming off. For such children, even the clothes at a second-hand place such as Value Village are too expensive.

As a teacher, I’m responsible for their test scores because it must be the quality of my teaching that accounts for the lack of progress of some students. I’m more concerned about their readiness for learning. I plan stimulating, enjoyable learning activities for my students. Most of them excel. I only wish I could do more to get decent housing for the homeless. I’m sure that employment is the key.

The BLP article notes the need for extended days at school to catch up on learning. Most underperforming schools have after school programs, including ours. But, I’m sure you can see the challenge for the students who are not even able to meet the demands of the normal school day. They are too tired before any extra help kicks in after school.

Thanks for reading my letter,
A PGCPSS teacher in Hyattsville.

FACTS TO PUT US IN OUR TINY SPACE: The just-discovered dark hole in the universe is 10,000,000,000 times larger than our sun!! It is 300,000,000 light years from our earth!!

HAPPENINGS & MORE

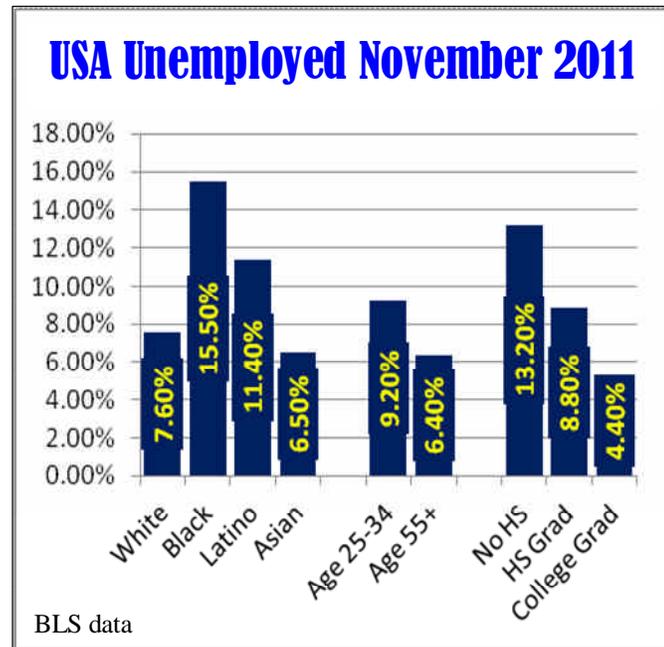
THE SECTOR PLAN MYSTERY

The big mystery remains: Why did the county planning department and the County Council develop and approve a plan for the Langley Park area that enables developers to demolish most if not all of the affordable apartments and replace them with more expensive condos and apartments? Why did they approve a plan that enables developers to demolish many of the small family-owned businesses and replace them with higher-end businesses? With no community-sustaining relocation options! (The plan was developed

during the Jack Johnson regime. The lead project planner has since left county employment.) Do they not care about the residents and businesspeople? The ALP staff has interviewed several people in the development business, and none could think of any legitimate explanation for the plan. Was the desire for more real estate taxes a factor? Or was it improving business by getting rich people to live in the area? What is the answer to the mystery? Please send us your proposed explanations.

LATINO UNEMPLOYMENT REMAINS HIGH

The number of jobless Latinos remained high despite an overall decline in the national unemployment rate to a two-year low. The official unemployment rate for Latinos remained unchanged at 11.4% between October and No-



vember, while the national unemployment rate dropped from 9% to 8.6% in November. A total 80,000 jobs were added during the same period. Latino teenagers have been among the worst hit with an unemployment rate of 31.8%, which is 8.1% higher than teenagers in general

across the country. The unyielding figures for Latino unemployment might be partially explained by mixed results in sectors that employ large amounts of Latinos. A total of 22,000 jobs were added in the leisure and hospitality industry, but on the other hand, 20,000 construction jobs were also lost. From latinovations.com, 5 December 2011.

The table (see left column this page) shows that people of color (Blacks and Latinos) have the highest unemployment rates, probably due to a combination of less formal education plus discrimination.

There almost certainly is a dramatic undercount of Latinos. After all, to be counted as unemployed one has to have contact with the government and be seeking employment. But perhaps one million or more Latinos are looking for work independent of the government—due to undocumented status or some other reason. (A somewhat parallel domain of undercounting is hazing. Fully 95% of those who were victims of hazing are said not to report it to police, family, or others.)

LATINA BIRTH RATE DROPS

The birth rate among Latinas decreased by 11% since 2007, according to preliminary 2010 data released earlier this month. The decline is attributed to the dwindled economy and a general downward fertility trend in the U.S. Last year, less than 1 million babies were born to Latinas. The National Center for Health Statistics reports that although birth rates have decreased across backgrounds and races, the Latino population has experienced the sharpest drop, declining from 97.4 births per 1,000 women aged 15-44 in 2007 to 80.3 in 2010. "Hispanic fertility is dropping like a stone," said one demographer. From latinovations.com, 30 November 2011.

As reported in BLP 224 on teen pregnancy, "White non-Hispanics, Black non-Hispanics, and Latinas have all reduced their rates significantly: 35%, 40%, and 27% respectively."

A SECOND OR THIRD LANGUAGE

Washington Post writer David Montgomery recently (7 December 2011) wrote about the difficulty of retaining a heritage language when immersed in USA's world of English. It may be less difficult in a neighborhood such as Langley Park where the dominant street language is Spanish. But in more middle class neighborhoods, the situation is different.

Here is a small part of Montgomery's article: "Washington feels more Latinized every day. The region's Latino population rose 73% between 2000 and 2010, from 408,885 to 709,193. Hispanics are 15% of the population. There are bilingual signs in stores, Spanish advisories in Metro stations and airports, bilingual ATMs and bank tellers. Spanish seems so very alive because it is fresh on the lips of so many new arrivals. Yet, simultaneously, the language is dying daily. Research shows that most grandchildren of Latino immigrants will sound like gringos. Despite parents' and grandparents' best efforts, 'Spanish appears to draw its last breath in the third generation,' said Ruben Rumbaut, professor of sociology at the University of California at Irvine, a leading

"Happenings" continued on Page 3



← Lucky Jack Johnson, the corrupt crook and former County Executive. He may only be incarcerated for seven years. Only seven years for such harm to his county? It's too lenient! And lucky Leslie Johnson, at the least a complicit spouse. She has received the light sentence of one year and one day, probably to be reduced to ten months. It's too lenient! →



expert in the survival rates of immigrant languages. He calls the United States 'the world's largest language graveyard' because of the cultural power of American English."

It is so important to retain one's heritage language and also become fluent in English. Bi- and tri-lingual people have a range of opportunities than the monolingual folks don't, and the future will see more opportunities. It is much easier for very young people to acquire a second or third language, so parents and friends should encourage that, find ways to achieve that.

The full article is at http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/parents-help-their-kids-speak-fluent-spanish-and-maintain-their-heritage/2011/11/30/gIQAVCdfdO_story.html

CORRUPTION: JJ is gone; hopefully it's ended

Emailer JR writes: "This is certainly transparency by the Baker administration—Gerry Evans was a convicted felon. He is now [working] with Doug Peters, Justin Ross, and Rushern Baker...." Valid information? Redemption?

JR recalls a *New York Times* article from 2000: "The last time a high-rolling Maryland lobbyist was convicted



of corrupt behavior, the newly incarcerated felon boldly continued to enlist clients and lobby the Statehouse from a jailhouse pay phone. ... Last month, [the] prosecution of another blue-chip Statehouse lobbyist, Gerard E. Evans, ended with a 30-month prison term and

a blistering message to the state's citizenry from the sentencing judge that 'there is a mess in Annapolis.' In sentencing Mr. Evans, who was convicted on 11 counts of mail and wire fraud, Judge J. Frederick Motz of United States District Court warned of 'a culture of corruption that has been tolerated by lobbyists, legislators and the citizens of Maryland.'"

A recent report states (accurately?) that a PGCPs contract was awarded to a company whose officers contributed \$8k to the reelection campaign of the School Board chairperson. An act of admiration? Ethically questionable? Reminds us of Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*.

Yes, Maryland has a history of corruption; Spiro Agnew and Jack Johnson come to mind. (We are far from alone. Think of Illinois's Rod Blagojevich who is off to jail

for 14 years for trying to get payment for an appointment to the then-vacant Senate seat.) We can only hope that the current Baker regime will be clean, and that Gerry Evans is a completely reformed ex-con. Yea!! JJ is gone!!

Did you know there's a web site about corruption in our state? It is: <http://www.marylandcorruption.com>.

HOUSING: The continuing value decline

The housing situation in Langley Park remains difficult for residents. Some former apartment renters have had to leave because the "affordable" rents are no longer affordable, forcing tenants to double up (or triple up) or move to an area where danger lurks and education is not always at the forefront of the schools. Those renting



Typical 1950 house

space in houses have similar difficulties, although some kindly owners have adjusted their demands.

Home owners continue to see the value of their houses decline. Regionally, the housing market has picked up, but in Prince George's County the average sale price of a house in the January-June period has declined 17% and in zip code 20783 the figure is -14%—from \$185,870 in 2010 to \$160,000 in 2011.

Should we feel sorry for the home owners in Langley Park who paid \$300,000 or more for a house just before the housing crash? Here's a scary example: the house on Quebec Street was purchased in 2006 for \$425,000 and sold three years later for \$205,000. And a house on Ruantan Street that sold in 2006 for \$322,000 sold four years later for \$135,000. Alas, some dreams turned into nightmares. These are for the small houses that in 1950 sold for \$10,000!

PROHIBITION (continued)

"With so much bloodshed, hundreds of thousands incarcerated, and millions of families torn apart, one would have to be blind not to question the failed war on drugs. Given their close proximity to the devastation it has wrought, it's only natural that the police and Border Patrol officers tasked with executing the drug war for the last four decades would have the strongest views. Yet, around the country, some have been fired for criticizing the drug war as well as supporting drug decriminalization." (*Alternet*, 6 December 2011) The drug "war" has been harmful to the Latino community in the Langley Park area and elsewhere; just ask a local resident who has relatives in Central America thanks to deportations. And of course the "war" has caused great harm to Black males, who fill our country's jails.

The drug war has been harmful to Latinos

THE DREAM ACT REFERENDUM

There's a big fight ahead

As we know, the Maryland Dream Act passed this year and then was put on hold due to a petition campaign. The result is that in November, there will be an up or down vote on the Act. Those who think young people despite not having papers should have a good chance at higher education will vote to uphold the Act (that is, to defeat the referendum), and those who have a punitive view about the young people (despite the fact that they were

Maryland Dream Act Vote: November 6th, 2012

A PROTEST IN CANADA

Thanks to our foreign correspondent for sharing.



brought to the USA as children by their parents) will vote for the referendum - and against the young people. Who will be victorious?

The outcome probably depends on grassroots efforts. Pastor Paul Johnson of Grace United Methodist Church in Takoma Park is Co-Chair of AIM (Action in Montgomery). This group is effective at community organizing, which did a lot to get the Maryland Dream Act passed. The organization is now planning an education campaign about the referendum for the spring. The up or down vote will be in November 2012. Pastor Paul plans to coordinate the Prince George's County churches plus other groups that would like to help. Those who prefer to see the referendum fail (thus upholding the Act) might want to contact Pastor Paul at 301-891-2100.

The arguments for and against the Act have been widely publicized. One not often heard is that undocumented college students who eventually return to their homeland will be marvelous informal ambassadors because they will appreciate the higher education they received in the USA.

Note: Casa de Maryland has decided not to challenge the validity or number of petition signatures approved by the State Board of Elections. But its leaders are not giving up. They will pursue the legal challenge by arguing that Dream Act legislation is an appropriations bill, thus disqualifying it from being subject to a referendum.

Thanks to Marlene Cohen for the AIM information.

**SON OF AN UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANT
Thank goodness this undocumented immigrant
got into the USA**

"A few minutes before Ronald DePinho was to give a speech to his graduating class at Fordham College in the Bronx, he sat with his father in a student lounge. It was May 1977. His father had been in the United States for nearly 40 years. The son was on his way to a career in medicine and research that would bring him to the presidency of the biggest cancer center in the country. It was a time for the father, Alvaro DePinho, to pass along some history.

"In 1939, it turned out, the elder Mr. DePinho had made his first home in America in the basement of one of the creaky three-story apartment buildings just outside the gates of the Fordham campus. He had settled in the Bronx after coming to New York as a stowaway, spending 13 days at sea in a cargo container: an illegal immigrant.

"On his way to work digging ditches, Mr. DePinho, who had had just a year or two of grade school in rural Portugal, noticed the young scholars heading to classes.

"He lived right across the street with another man in this refugee situation," Dr. DePinho said. "I didn't know this. He talked about seeing these men in ties and white shirts, the dress code back then, walking around the college. His only thought was that he wanted his children to go to college." Which they did." (From the *New York Times*, 9 December 2011)

IS YOUR CHILD EATING A HEALTH CEREAL?

Some cereals designed to appeal to children are the equivalent of having desert for breakfast. More sugar, more fat, ... more obesity. In the past three decades, obesity rates have doubled for children aged 2 to 11 and tripled for



teens aged 12 to 19. That's scary. Here is a list of some of the worst cereals—that is, the most unhealthy:

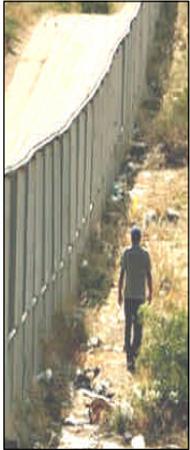
- Honey smacks; Wheaties fuel; Golden crisp; Cocoa krispies; Frosted krispies; Oh!s; Cap'n crunch original; Cap'n crunch's OOPS! All berries; Fruity pebbles; Cocoa Pebbles; Frosted flaks original; Cap'n crunch chocolately crunch; Cap'n crunch's crunch berries; and many more.

There are plenty of healthy cereals. Below is a list of the best. If you want to fight ill-health and obesity, choose your children's morning cereals carefully. (No, we are not paid to mention these! They are based upon a recent report of the Environmental Working Group, <http://www.ewg.org>.)

- Cheerios; Rice krispies gluten free; Rice chex; Kix original; Corn chex; Rice Krispies original; King vitamin; Honey kix; Wheaties; Berry-berry kix; Multi-grain cheerios.

BORDER CROSSINGS, DEPORTATIONS

In the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30, the Border Patrol arrested 327,577 people trying to cross the southern U.S. border. Meanwhile, Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials deported a record 396,906 people over the same period. [Hey, congratulations Obama administration for kicking 400,000 people out of the USA. That clearly shows that many people who were kicked out had committed no crime.] That marks the first time in decades that formal removals from the U.S. outpaced arrests at the border.



The number of arrests of people trying to sneak across the border has been steadily declining since 2006, after an all-time high of more than 1.6 million apprehensions in 2000. During those 10 years, more immigrants have become settled residents of the U.S.

KNOW ABOUT 'FAIR'?

The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) is a very anti-immigrant organization founded in 1979; its offices are located in Washington D.C. Here's an example of its leader Dan Stein's thinking: "Immigrants don't come all church-loving, freedom-loving, God-fearing ... Many of them hate America, hate everything that the United States stands for. Talk to some of these Central Americans." It's too bad that some FAIR staffers don't talk with Central Americans. Rather, they seem to have nightmares about immigrants and then write them down as something valid.

COPS AND COATS

The Prince George's County Police Department's Community Services Division, in partnership with One Warm Coat and Homeless Outreach, Inc., distributed more than 150 coats to community members in need earlier this month. Thanks, officers; that's great. It's another way that you help the people of Prince George's County. The partnership between the Police Department and One Warm Coat was established this year by Corporal Jessica Mercer of the Community Services Division. Through Corporal Mercer's efforts, over 600 coats



"Happenings" continued from Page 4

have been collected for distribution to community members in need this season. Hey Jessica: Hopefully, some year you can distribute coats at a location in or near Langley Park. There are quite a few people in the area without proper winter clothing.

KNOW HISTORY, BECOME A CITIZEN? What about staying a citizen?

According to a recent national poll conducted for the *National Journal*, a majority of Americans state that they favor allowing some or all "illegal" immigrants to remain in the United States. Asked what should the USA do with the millions of "illegal" (the word used in the survey) residents, only 25% said they should all be deported; 28% say that all undocumented immigrants should be allowed "to stay, provided they have broken no other laws and commit to learning English and U.S. history." Fully 39% said that the United States should "deport some, but allow those who have been here for many years and have broken no other laws to stay here legally."

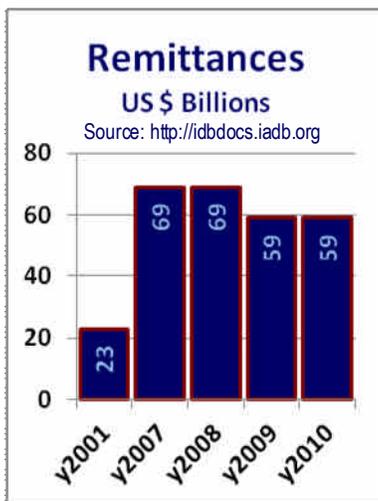
Let's hope that the history requirement is in the possible future legislation. After all, few native-born citizens know our history well, so someone should have our heritage in mind. A recent poll of college students at College Park revealed that only 3% of them knew the significance of the December 7th date. We wonder: How many citizens know in what year women were allowed to vote in all US elections? (1920) And when did our war with Mexico lead to the transfer of sovereignty of the northern part of Mexico to the USA? (1848)

"From the Halls of Montezuma to the shores of Tripoli; We fight our country's battles in the air, on land, and sea."
(Marines' Hymn)

Here's some relatively unknown history: The Mexican-American War came to a close after the United States sent its army deep into Mexico resulting in the capture of Mexico City and Veracruz. The invasion culminated with the storming of the Chapultepec Castle. The war ended with the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Mexico was forced to cede all of present-day California, Nevada and Utah plus most of Arizona, New Mexico and Colorado. It also relinquished all claims to Texas. Thus the former territory of Mexico was cut by about half! *Some people ask: Should the USA give back the territory taken from Mexico?*

REMITTANCES

Not surprisingly, remittances to Latin America and the



Caribbean have fallen in recent years thanks to the global recession that has especially hurt employment in the construction industry—the industry hardest hit by our recession and the post-recession lag.

As the graphic reveals, remittances soared during the growth economy of the early years of the decade, and the decline of the recession has been about 15%.

After a decline in 2009, remittances to

BOOK: IMMIGRANT BUSINESSWOMEN

Many women back in their home countries are confined to the house or in business to micro-businesses. In the USA, immigrant women are contributing more and more to our country's economy. The book, *Immigration and Women* (NYU press, 2011) explores this transformation. Here are three paragraphs from the introduction:

"When Americans picture an immigrant entrepreneur, they likely imagine a man who began the migration of his family, later bringing his wife over to become a volunteer assistant in the shop. This image is straying farther and farther from reality as more women open their own enterprises. Yet the idea that immigrant women might be the owners and originators of some of our restaurants, motels, Silicon Valley hi-tech firms, local real-estate agencies, or other entrepreneurial ventures has yet to become conventional wisdom.

"Today, immigrant women entrepreneurs abound in every region of the United States. In fact, the ten states where the most immigrant woman-owned businesses are located include states in each region of the country. The top three cities are Los Angeles, New York, and Washington, DC. Several businesses owned by immigrant women are making their way into the lists of top-grossing firms in arenas such as technology. According to the 2000 U.S. decennial census, 575,740 foreign-born women who immigrated as adults reported that they were self-employed in their own incorporated or unincorporated businesses ...

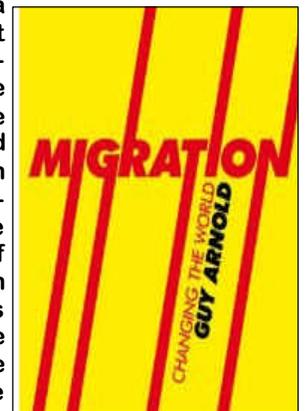
"In 2010, 40% of all immigrant business owners were women (1,451,091 immigrant men and 980,575 immigrant women). That same year, 20% of all women business owners were foreign-born."



BOOK: MIGRATION, CHANGING THE WORLD

Yes, changing the world. Just think about the USA and Europe fifty years ago. Guy Arnold's book (Pluto Press, 2011) looks at the positive side of the transformation.

"Constant migration is a worldwide phenomenon that creates sharp divisions between those who accept the need for migrants and welcome the contributions they make and those who oppose them on xenophobic grounds. Guy Arnold provides a comprehensive survey of the consequences of migration. Arnold studies both the massive internal migrations in China and India that drive economic development and the influx of cheap labor into the advanced economies of the USA and EU. He shows that migrants are essential to advanced countries, filling skills gaps and to bolstering aging and static populations. He argues that the constant flow of people in all directions should be welcomed as a positive assault upon outdated, narrow nationalism. [The book is] packed with statistics that support the argument that migration is a force for positive change.



The Education/Schools Page

ACTION LANGLEY PARK

The December 8th ALP meeting was primarily devoted to education: the current state of the schooling and what should be done to contribute to needed improvements. The grim facts faced us: about 50% of area Latino students drop out before getting a diploma; many students have to repeat grades; and too many graduates are not prepared either for college or for a trade or other occupation. And so we hope in the coming weeks to try to generate ideas on how to help.

One idea: have students from U. of Maryland, PGCC, and Washington Adventist U. come to 9th grade classes at Northwestern HS and High Point HS to talk about positive futures.

Readers of BLP are encouraged to share their ideas; send them for publication to our email address: actionlangleypark@yahoo.com. Perhaps only the central administration of PGPCS can solve these problems. But we think at the local level (school and community) some positives are possible.

FRENCH? SPANISH!

Non!
Si!

It's great that PGPCS offers French immersion at several schools. French is a wonderful language, even the Paris version. But the largest international language category of people in the USA speak Spanish, and our country now is about 15% Latino/a—most of whom speak the Spanish language. Could it be that the school system is stuck in a past when French was the language of first choice in US schools? But please note: we're about to enter 2012, and in 2012 and into the foreseeable future, Spanish is our country's main second language. Perhaps by 2050 or 2075, it will be Chinese. But not now. So please, Bill Hite and others, establish several Spanish immersion programs. Show you're up to date!

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TEACH FOR AMERICA

The nonprofit organization Teach for America aims to eliminate educational inequality. It is partnering with the Hispanic Scholarship Fund (HSF) to start a Latino teacher recruiting initiative to help solve the apparent deficit of Latino teachers in the U.S. More than 21% of children enrolled in schools are Latino, while only 7% of Latinos are teachers. Some experts advocate for a diverse staff, claiming that it might direct students to have better attendance and get higher test scores. The evidence on race/ethnic matching is very shaky, but opening up teaching opportunities for Latinos and Latinas is certainly a positive. Of course the 21/7 gap is largely caused by the poor education and high dropout rate in many primary and secondary schools, so the real solution is to transform pre-collegiate education by having quality teachers and strong links between schools and parents. (That's why it was a tragic mistake for PGPCS to let parent liaisons go.)

TEACH IMMIGRATION

Four high schools on Long Island are participating in Teach Immigration: Immigration Law and Policy. Working with their teacher and a local immigration attorney participating students will organize a service learning project. The goal of the program is to increase the knowl-

edge, ability, and dispositions of high school teachers to engage their students in the study of immigration law and policy. In doing so, the project seeks to increase students' knowledge about immigration on a national and local level and to engage students in discussions about how immigration laws and policies affect their own communities. For more information, go to <http://www.teachimmigration.org/>.

STUDY, DON'T EXERCISE!

That's what U of Illinois researcher Angela Wiley has found is a prevailing preference in Mexico. "In Mexico, where there are very high rates of obesity and diabetes, we'd expect parents to encourage their teens to be active, but this study tells us the opposite is often true, at least for college-bound students. Or, parents may believe their teen's physical activity, which often takes place in a social context, takes away from family time." Is this finding generally applicable? To those of Mexican heritage in the USA? Perhaps to Central American heritage residents in the USA? If so, school personnel and others need to work hard to modify the culture. It's nice to be a college graduate, but not at the expense of a long life. Of course, exercise can enhance the quality of studying, learning.



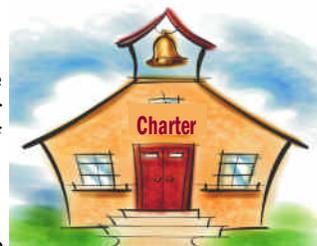
WHAT ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS?

Some people argue that traditional public schools (TPS) are failures, and that the way to better education is to increase significantly the number of young people going to charter schools. So what does research reveal? The Center for Research on Educational Outcomes at Stanford University has released a report with these results:

- ♦Of the 2403 charter schools reflected on the curve, 46% of charter schools have math gains that are statistically indistinguishable from the average growth among their TPS comparisons.

- ♦Charters whose math growth exceeded their TPS equivalent growth by a significant amount account for 17% of the total.

- ♦The remaining group, 37% of charter schools, posted math gains that were significantly below what their students would have seen if they enrolled in local traditional public schools instead.



So the message seems to be: If parents can find those one in six better charter schools, good. But for 5/6 of the charter schools, TPSs are equal or better. From the report: "This study reveals in unmistakable terms that, in the aggregate, charter students are not faring as well as their TPS counterparts. Further, tremendous variation in academic quality among charters is the norm, not the exception. The problem of quality is the most pressing issue that charter schools and their supporters face." Thus we must all work hard to improve the current public schools; we need not flee.

Source: <http://credo.stanford.edu/reports>

SERIOUS ENTERTAINMENT

Our district police office sent this meeting information

A few days ago, there was a hearing about establishments that have filed for Special Entertainment Permits. The establishments listed below are those within police District I.

The notice reads, in part: "Notice is hereby given: That the following establishments have filed for a Special Entertainment Permit pursuant to Section 6-201 of Article 2B of the Annotated Code of Maryland: A Public Hearing will be held"

Cococabana

Class B, Beer, Wine and Liquor, Cocody, Inc.
2031 A University Blvd., Hyattsville, 20783

Cuzco Restaurant #2

Class B, Beer, Wine and Liquor, Cuzcorp, Inc.
2051 University Blvd., Hyattsville, 20783

Galaxy Sports Bar

Class B (BLX), Beer, Wine and Liquor, Y.S. Enterprises, Inc.
2031 University Blvd., Hyattsville, 20783

Golden Bull

Class B, Beer, Wine and Liquor, Coach Lamp Inn, Inc.
9107 Riggs Road, Adelphi, 20783

King Kong Restaurant

Class B, Beer, Wine and Liquor, East Wind, Inc.
2350 University Blvd. E, Adelphi, 20783

Tick Tock Liquor & Restaurant

Class B+, Beer, Wine and Liquor, Melhi Corporation
1820 University Blvd., Hyattsville, 20783

NOTES SUPPLIED BY BLP

◆As directed under Section 6-201 of Article 2B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the Board of License Commissioners is authorized to issue Special Entertainment Permits to qualified businesses with Class B Licenses. The Special Entertainment Permit authorizes the holder to provide entertainment, allow patron dancing, and assess a cover charge under conditions as determined by the Board and in compliance with all County laws. The annual fee for this Special Entertainment Permit is \$1,500.



◆In order to apply for the Special Entertainment Permit, the applicant shall develop a security plan to prevent the premises from causing a threat to the peace and safety of the surrounding area and provide evidence that the security plan will be implemented. The applicant may utilize sworn security personnel as part of the plan if the sworn security personnel have police powers in the jurisdiction where the premises is located.

◆An annual renewal of the Special Entertainment Permit shall include a Renewal Application to be filed between August 15th and September 15th to ensure that the licensee may continue to offer entertainment while the Board considers the application.

There may not have been relevant evidence about the secondary effects of the changes in the offerings of these businesses. And so the discussion might have been an ideological battle drawing upon various religious beliefs. Let's hope not.



"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

—Winston Churchill

HOLY SEE

NOW A MEMBER OF THE IOM

VATICAN CITY, 6 December 2011 (VIS) - The Holy See yesterday became a member State of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The Holy See's request was accepted by the Geneva-based institution in the course of its recent plenary.

The OIM was established in 1951 and bases its activities on the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits both migrants and society. It has 130 member States and around 100 observers, including States and non-governmental organisations.

Speaking on Vatican Radio yesterday, Archbishop Silvano M. Tomasi C.S., Holy See permanent observer to the United Nations at Geneva, noted that, "as we are witnessing a continuous increase in the number of migrants and refugees in the world, it is important for us to be present and to participate in the efforts of the international community with the specific contribution of the Holy See: an ethical voice which gives a fresh interpretation to these new situations. ... What must prevail is not so much politics, as the need to meet the human needs of these people, as they migrate through the various regions of the world".

"[To] serve all people generously irrespective of their religious faith, colour, or legal status."

Archbishop Tomasi recalled how the Church has always been in the frontline in helping migrants, through a broad network of Catholic organisations. For this reason, "collaboration with the structures of the international community is a logical operative step helping us to make our service even more effective", he said. Ecclesiastical structures "serve all people generously, irrespective of their religious faith, colour or legal status. What counts is human beings and their dignity, and this is often at risk in the situations of marginality which arise as people move from one country to another seeking work or new forms of survival". The Church's ethical contribution will, then, focus on "the defence of human beings and their dignity".

This voice is certainly welcome. Let's hope many people in the USA and elsewhere hear the voice.

Thanks John Geron for calling this to our attention.

"Tour" continued from Page 1

School, and especially visit when the organization Beyond These Walls is teaching art and reading on a Friday afternoon. And we can sneak across University Boulevard to let the tourists see CentroNia. From its website: "Visit CentroNia and see children building bilingual literacy skills with a native speaker, teens experimenting in music with our artists-in-residence, or budding entrepreneurs preparing to build a quality childcare business."

Some visitors will visit in Spring, and perhaps they can time their visit to coincide with Langley Park Day. They can watch music and dance, have their children involved in arts and games, and they can top off the visit with time in the health fair.

To give greater authenticity, we can hire some people to pretend to be Immigration officers or members of the Border Patrol. But they will be friendly, unthreatening.

Thanks, Cultura! A wonderful idea! Of course, the PG County's planned destruction will have to be stopped.

For more about Latino neighborhood tourism, go to http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/12/05/latino-neighborhoods-tourism_n_1129331.html

SORRY

Where you're born
Is where you'll die
Unless you're awfully lucky.
Cause walls are built
And gates are closed
No matter your pain
No matter no gain.
You are condemned
By where your mother
Pushed you into life.
No matter the horrors
Of that life,
No matter your brains
Or brawn
Or talent;
No matter your loves
And passions.
You are there,
Not here,
And your chances
Of here not there
Are only in your dreams,
Not in your realities.
Your life will be
No good house,
No good school,
No good job,
No life like in
Those old issues of
Good Housekeeping.
So take the pain
Because your life
Is enclosed
In fences
With no gates.
And most of us
Aren't even sorry.

Joe's Movement Emporium

This nearby arts center at 3309 Bunker Hill Road in Mount Rainier (301 6991819) has performances, events, and classes. For instance: Mason/Rhynes Productions presents Late Night Expressions on Saturday, December 17, 2011 @ 10p.m. The Late Night Series gives artists opportunities to express themselves in more mature and untraditional ways. The ticket purchase includes hors d'oeuvres and drinks throughout the night.

Central America in 2010 began to grow. Remittances in 2010 to South America still declined.

THE AWFUL SECURE COMMUNITIES

Puts US citizens in jail

A growing number of United States citizens have been detained under Obama administration programs intended to detect illegal immigrants who are arrested by local police officers. A *New York Times* (14 December 2011) report provides more evidence of the deeply flawed Secure Communities program: "An American college student, Romy Campos, was sent to a California jail on an immigration detainer. In a spate of recent cases across the country, American citizens have been confined in local jails after federal immigration agents, acting on flawed information from Homeland Security databases, instructed the police to hold them for investigation and possible deportation.

"Americans said their vehement protests that they were citizens went unheard by local police officers and jailers for days, with no communication with federal immigration agents to clarify the situation. Any case where an American is held, even briefly, for immigration investigation is a potential wrongful arrest."



Of course looks are the big clue. If you look Mexican,* you're probably undocumented. Racial profiling has a wonderful (full of wonder) vicious history in the USA. So perhaps it was obvious that Ms. Campos had swum the Rio Bravo after years working on the farms of Mexico. Really!? Check out her photo.

*Stereotypes about looks abound in the USA and perhaps in most countries. As anyone familiar with Mexico knows, the range of looks is enormous. There are quite a few people in Mexico who have Ms. Campos's features, and of course quite a few who do not.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS SUPPORT UNDOCUMENTED

American Roman Catholic bishops sent a strong message of support to undocumented immigrants on the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In a letter to immigrants, 33 American Catholic bishops suggested that Americans should be thankful to undocumented immigrants for their contributions to the USA. Archbishop Garcia-Siller: "Despite your contributions to the well-being of our country, instead of receiving our thanks, you are often treated as criminals because you have violated current immigration laws. In your suffering, we see the face of Jesus Christ." To the antis: read the bible!

PEARL HARBOR

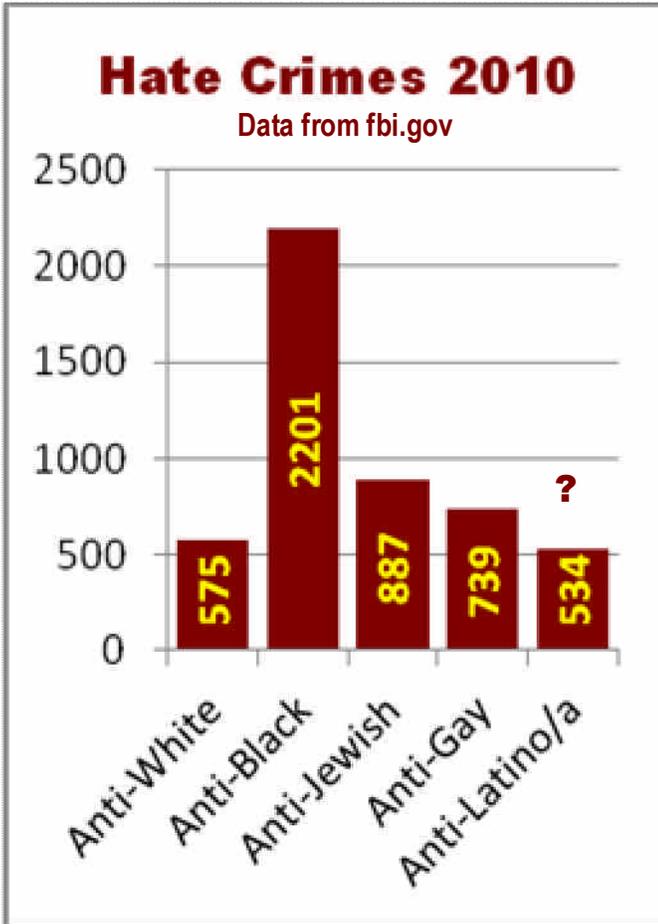
What did you think about a few days ago, on December 7th? Some people (probably the more "mature" among us) thought

about December 7th, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in Oahu, Hawaii. The result was a devastating blow to American military forces, and the entry of the USA into World War II.



HATE CRIMES

Alas, the USA is far from a healthy record of few or new hate crimes. The most frequent bias motivation is against a race, followed by religion. The most frequent bias against race is focused on Blacks; for religion, anti-Jewish bias is the more frequent.



The anti-Latino/a hate crimes seem modest compared with anti Black, White, Jewish, and Gay. What could account for the modest number given the nationwide anti-immigration rhetoric—and of course with few exceptions, anti-immigrant means anti-Latino? Underreporting seems to be the obvious answer. We know that many Latinos are afraid to contact the police or other authority, in part because of the fear of deportation (which can happen to those with papers as well as those without). That fear has been magnified by the deeply flawed Secure Communities Program which may lead any contact with the police (back light not working on one's automobile, speeding 41 in a 30 mph zone, etc.) to deportation. So many crimes are not reported, including domestic violence, an auto accident, robbery, assault—and hate crimes. How many hate crimes took place against Latinos in 2010? The number must be well over 1,000. Note: anti-Muslim acts must be underreported too.

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.

2011

The Foreclosure Prevention Project is open Mondays through Fridays 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Free; offered by Community Legal Services. The intake line is 301.864.8186.

December 16—Flu Vaccination Fair, 9 to 11 a.m., shots for adults at Cool Spring ES, Adelphi.

December 16—Free Community Dinner & Food Distribution at 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.

2012

January 5 & more—Physics is Fun—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!

January 10—LPCC Children's Programs. It's the start date for programs at the Center, including tutoring for 6-12 year olds and poetry for 8-13 year olds. Check on the offerings—and costs—at 301 445-4508.

March 15—Action Langley Park meets at 7 p.m. at the Langley Park Community Center.

April 21—Maryland Day, 9 a.m.-6 p.m. at the University of Maryland. Lots to see and do; a mile east of Langley Park.

April 28-29—Science and Engineering Festival: "Our mission is to re-energize 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! In DC. 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.

BARRIO DE LANGLEY PARK

This neighborhood planning newsletter is edited and published by Action Langley Park, with a supportive link to the Langley Park Project of the University of Maryland as an element of the university's community outreach. The Editor is Bill Hanna, who is a university professor and also Executive Secretary of Action Langley Park.

BLP appears irregularly, but approximately every two weeks. Submissions and suggestions are welcome at actionlangley-park@yahoo.com. Back issues of BLP will soon be available on the web.

BLP is read in the United States, Canada, and Mexico! Maybe elsewhere too! If you have friends or associates elsewhere in Maryland or the USA or elsewhere who are interested in immigration issues, please pass BLP along or let us add the person to one of our email lists.

For information about Action Langley Park, a nonprofit 501c3 organization, email actionlangley-park@yahoo.com.