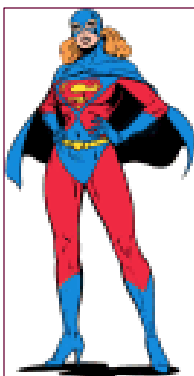


Barrio de Langley Park

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PRINCIPAL POWER IN PGCPs There's a Plus and a Minus

In mid-November, Schools Chancellor William Hite sent a letter to the schools and others announcing a new-for-PGCPS policy with regards to the budget. Whereas principals had little discretion in the past, now they will have control over 50% of their budget. Principal Power!! The letter follows:



The Principal

Dear Parents and Community Members,

Last school year, we laid the foundation to enhance equity in funding decisions by piloting a system called Student Based Budgeting (SBB) at eight schools. SBB allocates dollars directly to schools based on the number of students enrolled and the specific needs of those students. Certain student needs and characteristics, such as grade levels or English language learners, will be given a predetermined weight that translates to real dollar amounts. This formula is gaining momentum in large school districts across the country, including Boston, Philadelphia, San Diego and Baltimore. After listening to principals in that pilot group and working through their concerns, we are rolling out SBB this year system-wide with the exception of early childhood centers, alternative schools, charter schools and regional centers.

Prince George's County, like many school systems, has traditionally given dollars to schools based on factors such as the number of students and staffing ratios. That formula did little to address students' and schools' diverse needs. It's a simple fact that every school is not the same. For too long, however, our funding system suggested otherwise.

In short, this means that now you and your child's school can have greater confidence that money is following students. What this means for Prince George's County Public Schools is that we are literally putting dollars behind our stated goals to empower school leaders, shift central office to better support schools, and balance accountability with increased autonomy.

To address your questions and concerns, we have created an in-depth budget section on the PGCPS website ... Your

"Power" continued on Page 2

Thanks, Erwin!

Erwin Mack has been an activist in the Langley-Takoma area for almost three decades, and now he is in the process of "retiring" (the word retiring focuses only on his job as Executive Director of the Takoma Langley Crossroads Development Authority, not what will fill his days). Erwin founded the help-area-businesses organization.



Leading or representing the CDA, Erwin pushed hard for cooperation among businesspeople, reduction of pedestrian injuries and deaths, and much more.

A retirement party for Erwin took place on November 15. About 100 people joined the praise-filled celebration, including state and local officials: Franchot, Ramirez, and many more. The ALP executive secretary attended.

One of Erwin's hobbies is antique automobiles, and on special events he and his car can be seen charming the audience; sometimes he's dressed as Santa Clause. (Maybe he's the real Santa Clause.) Keep that car in good shape, Erwin!

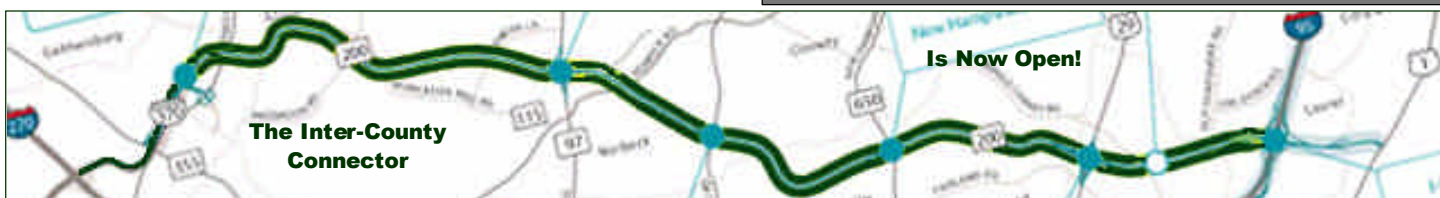


Erwin has been a friend of Langley Park and Action Langley Park, and we're sure that relationship will continue—but more individually than with the CDA. Thanks, Erwin; and to be continued.

GOODBYE JACK JOHNSON

Our dearly beloved ex-County Executive will soon be sentenced to a maximum of fourteen years in prison. Only? "As one of the most egregious and notorious instances of corruption and obstruction of justice in Maryland history, the government submits that Jack Johnson's criminal conduct calls for a very significant sentence that will promote respect for federal law and deter other public officials from engaging in corruption and obstructing justice." Maybe Jack can wave at Leslie in a nearby cell.

(Quote is from sentencing memo.)



"Power" continued from Page 1



child's principal will also contact you in the coming weeks to explain how you can be engaged and involved throughout this process.

Prince George's County Public Schools is committed to making transparent budget decisions that work in the best interests of all children regardless of zip code. We hope that you will be an active participant in this process.

Best regards, **William R. Hite, Jr.**

The positive is that the principal knows (or should know) more about the needs of the school than a central administrator. So she or he can put that knowledge to work in the school. All good.

With the continuing budget cuts, fewer dollars will be available to schools to meet the increasing needs of smaller classes—thus more teachers, liaisons with parents, special tutorial help for students having difficulties, sports programs, counselors, and a long list of other items hard to imagine by an outsider. There will be lots of pressures on the principal.

Many parents will become more active. Parent power: good. But... the conflicts among those with different interests (for instance, the Special Ed mother vs. the Sports Freak father) will come directly to the principal, who will not be able to say, "They did it." Should we cut Special Ed to hire a futbol coach? Or hire a parent liaison but fire a classroom teacher? Tough times ahead.



So let's praise the school system for giving principals more power, but let's do everything we can to minimize school-level conflicts that are certain to face the principals. Otherwise, we'll have more good principals leaving the county.

TIMING

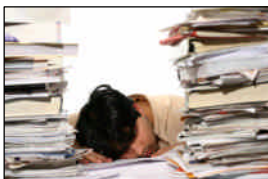
- **November** – Schools submit initial budget proposals to Central Office for review.
- **January** – Schools receive an updated enrollment projection with an updated budget allocation.

SOME CHALLENGES FROM THE LITERATURE*

Schools may neglect to provide adequate training for teachers, principals, school board members, parents, and community members who are participating in the budget decisionmaking. Participants lacking in problem-solving and consensual decision-making skills may find themselves in an adversarial environment struggling for power and focusing on procedural issues instead of student learning. Ongoing training opportunities are critical to creating well-functioning decision-making.

School districts may neglect to recognize the time and resources required for change to site-based management. All too often, schools find themselves on the road to change without the proper support. Expecting teachers to work extra hours without pay will create a frustrated, burned-out staff. Finding time and money for teachers to engage in the added responsibilities of effective school-based decision making is key to supporting schools.

"[There's] a bureaucratic ailment that's becoming a region-wide classroom epidemic: the overburdening of



DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE OUR CHILDREN

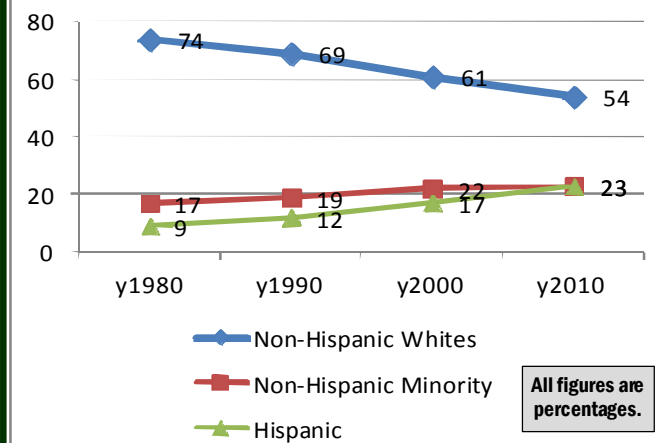
In several states, non-Hispanic white children are now less than half of all children. The 10 states (and Washington, DC) with a "minority majority" child population are Hawaii (87%); Washington, DC (83%); New Mexico (74%); California (73%); Texas (66%); Nevada (61%); Arizona (58%); Florida (54%); Maryland (54%); Georgia (53%); and Mississippi (51%). These are the states likely to have an overall minority majority population within a few decades.



Maryland's all/children percentages in 2010: White 58%/46%, Black 29%/32%, Asian 6%/5%; Hispanic of any race 8%/11%. Other categories left out here include two or more races, some other race, Native Americans, and Pacific Islanders.

Nearly three-quarters of the child population in the

EURO NON-HISPANIC UNDER-18 CHILDREN = 54% THE USA IS CHANGING FAST!



100 largest cities belong to a racial or Hispanic minority group. Note the overall USA trend from 1980 to 2010 (see graph above). These data are largely a reflection of fertility rates. The Non-Hispanic White fertility rate is 1.8, which is below the replacement rate. Hispanics are 2.9, and Non-Hispanic Asians as well as Black Non-Hispanics are at 2.1 (just at the replacement rate). The number of children in Maryland has slight declined over the 2000-2010 period.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has developed an "Index of Child Well-Being by Race," with the higher the better. Asian children rank first with a score of 174 followed by Non-Hispanic Whites at 130. Then come Hispanics, 86, and Blacks, 63. We *must* make improvements.

All data in this section about children from the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

teachers with paperwork. Everyone from school board members to administrators agrees it's a problem, but it keeps getting bigger anyway. The mania for more student data, more meetings to discuss the data and more high-level monitoring of the data is demoralizing teachers and undermining education."

*Source of first two paragraphs (which are not quoted): <http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/enwmnt/go/go700.htm>. The third paragraph is from Robert McCartney, "Pedagogy vs. Paperwork," *Washington Post*, 13 November 2011

HAPPENINGS

And Much More!

ALERTS FOR PARENTS

Health: A panel convened by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute has called for all children in the 9 to 11 age group to have a cholesterol test. High cholesterol in this age group makes heart disease more likely later in life. So, parents, get your 9-11 child to a clinic soon.

Harassment: A recent AAUW survey indicates that among young people in grades 7 through 12, fully 48% of respondents indicate that they have experienced sexual harassment. It might be a malicious rumor or a lewd photograph or groping or more. Clearly, this is a serious problem that must be of great concern to school officials and parents. There are often negative emotional effects, and they may take a toll on students'—and especially girls'—education, resulting in decreased productivity and increased absenteeism from school.

SCHOOLS

Latino/a teachers: About one in five students in Prince George's County schools is a Latino or Latina. But only one in fifty teachers is Latino/a. So the school system is trying to hire more teachers in this ethnic category. Okay, fine. But what research is available to demonstrate that an ethnic or racial match enhances the education of children?

An important study issued by the Rand Corporation, "Does Matching Student and Teacher Racial/Ethnic Group Improve Math Scores?" addresses the issue. Here is a key finding: "After adjusting for several student and teacher characteristics, only teaching experience showed a statistically significant correlation with student test scores." Note that there are many studies of the matching issue, and consensus has not yet been achieved.

A related issue is the role model of a match. Does a Latino/a student have higher aspirations if s/he has some teachers in the school who are also Latino/a? That would seem to be the case, but again the research results are mixed.

Having an experienced—and good—teacher does make a difference, and such a teacher is in demand. (At every level, few teachers are great or awful; most are in a large middle category.) We sure need more of the best in the Langley Park area ... and throughout the nation.

Raising money: These days, almost all schools need more money than is available. Some of the cuts have been brutal. So how can extra money be raised in a neighborhood where wealth is not abundant? Some California schools have found an answer (reported in the *Los Angeles Times* (23 October 2011): "Parents picking up their children can also grab dinner from food trucks parked on the grounds of at least a dozen Southern California schools. They are part of a growing trend as schools try to make up for a triple whammy—reduced budgets, fewer donors, and new state fundraising guidelines.... Food trucks have become a popular solution." And for school football games: "In a recent Saturday, 22 food trucks circled the football field under high-voltage floodlights as music blared in the speakers that normally

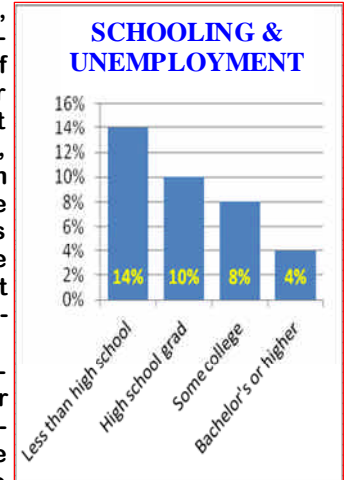


carry the voices of sports announcers. More than 1,000 residents, students and food truck followers sat on the field on blankets, in lawn chairs and around folded dinner tables." This would be a good solution for Prince George's County too—unless rigid official thinking would stand in the way—as it has in the past.

How Well Do 4th Graders Read? Alas, these 2009 national figures show how large the gaps in achievement still are. The below-grade-level figures: Asians 20%, Euros 22%, Hispanics 51%, and Blacks 52%. An increasingly large percentage of Americans are Hispanic or Black, so if we care about the future of our country, we'd better raise the bottom tier. Of course, closing the gap is inappropriate unless it is closed by raising the bottom tier; we don't want 36% of all children to be below-grade-level.

Does school accomplishment pay off? The October unemployment report reminds us that the more schooling, the less likely one is to be unemployed. (See graph.)

Data from Annie E. Casey Foundation, Bureau of Labor Statistics



CRIMES

MS-13 shifts focus: The seemingly good news is that MS-13 has shifted from violence. And the bad news is that the new "enterprise" is under-aged prostitution. Here are two paragraphs from a report in the *Washington Post* (14 November 2011):

"In recent months, authorities have arrested four alleged MS-13 members or associates in Northern Virginia on federal prostitution-related charges involving juvenile victims. Three have been convicted. Last month, a federal judge sentenced the man who prostituted [a] 12-year-old to life in prison, calling it 'the most difficult case I have ever listened to.'

"In recent years, authorities say, MS-13 in the D.C. area has largely stepped back from the violent attacks that helped cement its national reputation as a street gang whose motto, 'rape, control, kill,' instilled fear in many communities. Although the gang continues to engage in illegal activity ranging from extortion to drug dealing, the recent arrests signal that it is working to expand its criminal enterprises."

Commented an ICE official stationed in Maryland: "Street gangs pose a growing public safety concern to our communities." They sure do. The challenge is for area residents to work hard to let their children know the great dangers that come with gang involvement. Do the boys want to inflict serious harm on someone? Do the girls want to become sex-slaves? The pressures are great, and the defensive fight has to be powerful.

Hate Crimes: The FBI reports that Latino/as are the target of an increasing number of hate crimes. And alas, many Latino/as are afraid to report such crimes, so there is a significant underreporting.



DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES: Latino/as are coming!

North Brentwood: This nearby neighborhood is steeped in Black heritage. But of late, Latinos have been moving in. Just in the last decade, the number quadrupled. Quite a change! The change has been handled fairly well, but there are some points of contention. One is parking: who gets to park in front of someone's house? Another is remodeling a house, thus cutting the tie to a house that might have historic meaning to the oldtimers.

North Brentwood is perhaps following the lead of Langley Park, which was majority Black in the 1970s but now, of course, is predominantly Latino. But maybe there will be a reversal; Africans are moving into Langley Park at a brisk pace, so who knows what the 2020 census will show.

The Plains: For many years, towns in the Great Plains have been losing population. Young people moved to big cities of opportunity, birthrates dropped, and old folks passed away. Dying towns. But maybe no more: The Latino/as are moving in!

From the *New York Times* (14 November 2011): "For generations, the story of the small rural town of the Great Plains, including the dusty tabletop landscape of western Kansas, has been one of exodus — of businesses closing, classrooms shrinking and, year after year, communities withering as fewer people arrive than leave and as fewer are born than are buried. That flight continues, but another demographic trend has breathed new life into the region. Hispanics are arriving in numbers large enough to offset or even exceed the decline in the white population in many places."

The influx of Latino/as has not led all to enthusiastically welcome the newcomers. The old traditions are dissipating, and the quiet of small town rural life has been enlivened a bit. There are even some oldtimers who say that they feel like strangers in their changed towns. But change it is, and almost certainly change it will be.

HOT LOCAL POLITICS!

Redistricting may not be final! Some Republicans and others have challenged the redistricting recently approved by the Maryland governor and legislature. U.S. District Judge Roger W. Titus turned down an effort to dismiss the case and called for a three-judge panel to be seated to hear the case. If the plaintiffs succeed, the timing of Maryland's April 3 congressional primary might have to be changed. Hot stuff!

Donna! Congressman Steny Hoyer, the House minority whip, is backing incumbent Donna Edwards in the race to represent Maryland's Fourth Congressional District.

Raise for Council members? What a time to accept a raise (bringing the salary to just under \$100,000)! So far, if news reports are correct, only one councilman has stated that he is likely to accept the raise: Will Campos.

Council members duck the slots vote: Should the county legalize slot machine gambling within its borders? We don't know, but surely members of the County Council should have the answer. And yet five out of the nine council members voted not to decide, but to send the matter



Candidate Gingrich: Fire union janitors and put 9 to 14 year olds to work cleaning schools.*

to the state for a future referendum. Aren't democratic leaders chosen to lead? To decide? Well, the non-deciders did have an inappropriate factor interfering with the decision: The leader of the Maryland Senate reportedly threatened the county, saying that money for a new hospital would not be forthcoming if slots were not approved. So if the five council members avoided a vote, the Senate President should be tossed out of office for such inappropriate behavior. Who is that Senate President? Spiro Agnew? Mike Miller?

WHERE ARE MARYLAND'S POOR?

The state's poverty rate is just under 11%. Here's a stunning finding: There are more poor people in Montgomery County (64,607) than in Prince George's County (63,748)! The leader is Baltimore City with 127,205 poor; Baltimore County's number of poor is 63,931. The state's total is 509,141; thus about one in four poor Marylanders are in Baltimore City. But we're better off than those in Virginia; that state's total of people below the poverty line is 805,555. [Data from 2009]

Isabel Sawhill, senior fellow with the Brookings Institution in Washington, said she expects national poverty numbers to continue growing—unless services and jobs are increased for the poor. She also said that the federal poverty line is too low and doesn't include many families and individuals who make slightly too much money for government aid. But they need aid—you know, the aid that is about to be cut. Will those of us with homes welcome the homeless into our homes as the temperature drops? Or...?

Nationally, about 15% of all Americans are poor. Children 17 and under have the highest rate, 22%; Latino/as and Blacks have the highest of percentages of the poor. These ranks also hold for the revised system of counting.

In the spirit of addressing the problems of the poor, on November 17 Congress slashed—about 38%—funding for HUD's housing construction funds for the poor. Will the President sign the bill?

DON'T YOU DARE WORK to avoid starvation

According to a November 15, 2011 article in the *Wall Street Journal*, "The Obama administration has extended its crackdown on employers of illegal immigrants, notifying 500 companies across the nation in recent weeks that the government will inspect their hiring records." Under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), employers must require newly hired employees to fill out Form I-9, documenting identity and lawful work status. There are consequences for employers and/or employees if the form is not properly completed, or if the documents are fraudulent. There are also protections in the law for employees who face related document abuse, national origin discrimination, or citizenship status discrimination.

MONEY

County budget anger: The clear goal of county officials is economic development; other matters seem secondary. And so County Executive Baker has a \$50 million fund to attract development or help it along the way. Most observers think that such a fund will indeed help the county's development goals, but not all residents are aboard. Below are two recent emails. Let's hope they don't understand the value of the fund as well as develop-



DEPORTATION: WORDS & DEEDS

What is the country's deportation policy? Is it what President Obama recently said it was, or is it what is happening on the ground? Is there hope that families and law-abiding single men or women will not be tossed out - without legal aid? Is there hope that the Secure Communities program will be revised so that only the criminals will be targeted for deportation? In some states, the number of deportees has recently soared. Is this really what the President wants?

From the *New York Times* (13 November 2011): "A new Obama administration policy to avoid deportations of illegal immigrants who are not criminals has been applied very unevenly across the country and has led to vast confusion both in immigrant communities and among agents charged with carrying it out. Since June, when the policy was unveiled, frustrated lawyers and advocates have seen a steady march of deportations of immigrants with no criminal record and with extensive roots in the United States, who seemed to fit the administration's profile of those who should be allowed to remain. But at the same time, in other cases, immigrants on the brink of expulsion saw their deportations halted at the last minute, sometimes after public protests. In some instances, immigration prosecutors acted, with no prodding from advocates, to abandon deportations of immigrants with strong ties to this country whose only violation was their illegal status."



On November 17, ICE's Principal Legal Advisor directed all ICE attorneys to begin a systematic review of immigration cases to determine whether pursuing deportation in each case is consistent with the Administration's enforcement priorities. This directive follows last summer's announcement that Homeland Security plans to review 300,000 immigration cases to assess whether they fall within the enforcement priorities and suspend those cases which do not. ICE also provided more detailed guidance to the staff attorneys regarding criteria for determining when it is appropriate to exercise prosecutorial discretion to close or dismiss a case.

These directives are important steps toward reforming the culture of immigration enforcement within the agency and aligning its resources with its enforcement priorities. They empower ICE attorneys to take into account the individual circumstances of each case when deciding whether it is appropriate to pursue removal. Although DHS needs to refine its overly-broad definitions of criminality, this new guidance, if fully—fully!—implemented, should mean that the government can focus its resources on deportations of those who pose a real threat to public safety. It should result in fewer deportations of low priority immigrants, such as DREAM Act students or individuals with strong family and community ties (often citizens in the family) and more.

From *Immigration Impact* (18 November 2011): "This week, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) directed ICE attorneys to begin a review process of current immigration cases pending before immigration courts in order to close or dismiss those cases warranting prosecutorial discretion. The attorneys also received additional guidance on how to apply discretion in certain low priority cases. At the same time, DHS announced new training modules for all ICE field agents on prosecu-

torial discretion. The package of initiatives are a follow up to ICE Director John Morton's June 17th memo which describes how, when, and why ICE officials should exercise prosecutorial discretion in immigration cases."

SECURE COMMUNITIES HEARING

As most readers know, the Secure Communities Program has led to many false arrests and even some false deportations. Prince George's County has in the past compiled a poor record—if sending to Immigration for deportation a high percentage of residents who do not have a criminal record constitutes a poor record. Furthermore, people inclined to cooperate with the police in the fight against crime are reticent to do so because they may have their own rights jeopardized. So it is interesting to see that some counteraction is being taken. Here's a message received via email:

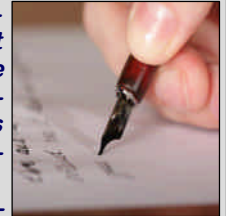
Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We are anticipating that the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Immigration Policy and Enforcement will hold a hearing on November 30th about Secure Communities. This Congressional hearing will be led by the Republicans, who are generally supportive of the Secure Communities program. To assist Democrats in advancing our arguments against Secure Communities, it would be extremely helpful to have a letter from your organization opposing the program. We are hoping that your letter will be part of a huge pile of letters that the Democrats can present at the hearing, and these letters will then become part of the congressional record.

The letter you write can be as simple as a description of your organization, why you oppose Secure Communities, and what recommendations you have with regard to Secure Communities.

Please send your Opposition Letter to me at shafiz@rightsworkinggroup.org by close of business on Monday, November 28th and I will submit the letters as a group to the Democrat Subcommittee staff. I know together, we can present a strong and forceful opposition to Secure Communities to Congress. Thank you and please let me know if you have any questions.

—Sameera Hafiz (Policy Director, Rights Working Group)



And from the *Baltimore Sun* (18 November 2011), there may be good local news for those who think that some undocumented immigrants should remain in the U.S. and not fear deportation: "Baltimore is one of two cities selected to test an immigration policy adopted by the Obama administration that could freeze deportations of illegal immigrants who have no criminal records, DHS announced. The elderly, children who have been in the country more than five years, students who came to the U.S. under the age of 16 and are enrolled in a college degree program, and victims of domestic violence are among those whose deportations could be put on hold under the test program, which begins December 4 and could be broadened in January. Though the federal policy was set earlier this year, the decision to begin implementation in Baltimore is likely to renew a broader immigration debate in Maryland."

ICE reports that nearly 1,800 immigrants were deported from Maryland in FY2011 (it ended September 30), up from 859 the year before. Lots of broken homes, tears.

ment-focused trips to other countries. Let's hope their sentiments are misplaced.

"The Administration just announced \$50 million for economic development. I've asked repeatedly where that came from. ... we are the fools because we continue to vote these spendthrifts in. Good grief, we put Marilynn Bland back in office. Corruption is the name of the game at local, state and national levels and the big money walks off with it all. You notice that people like former executive Wayne Curry will walk off with county money, and you and I will be asked to increase taxes to pay the bill. This is disgusting !!!!!!! !!!!!!! !!!!!!! and I will not pay another penny to secure this corrupt government. "



And another: "\$15.5 millions, shortfall, but there is money for a six person junket to India and for \$50 million in welfare payments to favored businesses that apparently need taxpayer-funded bribes to be persuaded to locate or expand in the county."

Reversing the international flow: According to an authoritative source in the El Salvador embassy, some families in the home country are sending money to their relatives in the USA. That's a sad comment on our economy and also a sad comment on our existing inequalities of hiring and other opportunities.



Microloans for naturalization: ALP friend and insightful reporter Luz Lazo writes in the *Washington Post* (1 November 2011) that CASA de Maryland, in partnership with Citi and other organizations, is offering small loans to those legally in the USA but short of funds to pay for the high cost of naturalization. CASA estimates that nearly 300,000 people in our metro area are eligible to apply for citizenship. The loans are due one month after receiving the money; if not paid in full, the interest rate is a seemingly very high 8.5% to 9%.

The article evoked the usual anti-immigrant comments. For instance: "What happens if they do not pay the loan back? Just more money the government gives away, and not even to citizens...where does the madness stop?" And: "A waste of scarce tax payer resources after which is followed more liberal spending for welfare, education, medical etc."

Maryland millionaires: According to a report in the *Washington Examiner* (6 November 2011), Maryland has the most millionaires of any state in the Union! Fully 7.22% of households are millionaires; our state is followed by Hawaii, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Now do you feel rich?!

OBAMA EXTENDS WORKSITE CRACKDOWN

According to an article in the *Wall Street Journal* (15 November 2011), "The Obama administration has extended its crackdown on employers of illegal immigrants, notifying 500 companies across the nation in recent weeks that the government will inspect their hiring records." Under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), employers must require newly hired employees to fill out Form I-9, documenting identity and lawful work status. There are consequences for employers and/or



employees if the form is not properly completed, or if the documents are fraudulent. So if you're a law-abiding undocumented immigrant who needs to work in the formal sector, watch out. The G-Men might well be after you.

OCCUPY IMMIGRATION!

In San Diego, the local "Occupy" movement headed for the Immigration office—with the police on guard. Apparently, the rally and march were peaceful. Hopefully, the result will be that more residents of Southern California will become aware of the increasing inequality in the USA as well as the harsh treatment experienced by immigrants in some parts of the country. (Photo of the march.)



COMPUTERS AND INTERNET ACCESS

The Federal Communications Commission has just announced a program, starting some time next year, that will provide low-income homes with computers for \$150 and broadband internet service for \$9.95 plus taxes per month. Installation and activation are included. What's low income? Eligible families must (1) have at least one student enrolled in the Free School Lunch Program; (2) not be a current subscriber to broadband (or have subscribed in the last 90 days); and (3) not have an overdue bill or unreturned equipment to the participating service provider.

Internet service will be provided by one of the major providers, e.g., Comcast, Cox. A computer refurbishing firm will provide laptops or desktops with Windows 7 and Office shipped free plus three months of free tech support. Morgan Stanley is developing a microcredit program to help families pay for the up-front costs.

President Obama said that the program "represents a major step towards closing the digital divide by connecting more families to the 21st Century economy." Let's hope that lots of the families in Langley Park learn about the program and participate.

HEALTH CARE NEWS

WOMEN: Low-income health care is going to expand starting in January 2012. A single woman making no more than \$22,000 will be able to receive free family-planning services. Right now, Maryland only offers family planning services—including pelvic exams, screenings for breast and reproductive cancer, counseling, prescriptions for contraception, and tests for high blood pressure, diabetes and sexually transmitted infections—to low- and moderate-income women *after* they've already had their first child. Family planning, of course, is best done before a family begins to grow. Have questions? Call 855.692.4993 about eligibility and 800.456.8900 for benefits information.

ALL: Prince George's County, working with the Children's National Health Center and other health care organizations, is scheduled to operate a mobile health van in the county. The mobile services will provide a team that includes a physician and other health care professionals. It will take three trips a month to the county. The start-up will be early next year. Keep tuned!

THE PURPLE LINE and the Sector Plan

Plans for the Purple Line continue to move forward, but the funding has yet to be secured. So if the construction begins in a few years, completion may not take place until 2020 or later.



One new challenge is the hiker-biker trail in Bethesda. For the light rail line and the trail to use the same tunnel under Wisconsin Avenue and some office buildings, the new additional-funds estimate is at least \$40.5 million. So that's another worry. How can the two mobility systems cohabit? Without a large

additional expense? Stay tuned.

And another challenge: Financing for the six-lane ICC linking I-270 in MoCo with I-95 in PG leveraged the Maryland Transportation Authority's toll collections; its debt capacity is nearly zeroed out from borrowing to build the ICC plus the express toll lanes on I-95 northeast of Baltimore. What's left, if anything?

Or Silver or Green or ...

A letter to the editor in the *Washington Post* (10 November 2011 by Robert Jenner) calls attention to the zero sum game that we may be playing with regard to transportation infrastructure development in these days of stretched and declining budgets:

"It's bad enough that the proposed Purple Line route in Prince George's County goes through neighborhoods where few travel to visit or shop. But the real tragedy of the Purple Line is that it is taking attention and money away from what should be the top transportation priority for Maryland and Prince George's County: extending the Green Line to Baltimore-Washington International Marshall Airport.

"The economic stimulus and overall growth resulting from a line to BWI would dwarf any economic development that the Purple Line might bring to Riverdale Plaza or Langley Park. And if an extension to the Green Line could also pass through Columbia and Laurel, the impact would be compounded.

"It is embarrassing that Virginia is moving forward on such a project with the Silver Line extension to Dulles International Airport while Maryland remains asleep at the wheel. A better transportation link to BWI would elevate our airport to world-class status. As a resident of Maryland, I would much prefer to use my own state's airport, but public transportation to BWI is so inconvenient that I always choose Reagan National Airport instead.

"The Purple Line could serve a useful purpose connecting Bethesda to Silver Spring. But the route through Prince George's County offers us very little."

Green or Purple or ...? That's a question best answered by independent transportation experts. The shame is that we can't have all of them. Well, the jobs of governments and politicians is to choose among alternatives—without personal convenience or gain.

And the Destructive Sector Plan

The Prince George's County's side of the Takoma-Langley Crossroads Sector Plan—the plan developed because of the expected coming of the Purple Line—has apparently not been changed in response to the vigorous opposi-

tion by residents, small businesspeople, officials of St. Camillus Catholic Church, CASA de Maryland, Action Langley Park, and others. Clearly, democratic processes are not recognized by some county officials, elected and otherwise.

Many people wonder how it could be that officials would approve a plan that will displace thousands of residents and scores of businesses—how they could approve a plan that will unleash the bulldozers! There is no clearly valid answer, but some people wonder if the traditions of Jack Johnson have been involved. Let's hope not. Too bad bank accounts are not transparent.

Envision

In Sam Parker's report on the work of Envision Prince George's, we read: "There have been four community forums on transit-oriented development with nearly 800 people attending." Not many from the Langley Park area, we bet. But had they been consulted about the sector plan to achieve TOD, Sam would have heard quite a pained roar.

THE ECONOMIC LOGIC OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

Gordon H. Hanson's report, titled the same as our headline and written as a Council on Foreign Relations publication, provides another voice opposed to the efforts to deport undocumented residents. (The full report is at [immigrationCSR26.pdf](#).)

"This analysis concludes that there is little evidence that legal immigration is economically preferable to illegal immigration. In fact, illegal immigration responds to market forces in ways that legal immigration does not. Illegal migrants tend to arrive in larger numbers when the U.S. economy is booming (relative to Mexico and the Central American countries that are the source of most illegal immigration to the United States) and move to regions where job growth is strong. Legal immigration, in contrast, is subject to arbitrary selection criteria and bureaucratic delays, which tend to disassociate legal inflows from U.S. labor-market conditions.

"Over the last half-century, there appears to be little or no response of legal immigration to the U.S. unemployment rate. Two-thirds of legal permanent immigrants are admitted on the basis of having relatives in the United States. Only by chance will the skills of these individuals match those most in demand by U.S. industries. While the majority of temporary legal immigrants come to the country at the invitation of a U.S. employer, the process of obtaining a visa is often arduous and slow. Once here, temporary legal workers cannot easily move between jobs, limiting their benefit to the U.S. economy. ...

"It is critical not to lose sight of the fact that illegal immigration has a clear economic logic: It provides U.S. businesses with the types of workers they want, when they want them, and where they want them. If policy reform succeeds in making U.S. illegal immigrants more like legal immigrants, in terms of their skills, timing of arrival, and occupational mobility, it is likely to lower rather than raise national welfare. In their efforts to gain control over illegal immigration, Congress and the administration need to be cautious that the economic costs do not outstrip the putative benefits."

More Photos

From Health Check 2011

Thanks to Andres Gonzalez



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 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.)

December 16—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.

2012

January 5 & more—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 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-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! 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.