

Barrio de Langley Park

BLP is a neighborhood planning newsletter published by Action Langley Park
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"Senators near accord on immigration proposal"

The above is the front-page headline in the 13 January 2013 issue of the *Washington Post*. The headline does seem to be a bit optimistic; there are details to work out (although some chance to become citizens in the future is currently one component), and of course any accord worked out by a group of eight senators has to be approved by the full Senate, the House of Representatives, and the President. But some good news is sure better than the usual news of gridlock. So there's a bit of hope!

From *Immigration Impact*: "This week, the White House revealed that President Obama will lay out a proposal for immigration reform at a speech in Nevada. ... Now, all we need is the actual bill." The Nevada speech is tomorrow.

Of course we need a good bill to be passed and signed into law before 50 foot broken-glass-topped double fences with snakes in between are built along the entire southern border. We wonder if any senators know that many families have been divided by the current fence.

QUINCEANERA

There's still time for a 14 or 15 year old young woman to sign up for the Quinceanera at the Langley Park Community Center. But hurry!

In Mexico and several other Latin countries, this event celebrates a girl's fifteenth birthday and thus entry into womanhood. In Langley Park, it is far



WOW!

from a one night event. Rather, it is activity and instruction over a number of weeks.

The final night brings the young women, their families, and their friends together to celebrate. The young women are beautiful, and their costumes are

more than elegant.

For information or to sign up, telephone Lourdes Sulc (the key organizer) at 301 408-4336 or send her an email at this address: Lourdes.Sulc@pgparks.com. And hurry! The full program starts very soon!

LANGLEY PARK MAY BECOME...

A PROMISE NEIGHBORHOOD

Promise Neighborhoods, first launched by the Federal Government in 2010, is a community-focused program that funds local-led efforts to improve educational opportunities and provide comprehensive health, safety, and support services in high-poverty neighborhoods.

To date, Promise Neighborhoods funding totals nearly \$100 million awarded to over 50 localities representing more than 700 schools. To help leverage and sustain grant work, 1,000 national, state, and community organizations have signed on to partner with a Promise Neighborhood site.

"For three years now, communities have been demonstrating the power of organizing their work around providing each child in their neighborhood with the support they need from cradle through college and career," said Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation Jim Shelton. "This year's planning and implementation grantees, and many of the applicants, exemplify the collective impact nonprofits, cities, and other partners can have when they work together."

With CASA de Maryland in the lead, Langley Park now has a Promise Neighborhood planning grant of \$500,000! Partners in the application include Prince George's County government, Prince George's County Public Schools, the Urban Institute, CentroNia, Prince George's Community College, the University of Maryland Schools of Education and Public Health, the Latin American Youth Center/Maryland Multicultural Youth Center, CCI and the Results Leadership Group.

The \$500,000 federal grant will support a year-long planning process which will result in a plan for cradle-to-career school, family and neighborhood supports for residents. If the plan is accepted, several million dollars will be awarded for the implementation. Comment: Wow!

"Langley Park is a vibrant immigrant community full of people who are working incredibly hard to just get by," said Gustavo Torres, Executive Director of CASA de Maryland. "The Promise Neighborhoods process will support us to unite together as a community and meet the needs of Langley Park students and their families."

NEWS AND NOTES

The Highway

Maryland Highway Safety Act of 2013: This legislation, to be introduced in the Maryland legislature, allows the Motor Vehicle Administration to issue identification cards, moped operators' permits, and drivers' licenses to taxpaying residents of Maryland who do not have access to personal transportation because current law prohibits issuance of drivers' licenses to residents who cannot provide certain documentation. Many may be undocumented. Most of these Marylanders have been living and working in Maryland for years and need drivers' licenses to get to work or to drop their children off at school.

Other jurisdictions—Illinois just did—have issued such licenses because passing ability tests and having insurance contribute to the safety of the rest of us. So it's a positive step for all of us.

Speeding Tickets: They (you know who "they" are!) are watching you! As some of us have discovered, there are speed cameras in College Park along Route 1. And the city of Hyattsville has announced plans for several cameras in that jurisdiction. A special warning: the speed cameras work regardless of the traffic. So if the road is empty and it's easy to go 40mp, don't!

Appointing to a Delegate Vacancy

Governor O'Malley has appointed Darren Swain to the vacancy in District 24—that's the seat that was held by Tiffany Alston who was forced to step down due to some "irregularities." Swain is an employee of Bowie State and a former delegate.

What a strange route to this appointment. The county's Democratic Central Committee had proposed Gregory Hall, apparently an upstanding citizen and community activist who two decades ago had been involved in a serious crime. Councilman Will Campos was among those who endorsed Hall. But he was rejected because of that crime despite his positive life in the intervening decades, including earning a degree from Morehouse.

Once guilty, always stigmatized? No forgiveness? No way to clean one's record? After the rejection of Mr. Hall, the Committee recommended three other people, but all were rejected in favor of Mr. Swain. Very mysterious. Costly?

Danger Alerts

Gatorade et cetera: This Pepsi product has had a very dangerous component, brominated vegetable oil, and the company just announced that it will be removed. But alas, other drinks such as Fanta and Mountain Dew still have the danger. Let's hope that the component will be eliminated from all drinks and other consumables. How about writing PepsiCo saying good for Gatorade but do the same for Mountain Dew and other drinks.



Lead: It's hard to overstate how important the removal of lead from household paint and gasoline has been in recent decades. There's something approaching a consensus that deleading is responsible for the majority, if not the vast majority, of the decline in

crime rates since the 1970s. One study says that 90% of the decline is attributable to deleading. It's not just crime. Much of the decline in teen pregnancy can be attributed to deleading, and school performance is highly correlated with lead exposure. Even lead amounts below the so-called "safe" amount can reduce IQ by about 7 points. Lead is just a very dangerous chemical, one that hinders judgment in all manner of contexts. So far, the country has done a pretty good job deleading, but more should be done. Many communities, primarily poor ones, still have buildings with lead pipes or lead-based paint. Is Langley Park lead free? We'd bet a lot that the answer is "no." (Largely borrowed from the *Washington Post* "Wonkblog," 6 December 2012.)

"Hot Spots": Do They Reduce Overall Crime?

In various parts of the country, and in Prince George's County, there has been a designation of certain localities as hot spots (or some euphemism) that get extra police officers to the location to reduce the hot (crime). Some observers have suggested that when an area is designated a hot spot, the criminals simply move to another area, that is, the overall crime rate does not decline. "We assumed that if we hit one area hard, the crime would just move somewhere else," said one police chief. But he reports that "crime doesn't move as easily we thought it did." It seems that the crime-moves observers are wrong.



Harvard scholar Anthony Braga reports on the basis of his research: "The results of our research suggests that hot spots policing generates small but noteworthy crime reductions, and these crime control benefits diffuse into areas immediately surrounding targeted crime hot spots." So a focus on Langley Park might reduce crime in Langley Park, and it might also somewhat reduce crime in the nearby areas. So we can thank Police Chief Magaw and others for focusing on six hot spots both because crime might be reduced—and also because the hot spot designation led to the Transitional Neighborhood Initiative and perhaps helped CASA de Maryland and others for getting funds to plan for a Langley Park Promise Neighborhood.

Some Dreamers Not Helped in Maryland

Maryland passed a law providing in-state higher education tuition for undocumented young people who met the criteria of a "dreamer," but it missed a significant category of young people: those still in secondary school. The Maryland law makes eligible those who graduated from a public high school in the state. Gads, what if the young person has not yet graduated? That's the problem, the gap in the law, and an effort will take place to close that gap.

Taxes

The State of Maryland needs more money for infrastructure. Roads, bridges, and other structures need to be maintained, and new projects should be com-

pleted so that the state remains competitive. One proposal is to raise gasoline taxes and also create regional authorities with taxing power. The new taxes will hit the less-well-off the hardest, but increasing the tax on the more-well-off seems not to be a political option. After all, the more-well-off are best positioned politically to protect their interests.

At least Maryland not as crazy as the governor of Kansas. He wants to eliminate income tax and raise sales tax but significantly lower the state's income. That will really hurt the less-well-off because there will be less money for social services, education, etc.

Official English in Three Maryland Counties

There do appear to be dramatic variations in policy preferences and political affiliations among Maryland counties' populations. There are now three counties that have adopted English as the "official" language: Carroll, Frederick, and Queen Anne's. These counties have comparatively few foreign-born. Afraid of "those people"? Should these counties be boycotted?

Scam Alert

A man was just arrested for taking money to help people to get a driver's license. He posted advertisements in grocery stores and elsewhere, and encouraged people to pass the word about his "business". Of course, he could not deliver; he was a thief. So to those without a license who want one (or without a green card), beware: scams are everywhere.

Health Enterprise Zones

Last year, the state decided to designate some areas as "health enterprise zones" to address the health disparities that negatively impact neighborhoods. Good idea, and that would be great for the Langley Park. But alas, the state looked to other places to designate five HEZs. Maybe there will be sufficient strength in the Transitional Neighborhood Initiative and the Promise Neighborhood to fill the gap. Given the prevailing poor health, let us hope so.

The Langley Park Promise Neighborhoods Project is targeted toward improving the educational outcomes of Langley Park students, and their families, who attend Langley Park McCormick Elementary School, Buck Lodge Middle School, and High Point High School. Residents of the neighborhood will be involved in the planning.

"As a result of this collaborative partnership and unwavering commitment to students, the Langley Park school community will receive much-needed improvements and support," said Interim PG School Superintendent Alvin L. Crawley. "Over the past year, we worked closely with CASA and other partner organizations on the grant proposal, as well as developed a plan for a new Langley Park high school, strengthened community partnerships and leadership, and implemented needed services. It is truly a partnership success story."

Maybe with the Transitional Neighborhood Initiative and the Promise Neighborhood programs, the County Council will realize how wrong (maybe how evil) was its approval of the bulldoze-the-neighborhood sector plan that was approved several years ago. If the council acts rationally, it will immediately cancel the plan and instruct the planners to start over. The restart should have as its goal making the Langley Park area the best neighborhood possible primarily housing working class immigrants. With the county and Promise, there should be better schooling, a clinic, a library, bright lighting of sidewalks and roads at night, an inviting transit center, new housing for the middle class (without displacing the old-timers), new retail and other businesses (again, without displacement), tutoring programs for all schoolchildren, and more. Do it!

Need Help? Want Answers? Contact Your Democratically-Elected Federal, State, or County Representatives

Member Name	Phone	FAX	Contact Form or Email Address
Senator Barbara Mikulski (D- MD)	202-224-4654	202-224-8858	http://www.mikulski.senate.gov/contact/shareyouropinion.cfm
Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D- MD)	202-224-4524	202-224-1651	http://www.cardin.senate.gov/contact/
Representative Andy Harris (R - 01)	202-225-5311	202-225-0254	https://harris.house.gov/contact-me/email-me
Representative CA Ruppberger (D02)	202-225-3061	202-225-3094	http://dutch.house.gov/email-dutch.shtml
Representative John Sarbanes (D - 03)	202-225-4016	202-225-9219	http://sarbanes.house.gov/federal.asp
Representative Donna F. Edwards (D - 04)	202-225-8699	202-225-8714	http://donnaedwards.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=52&sectiontree=452
Representative Steny Hoyer (D - 05)	202-225-4131	202-225-4300	https://forms.house.gov/hoyer/webforms/zip_auth.shtml
Representative John Delaney (D - 06)	202-225-2721	202-225-2193	https://delaney.house.gov/contact/email-me
Representative Elijah E. Cummings (D - 07)	202-225-4741	202-225-3178	https://cummings.house.gov/contact-me/email-me
Representative Chris Van Hollen, Jr. (D - 08)	202-225-5341	202-225-0375	http://vanhollen.house.gov/contact/
State Senator Victor Ramirez (47)	301 858-3745	301 858-3387	victor.ramirez@senate.state.md.us
State Delegate Jolene Ivey (47)	301-858-3478	301 858-3727	jolene.ivey@house.state.md.us
State Delegate Doyle Niemann (47)	301 858-3326	301 858-3403	doyle.niemann@house.state.md.us
State Delegate Michael Summers(47)	301 858-3340	301 858-3239	michael.summers@house.state.md.us
County Councilman Will Campos (47)	301 952-4436	301 952-5554	WACampos@co.pg.md.us

PETER'S BACK!

PG County Executive Rushern Baker has announced the appointment of former Prince George's County Council Member Peter Shapiro as Executive Director of the County's Revenue Authority.

The Revenue Authority is a quasi-public corporation that promotes the public interest of the county by facilitating economic development and employment growth; owning, operating and maintaining revenue producing facilities and programs; financing county capital improvement projects; managing a self-supporting public parking program; and providing administrative assistance to other county agencies.

The Authority supports itself through the income derived from the operation and management of a number of revenue generating programs, including the lease of real property, operation of 6,000 public parking spaces, parking enforcement, vehicle impoundment, citation processing, a 24/7 closed-circuit television surveillance system monitoring six facilities, management and operation of the false alarm reduction unit, and (beware!) automated red light speed enforcement unit.

During Peter Shapiro's years on the county council representing the area that includes Langley Park, he was supportive of the neighborhood and of Action Langley Park. Welcome back, Peter.

But... he currently lives in DC, so to comply with county regulations, he will have to move back to PG. Maybe to his old house? Maybe Victor or Will have an extra room?

A FLORIDIAN ON UNDOCUMENTED IMMIGRANTS

"Luckily for us, neither Obama nor Rubio is being hysterical about it. They both recognize that 11 million undocumented immigrants can't be wished away. Nor will they self-deport, in the unforgettably Stalinist phrase of the late Mitt Romney. And we can't arrest them all and ship them across the Mexican border. Dwight Eisenhower tried that in 1954 with Operation Wetback, when the casual bigotry of national policy had no problem advertising itself by name. The 'Wetbacks' came back, not least because the dirty little secret of chambers of commerce from here to Wall Street's bottom lines is that they want them here. ...

"Without illegal immigration, we wouldn't have had America. The founders of this nation were its first illegals, and they were a lot more illegal than the poor waddlers across the Rio Grande these days: in the founding days, the great illegals of Plymouth and Jamestown came ashore with a Bible in one hand and a musket in the other, massacring everything in their way. We're a nation founded not only by illegal immigration, but by genocide. At least today's immigrants come here to slave for us and preserve our standard of living. The least we owe them is the dignity of recognition, and yes, a welcoming road to citizenship. ..."

Source: <http://flaglerlive.com>, 20 January 2013

WHAT & WHEN



Here we list upcoming ALP activities and other events that are called to our attention. Have an event to list? If so, send information well in advance to actionlangleypark@yahoo.com.

February 2—Folk Society Festival, noon to 10:30 p.m., the Takoma Park Middle School, 7611 Piney Branch Rd, Takoma Park. The Takoma Park festivals offer a wonderful range of folk cultures. There is an entry fee. Parking is challenging.

February 11—District Night (see text block below)

March 7-9—Physics is Phun, "Energy and Motion." 7 p.m. U of MD Physics lecture halls. For information, call 301 405-6045 or email lohara@umd.edu.

March 14—Action Langley Park meets at 7 p.m. in the Langley Park Community Center. It's an open meeting: come one, come all! How can we help the residents and business-people of Langley Park? Let's explore and plan.

April 27—Maryland Day on the University of Maryland campus. Almost everything free; lots to see and do

May 2-4—Physics is Phun, "Water." See above Phun information.

May 5 —Langley Park Day, a festival of music, dance, food, information, and especially health (there's a big health fair included as part of the event). The whole world is invited!!! Everything is free

except purchases of foods or crafts. Time: Noon to 4 p.m. Location: Langley Park Community Center. Volunteer doctors,



nurses, dancers, musicians, clowns, and guides will participate; other volunteers are all welcome (let us know). Food and craft vendors should contact Lourdes Sulc at 301 445-4508; health professionals and information providers should contact Bill Hanna at 301 405-4005.

June 1 and 2—Washington Folk Festival at Glen Echo park. Free!



DISTRICT 47 NIGHT

Senator Victor Ramirez reports: Legislative District Night for District 47 is quickly approaching! The event will be held on Monday, February 11th, in the Miller Senate Office Building, President's Conference Center West (11 Bladen St., Annapolis) from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Food and drink will be served.

Please call the Ramirez office to let them know if you need transportation. There will be three buses stationed in various locations throughout the district to bring people to Annapolis and take them back. Limited seats are available.

The Senator is also seeking energetic volunteers to help make this event memorable and better than ever! For those interested please call the office at 301 858-3745 so the staff can add you to our volunteer list.