

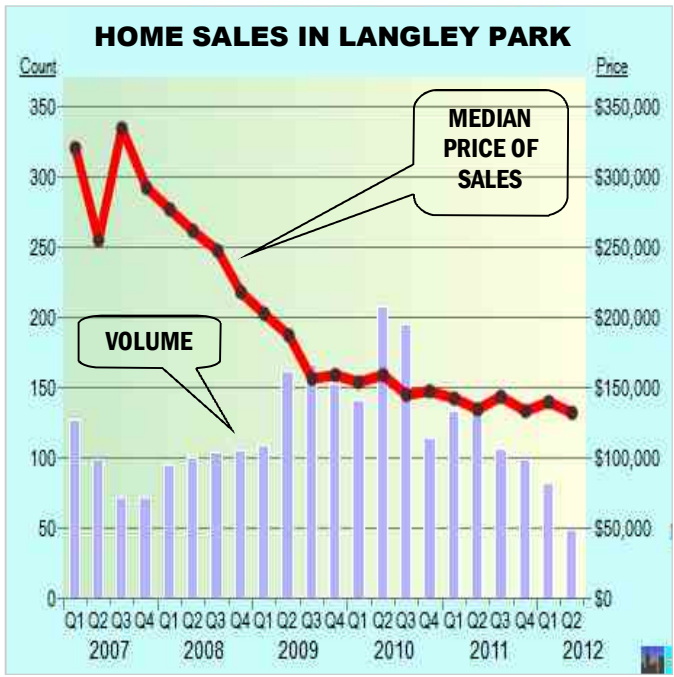
Barrio de Langley Park

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UNDER WATER IN LANGLEY PARK



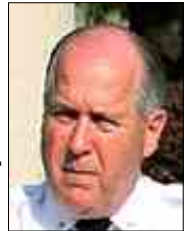
Alas, there are quite a few home owners who appear to be "under water" in Langley Park, that is, who owe more on their house than the house is worth. Example 1: A home purchased a few years ago for \$300,000 that is currently assessed at \$220,000. Example 2: A home purchased a half-dozen years ago for \$380,000 that is now assessed at \$220,000. And example 3: A home also purchased a half dozen years ago \$460,000 is now assessed at \$280,000. Prince George's County's home-value recovery lags the other jurisdictions in the metro area, and it is sharply felt by some of the homeowners in Langley Park. The dramatic drop in home value is shown below.



THE COUNTY COPS

Recent events and media reports can lead one to conclude either that Prince George's County's police force is excellent—or far from it.

From 2011 to 2012, there has been a significant drop in the county's homicides as well as other crimes.* Chief Mark Macaw and his central-office colleagues appear to have a steady hand and now offer greater transparency. The Transitional Neighborhood Initiative may help too.



Chief Magaw

And yet the handling of the College Park March 2010 "event" when U. Maryland students celebrating a basketball win against Duke were beaten by officers, apparently without anything worse than playful provocation, is a stain. What's on the record appears to some observers that there was a cover-up within the police department of brutal behavior (not by Chief Magaw).

In the Langley Park area, there was some brutal cop behavior in past years, but that appears to be in in a different police era. Let's hope so because police/resident trust and cooperation are essential in the fight against crime.

*Violent crime has declined nationally. In NY City, murders dropped from over 2,000 to under 500. Why the drops? Maybe smaller youth cohorts. ; America is getting older! Note: The county police department was a focus of Washington Post articles on December 28 and 29.

NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL On Immigration Policy

"The Obama administration [has just] announced a policy change that—if it works—should lead to smarter enforcement of the immigration laws, with greater effort spent on deporting dangerous felons and less on minor offenders who pose no threat.

The new policy places stricter conditions on when Immigration and Customs Enforcement sends requests, known as detainers, to local law-enforcement agencies asking them to hold suspected immigration violators in jail until the government can pick them up. Detainers will be issued for serious offenders—those who have been convicted or charged with a felony, who have three or more misdemeanor convictions, or have one conviction or charge for misdemeanor crimes like sexual abuse, drunken driving, weapons possession or drug trafficking.

"Times" continued on Page 4

The Know Your State Quiz

1. What may become the state sandwich in the upcoming legislative session?
2. What is the state tree?
3. What is the state bird?
4. What is the state fish?
5. What is the state flower?
6. What is the state sport?
7. What is the state team sport?
8. What is the state dog?
9. What's the state cat?
10. What is the state gem?
11. What is the state reptile?
12. What is the state dinosaur?
13. What is the state dessert?

The answers are on Page 4.

NEWS AND NOTES

1. IMMIGRATION & IMMIGRANTS

Deportations

President Obama supports setting a path to citizenship for many undocumented immigrants, but the administration deported 1,500,000 million of them in his first term—409,849 in the fiscal year that ended on September 30th. The administration states that about 45% had no criminal convictions, and many more had minor infractions such as DUI. Will this change, or is the administration engaged in what might be referred to as B.S.?

Secure Communities

The 287(g) program is being withdrawn, but Secure Communities, which requires local police to cross-check the fingerprints of all arrestees against a federal database and hold possible undocumented residents, is expanding. Alas, S-Comm (i.e., “secure communities”) is too often a program for racial profiling and the erosion of public trust. Official: “Hey, brown-skin, you look like you’re thinking of causing trouble. Show me your passport or I’ll take you in.” (Yes, BLP made the quote up.)

Detainers

ICE detainers are holds, up to two business days, that ICE places on prisoners in municipal prison. These prisoners would otherwise be let go, but because ICE wants to detain them for immigration violations, they continue being held for ICE to pick them up and process them itself. According to a memo dated December 21, 2012, ICE changed its definition of priority to receive such a detainer to someone with three misdemeanor convictions, from one misdemeanor previously.

The pertinent portion of the memo states that “[t]hree or more prior misdemeanor convictions” not including minor traffic misdemeanors or other relatively minor misdemeanors unless the convictions “reflect a clear and continuing danger to others or disregard for the law.” It should be noted that an individual still only needs to be suspected or convicted of any felony in order to warrant an ICE detainer.

Source: <http://frontpagemag.com>, 28 December 2012

English Language Instruction

The federal budget is tight, as are state and local budgets. The result is cut-backs in a range of programs, including education—and yes adult education. And adult education includes English language instruction. So the waiting lines for entry into classes get longer, and those who aspire to bilingual skills face another barrier.

Maybe a major effort to recruit volunteer teaching assistants would be helpful. PGCC folks: how can the local situation be improved?

Another Reason Why We Need Immigrants

America’s fiscal problems are shaky but not the worst in the rich world. However, its policymakers have long taken comfort that, when it came to demography, the country’s outlook was one of the best. Because Americans have so many babies and welcome so many immigrants, they have more room to deal with the coming burden of pensions and health care for the elderly.

But the recession of 2007-09 and its aftermath have not just deepened America’s fiscal hole; they have weakened those demographic advantages. America’s fertility

rate has been falling since 2007 [it’s now below replacement rate!], as has net immigration [which is close to zero]. Compounding this, the share of the population that is active in the labor force has slipped, both because of ageing and because of the recession’s lingering effects.

Source: The Economist, 15 December 2012

2. OTHER MATTERS

Traffic Cameras

PG County has launched a program to have 72 red light cameras working by this coming spring. The reason is the high number of traffic fatalities and accidents. Of the 485 traffic fatalities in Maryland during 2011, 105 of them were in the county—that’s 22%. But the county only has 15% of the state’s population. Red light running and speeding are two ways to endanger oneself and others, so the county is trying to get more drivers to operate their vehicles legally. And driving legally saves money: speeding tickets are \$40 and red light running is \$75.



Will there be freedom of information, that is, information about the location of the cameras?

FBI Move

Is this a valid comment, catalyzed by the competition for the new FBI building that may move into the Maryland suburbs?

“Look at the IRS building at New Carrollton; it has a pedestrian bridge, so employees who do not drive into the complex can access Metro without ever setting foot into the community surrounding it. I remember the hype, ‘they will shop and eat nearby.’ Get real, this is PG county and most of the people who are coming with these agencies live in DC, Monty County or Virginia and PG County is scary!” (From a received email.)

What about Census, located in Suitland? Employees there are said to be discouraged from eating or shopping in the proximate businesses and restaurants. If the government wants to separate the FBI building from the neighborhood in which it is to be located, is that a negative? Or can we imagine more openness?

Healthy Food at 7-11!?

Yes, there are now healthy foods at many 7-Elevens. The chief executive: “We’re aspiring to be more of a food and beverage company, and that aligns with what the consumer now wants, which is more tasty, healthy, fresh food choices!” So maybe some of the food deserts in PG County and elsewhere will have less slurrp and more oranges!

By the way, the large BLP staff just learned that 7-Eleven is owned by a Japanese company! So maybe we can look forward to sushi some day soon.





SOBER RIDE

The SoberRide program will be offered from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. every night until Tuesday, January 1st, 2013. To receive a free cab ride home (up to a \$30.00 fare), please 800-200-8294. AT&T customers may dial #WRAP from a wireless phone. The caller must be 21 or older to use the service. Do not call a taxi company directly.

Dreams come true—

AT LANGLEY PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

Mis Quince Años

Young ladies (ages 14–15) are invited to sign up for the Mis Quince Años program!

Classes begin on Tuesday, February 19, 2013 and meet for 20 sessions/10 weeks on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:30–8:30 pm. Apply online at www.pgxtremeteens.com to participate. Fees are \$75/resident and \$84/non-resident.

- Prepare for a magnificent spring Quinceañera celebration.
- Participate in workshops related to etiquette, dance, health and fitness, swimming, self-defense, college preparation, personal development and service projects, and more.
- Embrace this cultural tradition and celebrate the journey from childhood to maturity with family, friends, music, food and dance.

SAVE THE DATE

Young ladies and their families are invited to Langley Park Community Center to attend the FREE Mis Quince Años Open House and Expo on Tuesday, January 8, 2013 from 6:30–8:30 pm to learn about this extraordinary 10-week program.

Apply and make your dreams come true!

A few need-based scholarships are available.

Langley Park Community Center
1500 Merrimac Drive, Hyattsville, MD 20783
301-408-4336; 301-445-4509 (Línea en Español);
TTY 301-445-4512
www.pgxtremeteens.com



A PROGRAM OF



live more, play more

The Department of Parks and Recreation encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities. Register at least a minimum of two weeks in advance of the program start date to request and receive a disability accommodation.

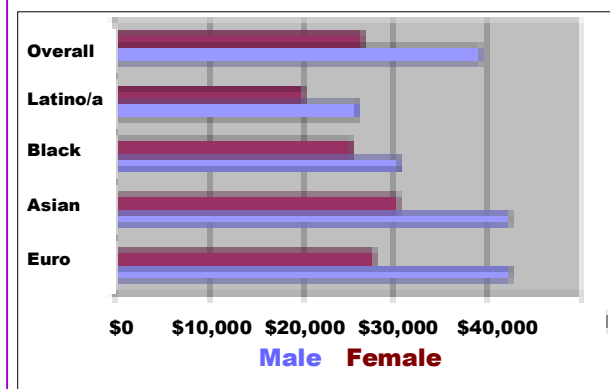
WORRISOME DOMESTIC NEWS

“Critics ... expressed concern that electronic surveillance, though directed at noncitizens, inevitably swept up communications of Americans as well. ... The Fourth Amendment was written in a different time and a different age, but its necessity and its truth are timeless ... referring to the constitutional ban on unreasonable searches and seizures. Over the past few decades, our right to privacy has been eroded. We have become lazy....” [Fearful?] <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/29/us/politics/senate-votes-to-extend-electronic-surveillance-authority-under-fisa.html?hpw>

Issues of Inequality

Yes, it's now the new year. Will this new year be similar to the last, with people being gunned down, poverty widespread throughout the world (and including 16% of the people resident in the USA), Congress impotent, race and gender determining some of our inequalities, and our working class in the midst of thirty years of stagnant wages while the top one or two per cent of earners have soaring incomes and wealth? Not to repeat the past surely should be our goal. And that will take activism on the part of many—most!—of us!

Does the reader wonders about evidence for inequality? The first chart, below, shows how since the 1970s, the top 1% of earners now command more than 20% of the earnings. The second chart shows that across race and ethnicity, males have much higher incomes than females. Is that deserved? And if not, what should be done to stop



the gap's perpetuation? The second chart also reveals that, especially among males, Latinos and African-Americans are far behind in income. Is this due to differences in education? Lack of role models? Negative peer influences in neighborhoods? Or more? Another challenge for our country.

GRIM INTERNATIONAL NEWS

“How would the United States government react if a huge section of its territory were occupied by terrorists and drug traffickers who raped women and forced them to marry? If children were conscripted and deprived of their education? If citizens had their hands and feet cut off? That is precisely what has happened to the once peaceful and democratic nation of Mali.” [This is a desperate call for help.] Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/29/opinion/save-mali-before-its-too-late.html>

Those who illegally re-entered the country after having been deported or posing a national-security threat would also be detained. But there would be no detainers for those with no convictions or records of only petty offenses like traffic violations. ...



"But wait, you ask, shouldn't ICE have been doing this all along? Didn't [the ICE director] say ... two years ago that ICE would use its 'prosecutorial discretion' to focus on the most dangerous illegal immigrants? He did."

Alas, detentions and expulsions have soared. (See Page 2.) Can we trust the administration now? Well, we have to—although we should not silently be trusting. Emails and telephone calls might help.*

Source: NYT 25 December 2012

"Inspired" by the fact that 71% of Latinos voted for President Obama in November, the President has promised to make immigration reform a priority in 2013. Because of the "cliff" threat, immigration will presumably come second rather than first on the agenda. One component of the President's likely plan is a path to citizenship for our 11 million undocumented immigrants. Here too, a message to the White House might help.*

*Contact information:

White House telephone: 202-456-1111

White House email: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/submit-questions-and-comments>

GOT A COAT TO SPARE?

Readers have an opportunity to support the Latin American Youth Center/MMYC Langley Park AmeriCorps Team's Coat Drive. Coats are being collected thru January 3, 2013 for Buck Lodge Middle School students (ages 11—14) and their siblings (ages 1—10). Donations of coats for boys and girls ranging from size newborn to Junior Extra Large are needed. Gently worn coats are accepted. The distribution will occur on January 7, 2013, in celebration of Three Kings Day. Please contact Loretta Tillery, ltillery@co.pg.md.us or 301-952-4755, to arrange a pick up of your items by a Latin American Youth Center AmeriCorps volunteer.



Know Your State: Answers

1. Sandwich = soft-shell crab sandwich.
2. Tree = white oak.
3. Bird = Baltimore Oriole
4. Fish = striped bass.
5. Flower = black-eyed Susan.
6. Sport = jousting.
7. Team sport = Lacrosse.
8. Dog = Chesapeake Bay retriever.
9. Cat = calico cat.
10. Gem = Patuxent River stone.
11. Reptile = diamondback terrapin.
12. Dinosaur = *astrodon johnstoni*.
- And 13. Dessert = Smith Island cake.

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.

2013

January 1—HAPPY NEW YEAR!! Let's hope that the new year brings in civil politics at the national level, more opportunities for marginalized immigrants, international peace, and more!

January 3 and 4—Physics is Phun, "Electricity and Magnetism," 7 p.m. Physics lecture halls. For information, call 301 405-6045 or email lohara@umd.edu.

January 8—Mis Quince Open House at the Community Center, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Check it out! It's a great experience for a young girl becoming a young woman. See page 3, above.

January 8 - Montgomery College Open House, 5:30 p.m., 7600 Takoma Avenue. CM 211 (English session), CM 210A (Spanish session). This information session is for adult students who are new or returning to college. The sessions will cover basic information about the enrollment process and include information on turning work experience into college credit, transferring previous college credits, balancing multiple priorities, and applying for financial aid. Sessions in English and Spanish will run simultaneously. For the full list of events college-wide, visit this webpage: www.montgomerycollege.edu/openhouse. Information: 240 567-3961.

January 10—Meeting on gangs, 7 p.m. at West Laurel Community Center, 16601 Supplee Lane, Laurel. Lead speaker: gang expert Sgt. Michael Rudinski.

February 2—Folk Society Festival, noon to 10:30 p.m. at the Takoma Park Middle School, 7611 Piney Branch Road, Takoma Park. These festivals offer a wonderful range of folk cultures, American and beyond. Parking is challenging.

March 7-9—Physics is Phun, "Energy and Motion." See above info.

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!

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

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 301 405-4005; health professionals and information providers should contact Bill Hanna at 301 405-4005.

