

# THE



# SUN

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## O'S FALL TO RAYS, 5-2

Orioles drop three games from top of AL East, still hold a playoff spot **SPORTS**

### Fix for Kent Island sewage triggers fears of hundreds of houses being built



ALGERINA PERNA/BALTIMORE SUN

Residents in Romancoke on the southern side of Kent Island have long wanted a public sewer system, tired of frequent flooding that stirs a stench in their backyards and threatens their groundwater. But now that the state is helping to underwrite a sewer line, some are worried about the prospect of additional development on the island.

# Double-edged progress

BY SCOTT DANCE  
The Baltimore Sun

STEVENSVILLE — Residents of southern Kent Island have wanted a public sewer system for decades, tired of frequent flooding that stirs a stench in their backyards and threatens their groundwater and the fragile Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

But now that the state is chipping in at least \$15 million to ensure that a sewer line is run down the largest island in the bay, some are worried about another consequence: The sewer project could allow more than 600 new homes to be built on the low-lying land at the foot of the Bay Bridge.

Gov. Larry Hogan's administration and Queen Anne's County officials say the \$50 million sewer system will yield dividends in water quality improvements that outweigh any impact from new homes that sprout along the sewer connection. The prospect of a switch from septic systems may already be spurring a market for wooded lots that owners have been unable to build on or sell.

Chesapeake Bay advocates and some residents say the benefits aren't so clear-cut. They argue that Kent Island isn't the place to be adding new development — some of the empty lots are on the bay, vulnerable to rising sea levels. And they fear that more developers could one day petition for sewer access; at least one developer whose See **KENT ISLAND**, page 19



KENNETH K. LAM/BALTIMORE SUN

**"I worry about it every time we flood, because it's disgusting."**

Tricia Krahlng, who lives in the Romancoke by the Bay community

# Quiet start, noisy debate

Stealthy at first, Port Covington plan ended up front and center

BY LUKE BROADWATER  
AND NATALIE SHERMAN  
The Baltimore Sun

A large waterfront parcel in Port Covington sold for \$2 million in 2012 to an investor who declined to identify himself.

Then a second large property sold nearby. Then a third. Each time, the investor's identity was hidden behind hard-to-trace limited liability corporations. Speculation abounded. Who was the mystery buyer? What was being planned in South Baltimore?

Keisha Allen, head of the nearby Westport Neighborhood Association, fired off a letter to her city councilman that foreshadowed the fights to come.

"When it's time to sit down with this developer ... you need to make sure we have a seat at the table," Allen recalled writing. "I knew it was going to be big. I just didn't know it was going to be that big."



Kevin Plank

Four years later, legal entities connected to Under Armour CEO Kevin Plank have spent more than \$14 million to purchase more than 150 acres on a partially vacant peninsula jutting into the trash-filled Patapsco River's Middle Branch.

Plank's Sagamore Development Co. has come out of the shadows and launched an unprecedented campaign, pushing for a \$5.5 billion redevelopment, home of a new headquarters campus for the nation's No. 2 sports apparel company.

After the secretive start, plans for the development have advanced publicly and loudly. On Monday, the Baltimore City Council is poised to give final approval to \$660 million in bonds that would pay for See **PORT COVINGTON**, page 22

## SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

### eNEWSPAPER UPDATE

#### NATION & WORLD

**EXPLOSION IN NEW YORK:** New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio says there is no reason to think that an explosion in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood had a terrorist connection, but he did call the blast an "intentional act." **NEWS PG 13**

#### MARYLAND

**SENATE RACE:** Speaking at a forum in the U.S. Senate race, Republican state Del. Kathy Szeliga said Democratic Rep. Chris Van Hollen is a "career politician" who has not done enough to address problems in the Department of Veterans Affairs. Van Hollen, a Montgomery County lawmaker, opposed Szeliga's willingness to consider privatizing veterans' medical care. **NEWS PG 2**

#### TODAY'S WEATHER

STORM POSSIBLE

**86** | **68**  
HIGH | LOW



Storm possible Monday **SPORTS PG 15**

### ELECTION 2016

## Iran deal remains issue in Md. races

BY JOHN FRITZE  
The Baltimore Sun

WASHINGTON — Maryland's Republican Senate nominee Kathy Szeliga was a few minutes into answering questions at a campaign event last week when the discussion took a sharp turn toward the summer of 2015.

"We've asked Chris Van Hollen to comment on whether he's still supporting this Iran deal," she told a few dozen Rotarians in Montgomery County, referring to her Democratic opponent. "We need to stand with our allies and stand up to our adversaries."

A year after the Republican-led Congress failed to derail the controversial agreement, which lifts economic sanctions from Iran in exchange for restrictions on its nuclear program, GOP candidates across the country are still hammering on it. In Maryland and beyond, they are suggesting Democrats See **IRAN**, page 22

# THE FUTURE OF HEALTH CARE

starts on page 7 of the Main News section.

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# MEDICINE & SCIENCE

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ALGERINA PERNA/BALTIMORE SUN

Alfreda Robinson-Dawkins, a re-entry specialist, helps Teresa Clayton, 50, left, and Samantha Malfi, 29, right, role play in a lesson about stereotyping at Bon Secours Community Works.

## Re-entry program aims to help people adjust to life after prison

Bon Secours provides life skills, counseling, job placement assistance

BY ANDREA K. MCDANIELS  
The Baltimore Sun

For years, Samantha Malfi had been in and out of jail for various offenses, including assault and theft, related to her drug addiction. Time and time again she tried to do better, only to sabotage herself and remain stuck in the same cycle.

Things began to change earlier this year when she got out of jail and into rehab, and joined a community-based program focused on helping people like her who have served long or multiple sentences adjust to life on the outside.

Malfi has been off drugs for nearly a year. She's working on building her self-esteem and not letting her past define her, and even allowing herself to believe she can return to being a hairstylist and reclaim other parts of her old life before addiction took hold.

She credits Bon Secours Community Works with helping her get back on her feet. The program, affiliated with Bon Secours Hospital, addresses the social issues, such as poverty, lack of housing and unemployment, that are as important to a person's well-being as physical health.

For 12 weeks, Malfi and a group of women in a similar situation met once a week to learn the skills to succeed in life and not land back in prison.

"I really needed this support," Malfi said. "It's given me more confidence."

Talib Horne, Community Works' executive director, decided to focus on ex-offenders after statistics showed the neighborhoods around the hospital had some of the largest numbers of people coming home from prison.

Baltimore receives 59 percent of all state prison releases, or 9,000 annually, Horne said. Of those, 30 percent return to just six communities, including the West Baltimore neighborhoods served by Bon Secours.

"When we started looking at the data, we saw that we were surrounded by this and we needed to do something about it," he said.

People leaving prison after long or multiple sentences are thrown back into a drastically changed society with little or no social or financial support.

The program, which includes both men's and women's groups, helps ex-offenders navigate reintegration into society. It is modeled after a program created by an Ohio nonprofit called TYRO, a Latin word that means novice, and used by community groups in many states. It teaches ex-offenders life skills and coping mechanisms to deal with the challenges and stigma that



ANDREA K. MCDANIELS/BALTIMORE SUN

Robert Boyd, right, attends the Bon Secours meeting. He earned a GED and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice while in prison and hopes to build a new life as a free man.

often follow them through life after they're released. Participants also are taught to think positively about themselves despite their past; they're referred to as "returning citizens," rather than ex-offenders.

The group leaders are ex-offenders themselves who understand the struggles faced by those leaving the prison system after many years.

Research has shown that a combination of family and peer support can help former prisoners transition better once they are released. Many of them move in with family when they get out and may put on a positive face to mask any anxiety they may be feeling, said Christy Visher, a professor of sociology and criminal justice at the University of Delaware who studies the re-entry of former prisoners.

"The family is not going to be that person or group they will confide in as they face their fears," Visher said. "People who have been through that experience will be the ones that they will share that with. They are trying to present a really positive, I-am-going-to-make-it, I-am-going-to-be-OK image to the family, because they feel like they let the family down."

Family members often don't know how to help returning prisoners negotiate re-entry. Former prisoners are most vulnerable in the first six months as they deal with finding a job and housing, and adjusting to life without regimented schedules and restrictive rules, Visher said. They also must cope with people's mistrust of

them. They also may face criticism from the victims of their crimes and their victim's families. While some can be forgiving and believe in second chances, the prisoners' release sometimes open old wounds.

Advocates say just as much support is needed for the victims.

"Many times having early release causes victims to be traumatized," said Russell Butler, executive director of the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center. "They relive the loss of their loved ones. There needs to be more support for them as well."

At a recent Bon Secours support group session, Alfreda Robinson-Dawkins, a re-entry specialist, asked Malfi and other women to describe their high and low moments of the week as she does at the start of each session. One woman described her low as feeling out of shape and unable to stop smoking. Another said her high was not letting an annoying boss goad her into losing her temper.

The discussion then turned to how people might judge the women because they are ex-offenders.

"Ever feel like people don't give you an opportunity because of your past?" asked Robinson-Dawkins, who spent 10 years in federal prison in the 1990s on conspiracy charges related to her son's drug dealing.

A woman dressed in a black T-shirt nodded her head feverishly.

"Yes," she said. "I was turned down so

much because of the nature of my charges; because I have shoplifted. People don't want you working in their establishment."

Robinson-Dawkins encouraged the women not to let labels define them. Don't let your past dominate the conversation in job interviews, she told them. Turn the focus to the skills you bring to the job.

"We know we can live beyond those labels," Robinson-Dawkins said.

A couple of hours after the women met, a group of men met, including Robert Boyd, who was 16 in 1982 when he and some other teenagers broke into a Gwynn Oak house and were confronted by the 81-year-old owner, whom one of the teenagers shot and killed.

While he wasn't the shooter, according to his attorney, he was convicted of first-degree murder and spent 34 years in prison before his release in April. The sleepy downtown Baltimore the now 51-year-old remembered had become a vibrant tourist hub. Walking down the street as a free man seemed foreign.

"I didn't feel as if I belonged here," Boyd said.

Sitting around a table recently with other men who had once been in his shoes, Boyd felt free to let go. Regret and remorse poured out of him. He said he was sorry about what happened.

The family of the victim could not be located for comment.

Boyd was introduced to the Bon Secours program by another ex-offender already in the program who lived in the same halfway house. Boyd earned a GED and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice while in prison and hopes to build a new life as a free man, but first he wants to learn how to navigate his freedom without being held back by his past.

After Community Works' 12-week program, participants get a year of follow-up through a Bon Secours career development program. They get help with small logistical issues that can become big barriers to their success. They are provided mental health and substance abuse counseling and job placement assistance.

Community Works also offers certification and occupational training for careers in construction and urban landscaping. There are also services for housing assistance, credit repair, child care, tax preparation and criminal record expungement assistance.

"A man coming out of jail after 33 or 44 years can't make it without a support system," said Anees Abdul-Rahim, re-entry coordinator at Bon Secours. "They need concentrated attention to get back on the right path."

[amcdaniels@baltsun.com](mailto:amcdaniels@baltsun.com)  
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