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### *Weekly Refresher*

Presumption should never make us neglect that which appears easy to us, nor despair make us lose courage at the sight of difficulties.

- Benjamin Banneker

**Publisher:**  
Adventure Enterprises of  
Maryland LLC  
P.O. Box 2454  
Columbia, MD 21045

**Phone:** 410-777-8467  
**Fax:** 240-455-0845

**Email:**  
[News@GuilfordGazette.com](mailto:News@GuilfordGazette.com)

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# Guilford Gazette

## School Board Member Fights Impeachment



HCPSS FILE PHOTO: Allen Dyer, out-going Howard County School Board Member has six months left in his term, but he is currently fighting to keep his post as the state board reviews the county school board's claim of misconduct in office.

Allen Dyer apparently has few friends on the Howard County Board of Education. In the coming days, the man who stood for "Open Meetings" and "Open Records" will be openly examined in impeachment hearings beginning May 7, 2012. Mr. Dyer refers to his opponents as the "Gang of Four", which includes board members Janet Siddiqui, Frank Aquino, Ellen Giles, and Sandra French.

Mr. Dyer lost his bid for a

ber.

As its basis for dismissal the board is using provision §3-701(g) of the Maryland Education Code Annotated that allows the State Board of Education to remove a county board member based on misconduct in office. Other reasons for removal include immorality, incompetency, and willful neglect of duty according to the 2012 version of the provision.

Mr. Dyer's troubles began after he refused a board request to cease legal actions against the board. He sued the board to open all of its meetings (or at least the records of those meetings) to the public.

His contention is that no record between public officials can be sealed or kept secret. Perhaps the board could have handled one suit, but Mr. Dyer also sued the board in an attempt to have them cease providing transportation funds for non-public school children.

The two suits mentioned are numbered among the dozen or more suits filed, including some prior to Mr. Dyer's election to the board in 2008.

In a recent interview Mr. Dyer said, "[The board] has (Continued on Page 3)

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## The Publisher's Notes

The education and general welfare of our children is a critical theme here at Guilford Gazette. While we do not often think of it, the education of a child begins straight out of the womb - perhaps earlier. Usually, the mom is the first teacher. The child learns how to walk and talk, learns manners, and much more. The mother is there through the critical, early phase, and the dad usually fills the gap.

Later, in most cases, the parents pack up the kid and sends her to pre-school or kindergarten. That first day of school can be traumatic for both the parents and the child, or it could be an absolutely delightful experience. Either way, the academic journey formally begins at that point.

On that momentous first day of school, parents should ask themselves if they have a vision for the child's future, and if so, to what extent will the parent be involved? Some parents find themselves deeply involved and even entrenched in their child's education.

The annoying parent – the one who does daily homework checks and asks a myriad of questions each school day – the one who knows the school staff better than the child, that parent typically has the child with the good grades and high test scores. Of course, this is not always the case. There's always that anomaly.

The not-so-annoying parent, who is just as loving, may be in the mindset that the academic education of the child is solely the responsibility of the school. That parent has completed the daily tour of duty by helping the child to be on-time to class.

Recently, I spoke briefly to Cameron Miles, a man with a heart for those teens falling through the cracks. He runs a program at Coppin State University called Mentoring Male Teens. Watching the tremendous work of Cameron is a strong indication that a parent's love is simply not enough. A strategic plan is required to get our children into adulthood fully educated and morally prepared to tackle the challenges in this 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In Howard County we are still talking about academic achievement gap. We have achieved very little success in erasing the gap. Somehow it seems that the reason for the gap does not fully rest with the schools. Perhaps it is time to look more closely at the home.

*Ricardo L. Whitaker*

**Dyer from Page 1**

to comply with the Open Meetings Act and can't destroy public records, as stated in our state code. These are governance issues." The board's contention is that Mr. Dyer exhibited misconduct in office and for that reason he needs to be removed.

According to Mr. Dyer, the board has characterized him as a bully. Mr. Dyer considers himself the minority on the board. Indeed, he is often out of step with the majority and is not given much to compromise.

Mr. Dyer appears to be one who stands his ground on principle. This statement is based on his tenacious and unrelenting ef-

forts to bring about change to the board. His values do not seem to have changed much over time. He has been pushing for complete transparency for years.

Although his value system seems to resonate with a loyal contingent in Howard County, his methods appear to have some wincing.

A glimpse into the board's deliberations at a closed meeting clarified that a majority of the board does not want Mr. Dyer to have access to past confidential records. Mr. Dyer is steadfastly intent on retrieving those records.

The standoff is further complicated by the lawsuits and possible board discussions of those law-

suits, which Mr. Dyer would not have knowledge of or access to as a private citizen. The present board rules deny access of confidential meeting minutes to the public and also to board members unless the board votes to unseal such records.

We asked Mr. Dyer to list the items for which he is seeking change. He listed four items. They all related to opening up the board to public scrutiny.

He believes that the board should not do the following: 1. copyright public documents, 2. destroy public records, 3. deny board member access to records of confidential meetings, and 4. meet secretly to discuss the ethics

issues regarding another board member. In response to why he chooses to sue the board regarding his concerns, Mr. Dyer said, "I tried to hold [the board] accountable with the law." He went on to say, "Is the Board of Education operating legally? That is the area of conflict being played out."

Mr. Dyer is no stranger to Guilford. In 2008 he met with Ricardo Whitaker of Guilford to discuss possible remedies to help close the achievement gap, and he volunteered on two occasions (while serving on the board) to meet the needs of the community. Once he participated actively in "Raising the Bar", (Continued on page 5)

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This \$5000 grant is disbursed in four \$1250 allotments over the course of four years. Applicants must be of Hispanic descent, pursue a major in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics (STEM) fields, and have a GPA of 2.75. Applications are due by May 14, 2012, and can be downloaded at [www.ushyee.org/educationgrant.html](http://www.ushyee.org/educationgrant.html).

## B. Davis Scholarship

This scholarship is not an academic one, but the committee would like to know where you are going to school now and what your future academic plans are. To apply, you will need to write an essay of less than 1000 words. More information about the scholarship can be found at <http://www.studentawardsearch.com/scholarships.htm>. The deadline to apply is May 28, 2012 and the award amount is \$1000.

## WiseChoice

This scholarship awards \$2500 for any U.S. student graduating from high school in 2012-2015. For complete details, including eligibility requirements, entry instructions and prize details, please see the official rules. Online scholarship applications must be completed by May, 31, 2012. The website to apply is [www.wisechoice.com/?sid=gcfx](http://www.wisechoice.com/?sid=gcfx).



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*Designed by Elvira McCullough*

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### Director of Music Position

Valley Brook Community Church is seeking a part-time Director of Music. We are located in Columbia, Maryland with our offices in Burtonsville. We are a non-denominational church and strive to have a diverse worship set each week to include genres from hymns and spirituals, contemporary praise and worship selections, and gospel.

The Director of Music will work closely with the pastor, worship leaders and staff in planning for each Sunday's set. The Director of Music will be responsible for the leadership, development and growth of our praise team through weekly Wednesday night rehearsals as well as the day to day management of music related administrative duties.

The qualified candidate must have made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ. A degree in music is preferred but not required. Previous experience in directing choirs

or ensembles is a must.

The Director of Music must be able to play piano, read music, play by ear, sing when needed and transcribe vocal parts off of recordings as well as possess a basic knowledge of Word and Excel for administrative aspects of the job. This is an hourly position for now (approx. 20 hours per week) with the possibility for more as experience and circumstances warrant.

Resumes can be mailed to Valley Brook Community Church, Attn: Mary Wierick, 3333 Spencerville Rd, Burtonsville, MD 20866 or emailed to [maryv-bcc@verizon.net](mailto:maryv-bcc@verizon.net).

### Dyer from Page 3

a grassroots effort to help parents navigate the academic needs of students, and later he joined a spring clean-up effort in a wooded area off of Guil-

ford Road near Oakland Mills Road.

The impeachment hearing will be held at the Office of Administrative Hearing in Hunt Valley, Maryland on May 7<sup>th</sup> beginning at 9:30 am.

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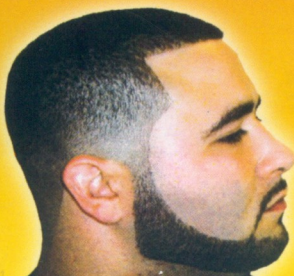
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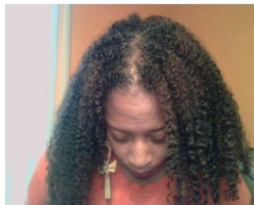
# Summer Fun and Opportunities

**Host an International Student.** E.F. Language Travel is looking for stable, caring host families to host students from Spain, France, Russia and China this summer. The students are here July 4-23 and July 25-August 13. Ages 14-17. They spend Monday-Friday at UMBC campus studying English and going on various field trips and outings. Host families drop off students at 8:30 a.m. and pick them up at 5:30 p.m. Host families provide a bed and three meals a day for the students. Evenings and weekends are spent with their host families. Host families receive a stipend of \$300 per student they host. Students have their own spending money and medical insurance. Interested families should email [april.snyder@ef.com](mailto:april.snyder@ef.com) or call 443-812-4914.

**Mental Health Concerns of Adolescents** -Thursday, May 10 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at The Bain Center, 5470 Ruth Keeton Way, in Columbia, 21044. There is **NO** fee to attend this event; however, space is limited, and parents must pre-register by calling 410-313-1940. The panel includes representatives from local community programs and student speakers, and will address a range of topics. After the panel presentations, parents will have the opportunity to take part in an open discussion or submit questions anonymously, depending on their comfort level.

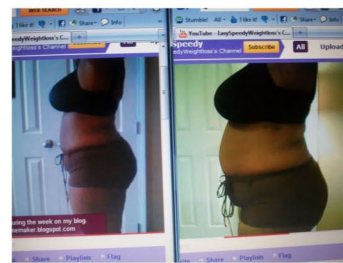
**Recreation and Parks' School's Out Adventure Rodeo** for ages 10-12. May 18, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Centennial Park South. Spend the day outdoors while sampling a variety of adventure activities and games. Fee \$73 includes equipment, instruction, supervision and a cookout lunch. More information: Matt Medicus, 410-313-4719 or [www.howardcountymd.gov/schoolsout.htm](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/schoolsout.htm)

The Elkridge Volunteer Fire Department's Junior Firefighters is sponsoring two youth dances for ages 9-15, at the fire hall, 6275 Old Washington Rd. **Luau youth dance** - Sat., May 19 from 7-10 p.m. **End-Of-School youth dance** - Sat., June 2, from 7-10 p.m. Tickets are available at the door for \$10 per person.. Call 410-761-6633.



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