Local Radio with a Big Reach

WKHS-FM, at 90.5 on your radio dial, is operated by Kent County High School students under the supervision of station manager Chris Singleton. It offers music from its extensive library, news, and sports (including live play-by-play coverage of most Kent County high school games), as well as a marine forecast and interviews with key personalities or organization heads from the broader community. The student staff also produces a weekly public affairs show in partnership with medical students from John Hopkins University. The station also offers a broader variety of programming hosted by volunteers most weekday evenings, Saturday mornings, and Sunday evening. Its website, http://www.wkhsradio.org, offers pre-recorded podcasts and hopes soon to offer live streaming over the internet of its broadcasts.

The students who provide its broadcast content and manage daily operations are enrolled in the high school’s career technical education program, which offers a wide variety of practical training and which more than 80 percent of all students complete. Typically, the radio/broadcasting program has 30-35 students at any given time.

What’s unique about WKHS, however, is its broadcast reach.
Because of a typo on the original application to the FCC for a broadcasting license, back in 1974, the station is one of the most powerful FM stations anywhere. Its signal can be picked up as far north as Wilmington, as far south as Cambridge, and as far west as Baltimore and Columbia. That reach is why the station partners with University of Pennsylvania’s WXPN station, which broadcasts over the WKHS tower for morning and evening drive time (up til 8 am, when WKHS’s local programming starts, and after 3 pm, when WKHS signs off).

That reach also means that the station could function as a means to share information about local Kent County or eastern shore activities to neighboring urban areas, helping to attract visitors and new residents. Chris Singleton says that he “would welcome more community involvement that could help it function as a beacon” in ways consistent with its educational mission, pointing out that the station would be glad to have more local sources of news to report and guests to interview about county activities.

The station is now undergoing a major upgrade in its physical facilities, to create more studio space and a modernized operations center and to replace disintegrating sound proofing. It has already replaced is audio playout system, bringing it up to industry standard, and automated its extensive music library to facilitate pre-recorded shows. It plans to upgrade the link between its studios and the broadcast tower to an optical fiber. The goal is to provide interview guests with a more comfortable experience and the students with training that would prepare them to operate in any commercial broadcast studio. Since funds for the upgrade aren’t available in the school budget, the station is also undertaking a fundraising campaign.

http://www.wkhsradio.org

Voter Fraud and Voter Suppression

We hear those words a lot, so let’s make clear what we mean when we use them. Voter Fraud generally means one voter voting many times, in spite of the fact that voting twice is a felony punishable by a fine and 5 years in prison. Our 1st District had its own fraudulent voter in Congressional candidate Wendy Rosen, who in 2013 was fined $5000 and given a 5-year probation for voting in two states in 2006 and 2008.
According to a report by the Brennan Center for Justice, while Kris Kobach was Kansas Secretary of State, he conducted a review of 84 million votes cast in 22 states and found a total of just 14 instances of fraud that could be referred for prosecution. Kobach is currently vice-chairman of the national Election Integrity Commission, which has so far been unsuccessful in its efforts to ferret out massive instances of fraud across the country.

Another definition of voter fraud, however, is the fraud perpetrated on voters by their state legislatures. It’s called Voter Suppression. The opposite of one person voting several times, Voter Suppression is aimed squarely at preventing qualified people, most of them registered with the “wrong” political party, from voting. The numbers of voters disenfranchised by these tactics are in the millions. A Wikipedia article does an eye-opening job of outlining many of the voter suppression tricks, including:

- creating impediments to voter registration;
- photo ID laws which hit students, the elderly and the disabled who may not have a driver’s license or passport;
- purging of voter rolls not only of those who have moved or died, but those who have similar names or who haven’t voted in the last two or three elections;
- limitations on early voting to eliminate weekend voting;
- felon disenfranchisement;
- transgender disenfranchisement;
- falsifying information about voting procedures and polling place location changes, sometimes using robo calls to deter people from going to the polls;
- inequality in Election Day polling places and hours, causing long lines and missed hours at work;
- closure of DMV offices to make registration a longer trip;
- gerrymandering to make districts safe for one party or the other;
- Jim Crow laws;
- “losing” absentee ballots;
- using electronic voting machines which have no paper trail back-up.

Here are two of many sources of information on this issue:

- [https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/debunking-voter-fraud-myth](https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/debunking-voter-fraud-myth)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voter_suppression_in_the_United_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voter_suppression_in_the_United_States) (If you go to this website, be sure to read about Maryland’s 2010 gubernatorial election and the fraud
perpetrated on Maryland’s voters.)
by Francie Miller

The Opioid Epidemic

Medical authorities report that opioid overdoses now rank with cancer, strokes, and heart attacks among the top killers in the state of Maryland. In the first 9 months 2016, for example, Maryland saw 1,468 deaths related to overdoses. The opioid crisis has grown to the point that it is not unusual to know a family member, a neighbor, or a coworker who has been affected or even killed by this scourge.

Addiction can occur in any generation and for any socioeconomic class. A common route into addiction is for a young adult or teen to be given a medical prescription for pain medicine following an injury, which then leads to drug seeking behavior after the injury has healed. Opioids include heroin as well as prescription pain relievers oxycodone, hydrocodone, codeine, morphine, fentanyl and others. Opioids relieve pain by reducing the number of pain signals getting to the brain, and they produce pleasure by binding to the same receptors as our body’s internal pleasure chemicals.

The prescribing rates for prescription pain medicines among adolescents and young adults in the US nearly doubled from 1994 to 2007. In 2012, 259 million prescriptions were written for opioids in the US, more than enough to give every American adult their own bottle of pills. And there is strong evidence that four of every five new heroin users starts out misusing prescription painkillers. After using prescription pain medicines, many opioid users said they switched to heroin because it was less expensive and easier to obtain.

Another influence for a teen or young adult to try opioids can be peer pressure for experimentation with alcohol or drugs. Some overdoses occur when users think they are buying heroin but in fact are actually buying even deadlier fentanyl, which is many times more potent.

The Department of Maryland Health and Mental Hygiene has been collaborating with federal, state and local partners to try to reduce the number of overdoses, including expanding access to naloxone, a drug that can reverse opioid-related overdoses when given in time. All Maryland-licensed pharmacists can now dispense naloxone without a prescription.
to anyone trained and certified under the Department’s Overdose Response Program. But it’s clear that early family awareness and intervention to prevent addiction or get affected individuals into treatment is and even better strategy.

Marylanders who need help finding substance related disorder treatment resources should visit MdDestinationRecovery.org or call the Maryland Crisis Hotline, which provides 24/7 support, at 1-800-422-0009

by Melinda Miller, CRNP, and Robert Miller

Why Congress Doesn’t Care About Obamacare

Since 2014 Members of Congress must get their health insurance through the Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare). However, they receive government subsidies that cover 72 percent of the cost. Why then, you might ask, do they want to do away with Obamacare? Well, if they can eliminate the ACA, they can return to their former health insurance plan, known as the FEHBP, which also pays 72 percent of their premiums. In addition, under either plan, they can make use of the free or low cost outpatient care at military medical facilities in the D.C. area, and the free services of the Office of the Attending Physician.

Details can be found at:
• Congressional Salaries and Allowances – Senate.gov;
• 10 Perks Congress Has That You Don’t – The Motley Fool; and
• Here’s How Much Members of Congress Pay for their Health Insurance - CNBC.

Common Sense wants to get it right across the Shore. Become a volunteer CSES reporter: send us your county’s news, reactions, preferences and priorities to info@CommonSenseEasternShore.org