

3.4 million Americans, including 59,900 Marylanders, had epilepsy in 2015 — a 25 percent jump in about five years



ALGERINA PERNA/BALTIMORE SUN

Paul Shaffer, right, an epilepsy patient at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, holds a programming wand at the spot where a nerve stimulator was implanted in his skull. At left is Jordan Takas, a consultant with the company that made the device.

More patients coping with epilepsy diagnosis

By MEREDITH COHN
The Baltimore Sun

As he was growing up, Paul Shaffer sometimes froze in his tracks and felt like he was walking away from his body.

He did not tell anyone about the sensation, which usually passed quickly: “Who would believe me?”

It was not until he was in his 20s and convulsions knocked him out of his chair at work that a doctor told him he had epilepsy and he was having seizures. Still Shaffer, now 54, did not do anything about it until years later when he crashed his car and his wife insisted on a proper assessment and treatment.

It's not uncommon for epilepsy to go

Seizure disorders are “common, complex to live with, and costly.”

Rosemarie Kobau, head of CDC's epilepsy program

undiagnosed and untreated for years. Doctors don't always recognize it or don't want to label the condition. Because it can be stigmatized, patients don't always accept the diagnosis, even as the condition wreaks havoc on their lives.

But researchers are discovering that epilepsy affects far more people than ever

thought. About 3.4 million Americans, including about 59,900 Marylanders, had epilepsy in 2015 — a 25 percent jump in about five years, according to a report released this month by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

While the CDC could not fully explain the rise in cases, attributing it partly to population growth, officials at the Epilepsy Foundation and others say there is no doubt that the numbers reflect a far more thorough accounting of people with the condition.

“We don't have the equivalence of a pregnancy test, a yes or no,” said Dr. Jennifer Hopp, a neurologist at the University of Maryland Medical Center who leads the center where Shaffer is being treated. See **EPILEPSY**, page 13

SUN INVESTIGATES

Baltimore Bike Share temporarily shutting down

Thefts, maintenance issues lead to shortages; program plans to reopen Oct. 15

By COLIN CAMPBELL
The Baltimore Sun

Baltimore is temporarily shutting down its \$2.36 million bike-share program, which has suffered so many thefts and maintenance backups that most of the bicycles are out of service.

Baltimore Bike Share will close Sunday and reopen Oct. 15 to provide time for the installation of additional locking equipment on the bicycle docks and to prepare for an overdue expansion of the system, city officials said Tuesday.

“We wanted to let our subscribers know we're taking it really seriously,” said Michelle Pourciau, the city's transportation director. “We're committed to this. We're working closely on it. We're keeping our eyes on it.”

City officials have met with the system's Canadian manufacturer, Bewegen, and its local maintenance contractor, veteran-owned Corps Logistics in Westport, to discuss fixes to the problems.

Bewegen has agreed to pay for the additional locking device in the bicycle docks to prevent the bikes from being wrenched out without payment, Pourciau said. The company did not respond to a See **BIKE SHARE**, page 13



CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

Boats, cars and other debris clog waterways in the Florida Keys two days after Hurricane Irma slammed into the state. **COVERAGE, NEWS PG 9**

Double hurricanes drive supply-chain troubles

Economic effects range far from Texas and Florida

By MEREDITH COHN
AND LORRAINE MIRABELLA
The Baltimore Sun

Once Mick Arnold absorbed the depths of the devastation from Hurricane Harvey last month, his thoughts turned to plastic.

Specifically, he worried about supplies of polyethylene, a common plastic used to make plastic wrap, trash bags and those air-filled pockets used to protect products shipped in boxes. Much of it is produced in Houston — and it's a key component of packaging materials made by his company, Baltimore-based Arnold Packaging.

“Americans don't always think about

where their products come from and how it gets to them,” said Arnold, the company's president. “Companies can make all the products in the world, but if they can't package it and distribute it, it doesn't matter.”

Disruptions at plastics plants and oil refineries in Texas, and at farms in Florida that were hit by Hurricane Irma, have sent immediate ripples through the nation's supply chain, and could linger if workers can't return to their jobs or the facilities can't be easily repaired. Arnold said effects could also be felt by businesses and consumers when resources such as See **HURRICANES**, page 10

DOJ won't charge officers

Insufficient evidence of civil rights violation in Freddie Gray case

By KEVIN RECTOR
The Baltimore Sun

The U.S. Department of Justice will not bring charges against Baltimore police officers in connection with the death of 25-year-old Freddie Gray from injuries sustained in police custody in 2015, the agency confirmed Tuesday.

The department issued a statement Tuesday evening that after “an extensive review of this tragic event, conducted by career prosecutors and investigators,” officials concluded that “the evidence is insufficient to prove beyond a reasonable doubt” that the officers involved in Gray's arrest “willfully violated” his civil rights. “Accordingly, the investigation into this incident has been closed without prosecution,” the agency said.

The decision means no officers will be held criminally responsible for Gray's death. The state previously filed local criminal charges against six officers in the case, but failed to secure a single conviction.

Then-U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced that the Justice Department was conducting a criminal civil rights investigation into Gray's death on April 27, 2015, the same day as Gray's funeral and the eruption of rioting, looting and arson in Baltimore. Lynch, who served under President Barack Obama, said at the time that the department would “continue our careful and deliberate examination of the facts in the coming days and weeks” to determine whether any officers should be charged with violating Gray's civil rights.

Now, nearly two and a half years later and under the Trump administration, Justice Department investigators have concluded that no charges are warranted. The agency said the evidence did not show Gray was given a “rough ride” in the back of a police transport van — a theory of state prosecutors — and did not prove that officers were aware that their failure to secure Gray with a seat belt put him in danger. Evidence did not show that officers knew he was See **OFFICERS**, page 6

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

MARYLAND

BWI AIRPORT NOISE: Gov. Larry Hogan has directed Attorney General Brian E. Frosh to sue the Federal Aviation Administration over new flight patterns at Baltimore-Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport that have provoked bitter complaints from area residents about excessive noise. **NEWS PG 2**

NATION

KUSHNER'S ROLE: A small group of White House lawyers reportedly urged this summer that President Donald Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner step down from his White House role amid the probe into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russians in the 2016 election. **NEWS PG 5**

NEW IPHONE UNVEILED: The crowd at Apple's new “spaceship” headquarters in Cupertino, Calif., saw new smartphones — including a premium version, the iPhone X, priced at \$999 — as the computer company commemorated the 10th anniversary of the introduction of the iPhone. **NEWS PG 6**

TODAY'S WEATHER

SHOWER POSSIBLE

79
HIGH

64
LOW



Storm possible Thursday **SPORTS PG 12**

More patients coping with epilepsy

EPILEPSY, From page 1

“There is a comprehensive evaluation that needs to be done. And every patient is a little different.”

Epilepsy is a brain disorder that causes any kind of seizure, from convulsions to staring to confused behavior. The condition can stem from strokes, head injuries, infections or genetic mutations, and is diagnosed when someone has two unprovoked seizures or one seizure but is likely to have more.

Seizures often frighten sufferers and people who witness them, perpetuating the stigma, said Patricia Osborne Shafer, the Epilepsy Foundation's senior director of health information and resources and epilepsy clinical nurse specialist in Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's Comprehensive Epilepsy Center in Boston.

“People fear the word epilepsy,” said Shafer, who did not know until college that she had the condition because doctors only told her she had a seizure disorder, perhaps cutting her off from resources that were available. “This feeds into why people may not know or haven't been told they have it.”

Experts, advocates and patients hope the greater number of cases brings attention and resources to people who often struggle with everything from relationships and parenting to working and driving.

“Epilepsy is common, complex to live with, and costly,” said Rosemarie Kobau, head of the CDC's epilepsy program, when the agency report was released. “It can lead to early death if not appropriately treated.”

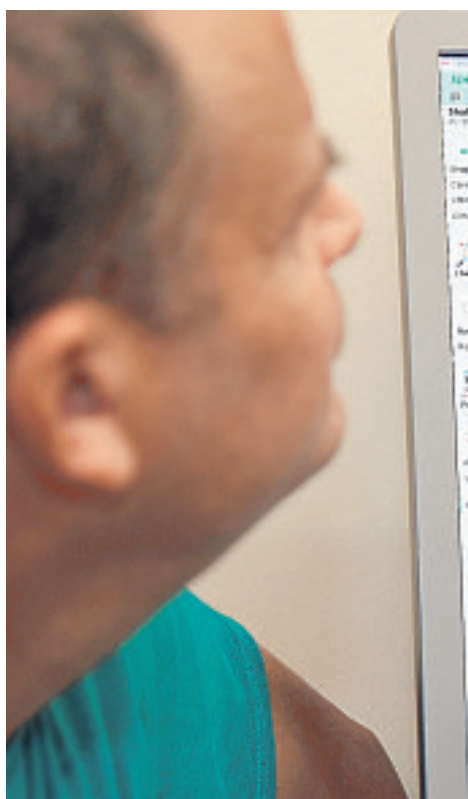
Many people take years to get to a neurologist trained in epilepsy, who not only can diagnose the condition but steer patients to the best therapies.

Patients can be treated with one or more medications, surgery to remove brain tissue where abnormal activity occurs or implantable devices to help control seizures.

Paul Shaffer now takes 14 medications a day, though some are for medical conditions other than epilepsy. His main goals are to better control his seizures, which he had been experiencing three or four times a month, and to get off the drugs that can be tough to manage and make him feel sick.

He wasn't a good candidate for surgery, which can offer immediate relief because the problem area is removed, because his seizures stemmed from both sides of his brain, said Hopp, also an associate professor of neurology at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

So he became one of her first patients to get an implanted device. The responsive neurostimulation device, approved just a few years ago by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, constantly monitors brain



Paul Shaffer looks at an X-ray of his skull in the office of his doctor, Jennifer Hopp, at the University of Maryland School of Medicine.

activity and is programmed to detect specific patterns that can lead to a seizure. The thumb-size device sends brief electric pulses that disrupt abnormal activity before a seizure begins.

It's the latest technology, giving doctors another option for treatment when medications are not effective. Only about 60 percent of patients get a good response from epilepsy drugs.

During a recent visit to Hopp, scans showed Shaffer had no seizures for seven weeks, though he experienced a set only the day before the appointment.

“That shows it's working,” said Hopp, who along with Jordan Takas, a therapy consultant from the device manufacturer NeuroPace, set the computer to give Shaffer bigger jolts in an effort to stop more seizures.

Shaffer said he knows the seizures upset his family, a burden for a doting dad who made sure everyone during his latest doctor's visit knew his 17-year-old daughter, Josie Shaffer, had just been appointed as a student member of the Baltimore County Board of Education.

For her part, Josie said she did not mind driving him to doctor appointments and elsewhere, though she did not much like navigating Baltimore streets. She said the

condition does bother her and her 15-year-old sister, as well as their mother, who often sends them out of the room or to walk the dog when their father has seizures.

“I hope this helps him,” she said of the new device, implanted in February.

Up to 85 percent of patients eventually have improvements with the technology, including one patient who Takas said has been seizure-free for seven years and others who have been able to return to driving. In Maryland, patients have to show they have been seizure-free for 90 days to apply for a driver's license.

No seizures is everyone's goal, Hopp said. Seizures can lead to injuries from falls, drowning in a tub, and accidents while cooking or driving. The condition is linked to depression, and, rarely, it can cause patients to die in their sleep.

Hopp said developing treatment plans is highly individual, taking into account what would work best to control seizures and any life plans, such as child-bearing or other medical conditions.

“It's important to take a medical history, but it's really important to listen to them and their goals,” Hopp said. “We take a lot of time on this. ... We focus on the best quality of life for a patient.”

ALGERINA PERNA/BALTIMORE SUN

DEATH / LODGE NOTICES

PAPADAKIS, Constantine

Constantine ‘Gus’ Papadakis, from Felton, PA devoted father and grandfather, died peacefully on September, 11, 2017. He was 71 years old.

He retired in 1995 from 31 years of service at Back River Waste Water Treatment Plant-City of Baltimore.

Survived by his loving children, Nicolette Szymanski, Frank Szymanski and Grandson Frank J. Szymanski, Daughter Anna Straw, John Straw, and Grandchildren Kamran and Spohia Insari, Son John Papadakis, Vicki Papadakis and grandchildren Brittany Papadakis, Marcus and Malik Long.

Celebration of Life service to be held 1pm Saturday Sept. 16, 2017 at John Papadakis's home
1907 Wills Road Baltimore MD 21222 dress is casual.
In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Parkinson's Disease Foundation.

ROE, David S., Jr.

David S. Roe, Jr., 86, of Linthicum passed away on September 11, 2017. Mr. Roe was born on July 15, 1931 in Clark Summit, Pennsylvania. He was a US Navy veteran and later retired from Bethlehem Steel as a General Manager. He was an active usher at St. Philip Neri Church and he enjoyed woodworking. David was preceded in death by his brother, James Roe and his grandson, Matthew Cheswick. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor Roe; his son, Richard Roe and his wife, Cecilia; his brother, Ronald Roe; his grandchildren, Austin Roe, Brittany Carey and Luke Cheswick; and his great-grandchildren, James and Alice Carey.

The family will receive visitors at Singleton Funeral & Cremation Services, P.A., 12nd Ave. SW (at Crain Hwy) on Thursday from 3-5 & 7-9 pm. A Funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Philip Neri Church on Friday, Sept. 15th at 10 AM. Interment Meadowridge Memorial Park. Contributions may be made in Mr. Roe's name to St. Philip Neri Church. For further information, please visit www.singletonfuneralhome.com.

RUBIN, Shifra M.

On September 11, 2017, Shifra M. Rubin (nee Meyer) devoted wife of the late Gilbert V. Rubin; loving mother of Richard J. Rubin and the late William ‘‘Billy’’ J. Rubin; beloved mother-in-law of Lynn ‘‘Chickie’’ Rubin; dear sister of the late Rose Ambach; adored grandmother of David Rubin (Karen Wargo) and Stephen Rubin; cherished great-grandmother of Mia and Olivia Rubin; dear daughter of the late Elizabeth and Buddy Meyer. Funeral services and interment will be held at Har Sinai Cemetery - Garrison Forest Road on Wednesday, September 13, at 11:30 am. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to Jane Austen Society of North America, care of <http://www.jasna.org/join/>. The family will be receiving at 4100 N. Charles Street, Apt. 901 (The Winthrop House), Baltimore, MD 21218 following interment on Wednesday only until 5 pm.
www.sollevinson.com

SHELDON, John

On September 12, 2017, John P. Sheldon passed away. He was the beloved husband of Lois K. Sheldon (nee Deterer); devoted father of Cindy Lauenstein and her husband Norman, John W. Sheldon and his wife Heather, Michael P. Sheldon and his wife Dawn, Gregory B. Sheldon, and the late Christine Sheldon; loving grandfather of Ashley Ruth, Brent Lauenstein, Nicole Davis, Brooke Sheldon, Blake Sheldon, and the late Mitch Sheldon. Also survived by six great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends are invited to gather at Schimunek Funeral Home, Inc. 9705 Belair Rd, Nottingham, MD 21236, on Friday September 15, 2017 from 4-8pm. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Saturday at 10am at St. Stephen Catholic Church (Bradshaw, MD). Interment services will follow at Gardens of Faith Memorial Gardens. Memorial contributions may be made in John's name to the Alzheimer's Association P.O. Box 96011, Washington, DC 20090-6011. Online tributes may be left for the family at www.schimunekfuneralhomes.com



SPIELMAN, Romaine

On September 11, 2017 Romaine Beloved wife of the late Henry W. Spielman Jr; Mother of Sean and wife Sherry and Joy and husband Blue; Great-Grandmother of Logan, Laney, Derrick and Dondi; Sister of Joane, Adam and Chester. Visit Gonce Funeral Service P.A. 4001 Ritchie Highway Thursday 3 to 5 and 7 to 9 P.M. Service Friday 11:00 A.M. Interment Glen Haven Memorial Park. Visit Goncefuneralservice.com

ST. JEAN, Donald E.

On September 4, 2017 DONALD EDWARD ST JEAN, 87, passed away peacefully surrounded by loving family. He was pre-deceased by his beloved wife Virginia Mae St Jean (Mellott), brothers Albert and Jerome St Jean and sister Lauretta Donnelly. Also survived by his sister-in-law JoAnn Tasker, 15 nieces and nephews, and their children and grandchildren.
Visitation Thursday 6-9 pm at the CVACH/ROSEDALE FUNERAL HOME, 1211 Chesaco Avenue. Mass of Christian Burial Friday 10 am at the Church of the Annunciation. Interment Cedar Hill Cemetery.

SULS, Elaine

On September 11, 2017, Elaine Suls (nee Wolf); beloved wife of the late Harold M. Suls; cherished mother of Carol (Barry) Henderson, Fred (Debbie) Suls, and the late Barbara Suls; devoted sister of Helene (late Sylvan) Feit; loving grandmother of Randy (Melissa) Henderson, Ian Suls, Aimee (Keith) Kaplan, and the late Michael Henderson; adoring great-grandmother of Zoey, Dani, and Jasper Henderson, and Olivia and Owen Kaplan.

Funeral services and interment will be held at Oheb Shalom Memorial Park - Berrymans Lane on Monday, September 18, at 2:30 pm. Please omit flowers. Contributions in her memory may be sent to National Kidney Foundation of Maryland, 1301 York Road, Suite 404, Lutherville, MD 21093. In mourning at 330 Lantana Drive, Owings Mills, MD 21117, Monday only. Arrangements by SOL LEVINSON & BROS., INC.
www.sollevinson.com

TRAVERS, Mary Jean

On September 5, 2017 Mary Jean Travers (nee Schenuit) beloved wife of Oliver S. Travers for 64 years; devoted mother of Robert Travers (Arden), Jean Travers Goodwin (David), Joan Travers Ottenritter (Robert) and the late Thomas Travers and loving grandmother of 8.
Memorial service will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 at 11 AM at the Church of the Redeemer, 5603 N. Charles Street, Baltimore. Private interment. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be given to the Humane Society of Baltimore, 1601 Nicodemus Road Reisterstown, MD 21136.
www.ruckfuneralhomes.com

VANCLEAF, Barbara

On September 11, 2017 Barbara Elaine VanCleaf; beloved wife of Harry L. VanCleaf; devoted mother of Kimberly Minch and her husband Robert, Susan Neifeld and her husband Eric; cherished grandmother of Rebecca, Miriam and Timothy; dear sister of Nancy Groth and Douglas Kerr.
A funeral service will be held at the family owned Leonard J. Ruck, Inc. Funeral Home 5305 Harford Road on Thursday at 7 PM. Friends may visit on Thursday 2-4 & 6-8pm. Interment Garrison Forrest Veteran Cemetery date to be announced. www.RuckFuneralHomes.Com

WENK, Mary

On Sunday, September 10, 2017, Mrs. Mary R. Wenk, beloved wife of the late Edgar R. Wenk, Jr., beloved mother of Rose Marie Amos and husband Thomas, Robert Ray Wenk, Sr., and wife Patricia, beloved grandmother of Kelly Ann Wetzel and husband Brad, Robert Ray Wenk, Jr., and wife LaDonna, great grandmother of Robert Ray Wenk, III and Gunner Wetzel.
Friends may call at the LOUDON PARK FUNERAL HOME, 3620 Wilkens Ave., on Thursday, September 14, from 11:00 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. at which time services will begin at the funeral home. Interment Loudon Park Cemetery.
Donations may be made in Mrs. Wenk's name to the Howard Hospital Foundation, 10760 Hickory Ridge Rd., Columbia, MD. 21044.

Baltimore Bike Share shuts down, plans to reopen Oct. 15

BIKE SHARE, From page 1

request for comment Tuesday afternoon.

The program launched last year with 200 bicycles for rent at 20 stations, with plans to expand to 500 bicycles at 50 stations in the spring. The bikes cost \$2 to rent for a 45-minute single trip or \$15 for a monthly pass, which provides users an unlimited number of 45-minute rides for 30 days.

The program did not expand on schedule — officials blamed a delay in receiving a steel component for the bike docks from the manufacturer — and a high rate of thefts and a maintenance backlog caused shortages.

Three times in August, the Bike Share mobile app showed fewer than a third of the 200 bicycles were available at docks across the city, The Baltimore Sun found. That's a much lower percentage than was available in other cities with similar programs.

Baltimore isn't the only bike-share system to struggle with theft. Capital Bike-share in Washington faced a similar problem in 2010. Officials addressed it by improving the locks on its docking stations, said Paul DeMaio, a principal at MetroBike LLC, a bike-share consulting firm, who helped design the Arlington, Va., portion of the D.C. system.

“The vendor at the time paid for the modified component, which we had installed in all the docks,” he said. “We did not close the entire system down. But I think that is probably a wise move, because the fleet is very important, and if they're losing bikes, they need the necessary improvements to ensure the fleet stays in place once docked.”

The bicycles are outfitted with GPS technology, so the stolen or abandoned bikes were usually recovered. But thefts and other non-returns of the bicycles had become such an issue that two maintenance employees were devoted solely to bike recovery, officials said. Bicycles are often damaged when they're ripped out of their docks or ditched in an alley, which has contributed to the maintenance backlog that leaves about 100 bicycles at a time awaiting fixes.

Having watched bicycles disappear from Bike Share docks around Baltimore over the past few months, Brian Seel thought the number shown on the app looked too high. He said he reached out to the Baltimore Bike Share Facebook site and was told it was a “rebalancing issue” — that the missing bikes must be at another station.

So Seel, a 31-year-old software developer and bicyclist who lives in Upper Fells Point, spent two and a half hours on Labor Day riding around to count the bikes himself. He took a picture of each station and wrote about the project on his blog, Baltimore Around the World.

The Baltimore Bike Share app at the time reported 45 available bicycles, Seel wrote. The total in his count? Four.

The Epilepsy Foundation's Shafer said depression and anxiety are concerns for many epilepsy patients that also need to be addressed by professionals. Some need legal aid, such as patients who fear losing jobs or custody of children.

The public also needs education about responding to seizures, she said. (The quick first-aid to keep people safe: Sit them down or lay them on their side, protect their head, don't restrain them and call 911 only if the seizure lasts more than about three minutes.)

She said people with epilepsy can feel a loss of control, or like “they have a time bomb in the head.”

New patients want quick answers about how they can be treated and how it will affect their lives, Shafer said. But it's really more of a “journey,” with people having to understand what triggers their seizures or what works to control them and how it all affects their ability to go about daily activities.

“Sometimes we can answer questions and sometimes we can't,” she said. “They need to understand what they have and what it means to them on a personal level and on a treatment level. ... Knowing how many people are affected is a start.”

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“I was quite surprised it was that low,” he said in an interview. “I knew it'd be low, but four was quite shocking.”

Seel said he understands the need for a shutdown to add the new locks and work out the kinks in the system. What troubled him more than the theft problem, he said, was the attempt by Bike Share officials to explain it away. He called their communication “absolutely horrific.”

“If people understand we have this issue, I don't think there'd be as much frustration as there is,” Seel said. They just need to be much more upfront with it.”

City transportation officials did not respond to a follow-up email seeking comment on Seel's criticisms.

Maintenance crews have been removing bicycles from the system for the past week in anticipation of the shutdown, said Jim Duffney, founder and CEO of Corps Logistics. “We've been taking the bikes off the street for a little bit,” he said. “But I'd try to keep them downtown, try to keep some bikes around the harbor for the weekend, do what I could.”

Dr. George Wittenberg rides past at least three different bicycle docks on Maryland Avenue on his commute downtown from his home in Rogers Forge. The 53-year-old physician and scientist said he saw lots of people using the system when it launched last fall, but the bike stations he's seen have been mostly empty for at least three months.

“I'm not surprised” by the shutdown, Wittenberg said. “Clearly the system has problems.”

Wittenberg, a member of the bicyclist advocacy group Bikemore, said he hopes the nearly monthlong hiatus gives the city a chance to get the program on track. “I would like to see anything that helps bicycle commuting become more prevalent in Baltimore,” he said.

The system will offer free bike rides to monthly pass-holders after the relaunch, Duffney said. “We've been proactive with those folks,” he said. “The system's going to be back and better than ever.”

Pourciau declined to specify how the city would manage to expand a system it has been unable to adequately supply at the current levels.

Jon Laria, chairman of the Mayor's Bicycle Advisory Commission, said the “proof will be in the pudding.”

“The system may have to earn some trust again, but I'm confident that'll happen in the long run,” he said. “People just have to give us a little space to fix this issue and get the bikes back in order and get the system running again.”

“It's absolutely the right thing to do to get the system back into reliable order,” he said. “A short hiatus in the interest of a longer-term system is well worth it.”
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