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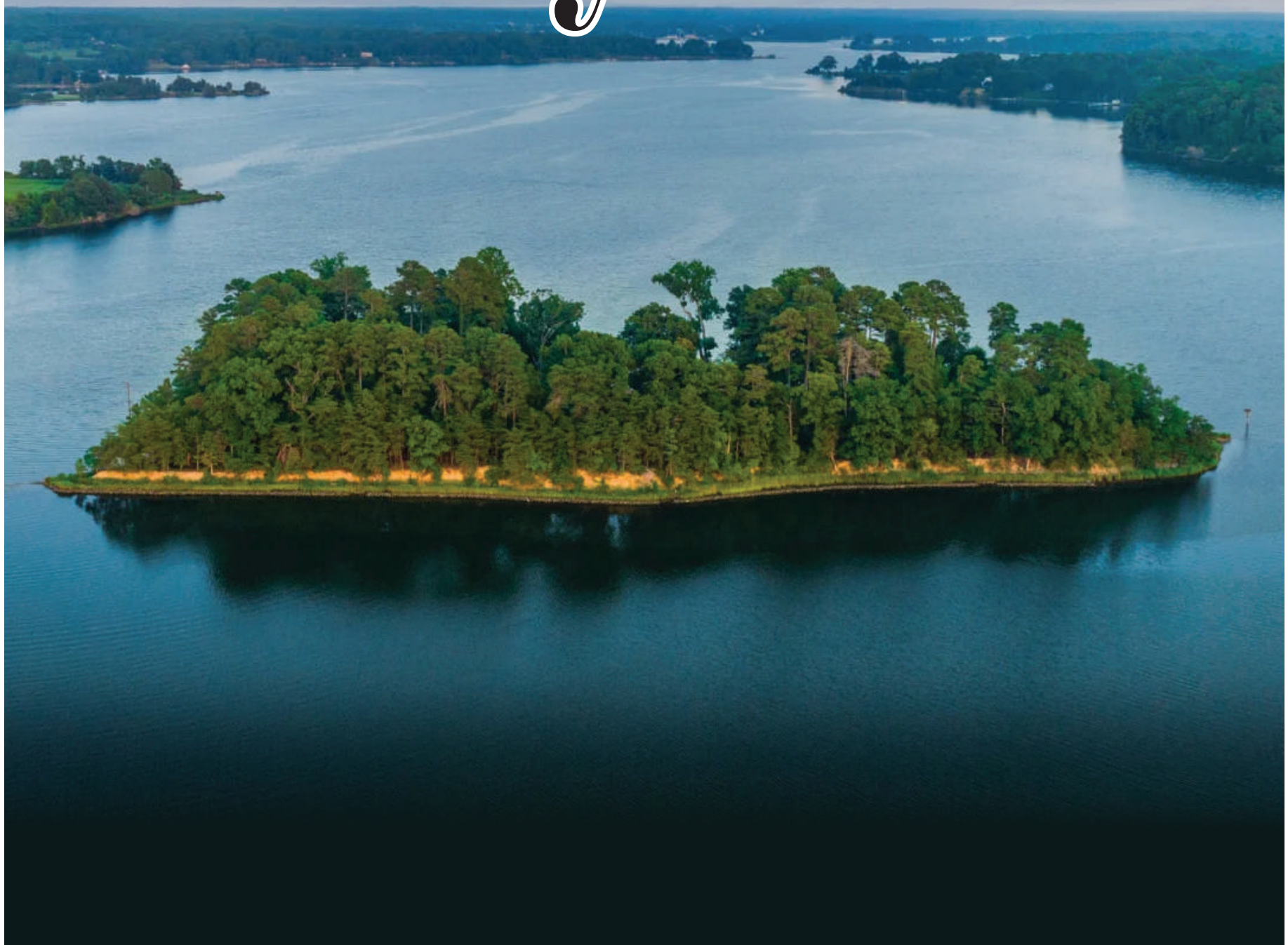
VOTERS

*******GUIDE*******

St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2022

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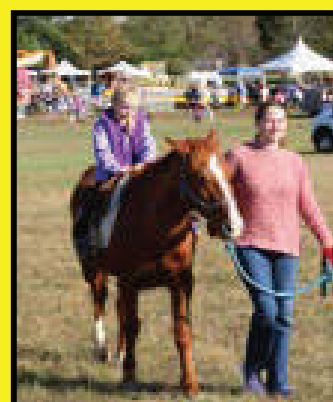
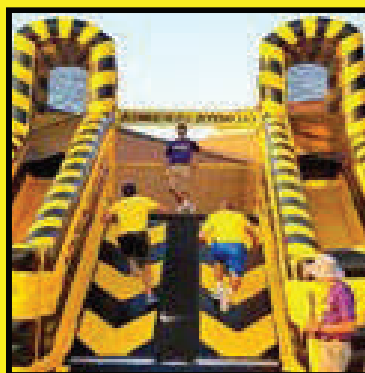
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“We’ve seen some massive amounts written on these intercepted checks,”

Jason Babcock, spokesman for the county sheriff’s office on theft of checks from the mail.



LOCAL 4
Weech suspends commissioner president campaign.



COMMUNITY 9
Pianist Brian Ganz offering free concert



Island getaway for sale

ON THE COVER

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU 10/13 71° /52° Morning showers	MON 10/17 67° /46° Clouds and sun
FRI 10/14 70° /49° Mostly sunny	TUE 10/18 61° /42° Morning rain; clouds breaking
SAT 10/15 72° /59° Nice with plenty of sunshine	WED 10/19 59° /44° Mostly sunny
SUN 10/16 75° /55° Considerable cloudiness	THU 10/20 60° /45° Mostly cloudy

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Town Raises Impact, Delinquent Utility Fees

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Leonardtown Town Council voted unanimously this week to increase the impact fees charged to new development for access to water and sewer and also to triple the amount the town charges for delinquent utilities accounts.

There were public hearings scheduled for the two proposed ordinances to be held at the Oct. 12 business meeting of the town council but no one rose to speak either in support or opposition to either measure.

Town Administrator Laschelle McKay said the town had likewise not received any written commits on the two ordinances.

Before the public hearings, McKay explained that the increased impact fees, which would be used to pay for the \$18 million project to expand the capacity at the town's wastewater treatment plant to one million gallons per day.

The impact fees have not been increased since 2007, McKay said, when the town had to pay for an enhanced

nutrient removal project at the plant; the fees have now increased from \$13,000 to \$18,000.

McKay said the costs would "not be passed on to residents currently using the facilities."

Mayor Dan Burris said the increase was needful, especially to keep town property tax rates in check.

"We haven't raised property taxes in the last 10 years," Burris said. "If we didn't do it [increase impact fees] we'd have to charge everyone."

The second ordinance raised the delinquent utilities account fee from just \$25 to \$75.

McKay said that in the last round of sending out notices to residents there were about 200, which necessitated town staff to engage in a lengthy process to contact the account holders and ask for payment before the utilities were shut off.

"It's very costly," McKay said, who noted utilities rates have not been raised for the past three years."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Weech Suspends Campaign For Commissioner President

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Natalie Weech, Democrat candidate for county commissioner president, confirmed this week that she has suspended her campaign after the state Board of Elections ruling stating that even if she won the race the seat would be considered vacant.

In late September, Weech announced that she had learned she did not meet the residency requirement of five years; she said she was unaware of the requirement until doing research for any potential conflicts of interest between her campaign and accepting a job with the county school system.

"I've done no further taking of money since as I can't take office," Weech told The County Times in a phone interview Oct. 10. "I haven't done any campaigning since I found out [about the residency requirement]."

Weech said she officially suspended her campaign Oct. 5, one day after the state elections board made its announcement.

Weech said she intends to run for the same office again once she has reached the required five years as a resident; she has only lived in St. Mary's for three years.

Weech said the remaining money in her political campaign account is mostly comprised of a loan from herself; according to the latest campaign finance report Weech has a little less than

\$2,200 in her account.

Sen. Jack Bailey told members of the St. Mary's County Republican Club last week that he would continue to press for answers from both the state and local boards of election as to how or why Weech was allowed to file for candidacy without meeting the residency requirement.

Bailey sent a letter to the state's chief elections administrator Linda Lamone expressing his concerns.

"This error in certification has the potential to set a terrible precedent to alter our election process," Bailey wrote. "Clearly, our current certification process is flawed since this error occurred in both the primary and general elections.

"Why should any potential candidate follow the established qualifications for office if these requirements are just going to be ignored by the Board of Elections and allow candidates to be placed on the ballot?"

Wendy Adkins, local director of the elections board, said last week that the staff are not required to ensure than candidates meet all eligibility requirements.

"It's my understanding that the candidates are responsible for making sure they meet the requirements," Adkins said. "Our paperwork does not require that and our paperwork comes directly from the state board."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Island Up For Sale In St. Mary's River

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Gail and John Harmon, owners of Tippity Wichity Island, nestled in the middle of the St. Mary's River about an eight-minute boat ride north from St. Mary's College, have loved living on the island as a vacation and week-end home for about 44 years.

But now they are ready to move on. The attorney and surgeon husband and wife team are finding the boat trips to the island from shore a little more difficult these days, Gail Harmon said.

"We're getting older and it's kind of a challenge to get in a boat," she told The County Times.

The good news, though, is that for \$2.1 million price tag, the island can become the property of a new owner to enjoy.

"We had wonderful times there," Gail Harmon said. "It's one of the great secrets; it's a wonderful spot." The island's sale is being handled by TTR Sotheby's International Realty and the property has an allegedly storied — possibly raunchy — history.

"There's one story about it being a Native American settlement and there have been some artifacts found there," said David DeSantis of TTR Sotheby's.

According to the Tippity Wichity website: "Early records for St. Mary's County document a purchase of the Island by a Captain Henry Howgate after the Civil War," the prospectus reads. "Depending on whom you believe, this Howgate was either a notorious Confederate smuggler or a former Union Army officer with a penchant for embezzlement

"Either way, it appears that Mr. Howgate purchased what was then known as Lynch Island in 1879 and built a house of ill-repute and distillery meant to appeal to traders and others doing business on the waterways of the Chesapeake after a crackdown of similar establishments in the then-thriving port of Alexandria." The website goes on to say: "It is not clear how long the establishment lasted or what became of Howgate and his 'employees,' but the 20th century brought a new era of respectability for St. Mary's County and the island which obscured its raucous history."

An old residence no longer there on the



island was built on that former brothel's foundation, DeSantis said, but an entirely new home now stands on the island. The island itself is between three-to-four meters about sea level, which means it is not expected to erode due to wind and tide, DeSantis said.

The island is five acres in size, according to the Sotheby's website. The island home includes three-bedrooms that have direct outside access. One side of the home features two bedrooms, one being the primary, and a full bath. The primary bedroom provides a view of the St. Mary's River through sliding glass doors giving way to a private porch. The third bedroom and additional full bath are located on the opposite end of the living area.

While each of the numerous porches offer a unique view and tranquility, the highlight is the screened-in "gazebo" porch. The space welcomes outdoor dining year-round or a shaded respite with the ebb and flow of the river in the background, according to the Sotheby's website.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Tippity Wichity Island



Schools Still Short Teachers, Support Staff

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith said this week that the county public schools' shortage of teachers continues.

"We are still looking for teachers," Smith told the board of education during their Oct. 12 meeting. "We are persistently looking for special education teachers; we have six vacancies."

Other teacher vacancies include slots for three elementary school teachers, two high school mathematics teachers, a Spanish teacher and a teacher for visually impaired students.

The school system also needs three speech pathologists, a school counselor and a registered nurse.

"Opportunity is here," Smith said. "If you are not interested in being in the classroom or counseling services, we do have all kinds of support professionals as well."

Smith said there were positions available in payroll services and building service staff.

The system also needs food services staff, maintenance workers, paraeducators, secretaries and teacher apprentices.

Smith said teachers who become certified nationally earn an extra \$10,000 and that addition to their salary becomes

part of their pension once they retire.

The school board also approved a special education staffing plan this week that is required to receive federal funding.

The plan is designed to prove to federal education authorities that the school system is adequately staffing for special education needs in the least restrictive environment for students who have disabilities.

According to Audrey Ellis, acting Director of Special Education, county schools have an average of one special education teacher per 200 students in general education classes enrolled in kindergarten to the 5th grade.

The average case of special education students per special education teacher is 18, according to Ellis' presentation.

In the middle school grades from 6th to 8th there are 150 general education students for every one special education teacher; this figures out to 15 special education teachers per special education teacher.

In high school there are 200 general education students per each special education teachers, which figures out to 15 special education students for each special education teacher.

guyleonard@countytimes.net



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Pianist Brian Ganz Resumes His Popular Midday Concert Series

St. Mary's College of MD (SMCM) Musician-in-Residence Brian Ganz will resume his popular midday concert series at the new Performing Arts Center on the college campus. On Tuesday, October 18 at 12:20pm he will be joined by another member of the SMCM community Beverly Babcock in a performance of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, K. 466. Mr. Ganz will play the solo piano part and Ms. Babcock will accompany him on a second piano in a reduction of the orchestra part. The concert, which will take place in the Recital Hall of the Performing Arts Center at 47855 College Drive, St Mary's City is free and open to the public. For more information, call (240) 895-4498 or visit <https://bit.ly/2YCPDKS>

"I am so excited to be making music with my dear friend Beverly Babcock in this stunning new setting at the college," pianist Ganz said. "And this masterpiece is perfect for the occasion. It is one of the most dramatic and exciting of Mozart's great piano concertos. Beethoven loved this concerto and played it himself. In fact, he loved it so much he composed cadenzas for the first and third movements. So it's the only work I know in which you get to hear both Mozart and Beethoven within the pages of a single piece!"

Ganz has appeared as soloist with such orchestras as the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the National Philharmonic, the Baltimore and the National Symphonies, the City of London Sinfonia, and L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo. He has performed in many of the world's major concert halls and has played under the baton of such conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Mstislav

Rostropovich, Pinchas Zukerman, Jerzy Semkow and Yoel Levi. A critic for La Libre Belgique wrote of Ganz's work: "We don't have the words to



speak of this fabulous musician who lives music with a generous urgency and brings his public into a state of intense joy."

Beverly Babcock has spent her life in the world of music. She had a private piano studio for many years before teaching at the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, VA, and at Andrews University in Berrien Spring, MI. She joined the music faculty at St. Mary's College of Maryland 1999, where she was the Resident Accompanist, working with voice students, instrumentalists, and accompanying Chamber Singers. She frequently accompanied piano concerto competitions and has played with students in the Maryland State Music Teachers Association, the Frederick Symphony Orchestra, the National Philharmonic, the Yida Novik Concerto Competition, the Young Musician Competition at Catholic University of America, and the National Symphony Orchestra. She received her M.Mus. Degree in Piano Performance from Peabody Conservatory where she studied with Ellen Mack and Leon Fleisher. Her post-graduate studies were with John Owings, pianist in residence at Indiana University of South Bend.

Cedar Lane Senior Living Community Selected for 2022 Thome Aging Well Grant

Cedar Lane Senior Living Community was recently awarded a 2022 Thome Aging Well grant. The funding will be used for a comprehensive "Life in Balance" program in early 2023, which brings professional dietitian services, cognitive and emotional support services, physical therapy and occupational therapy to Cedar Lane at no cost to residents.

The Thome Aging Well program is a four-year, \$19 million initiative from Enterprise Community Partners (Enterprise) designed to help older adults living in affordable communities age safely and securely at home.

"Age-related decline can make independent living a challenge," said Eric Golden, president and CEO of Cedar Lane. "With the right support, many seniors can successfully age in place, retaining their quality of life and the freedoms they have earned the right to enjoy."

Funded by the Edward N. and Della L. Thome Memorial Foundation, Bank of America trustee, the program awarded \$4 million in grants this year to scale aging-in-place initiatives with a track record of

success by 16 housing operators and public housing authorities in Maryland and Michigan.

In total, the 2022 Thome Aging Well grants will provide essential support to over 4,000 older adults to help enhance wellbeing, reduce isolation and allow them to age with dignity in their homes. Best practices learned from the grantees will be shared across the field of affordable and public housing providers serving older adults.

"Far too many adults, especially those with lower incomes, do not have the resources and support they need to continue living comfortably in their homes as they grow older," said Stephany De Scisciolo, vice president, Impact, Evaluation & Population Health, Enterprise. "The programs supported through the Thome Aging Well grants have proved successful at improving the health and wellbeing of older adults and will make an enormous impact on the lives of thousands in Maryland and Michigan. We are honored to partner with such remarkable organizations."

Legal Ads

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
CASE NO: C18CV21-000043

Alan Wetter and Keith Schmidt
c/o Dansie and Dansie LLP
406 5th Street, N.W. Lower Level
Washington, DC 20001
Plaintiff

vs.

Andre Nicholas
1335 Steed S.
Ranson WV 25438

and

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

and

all known owners of the property described below, their heirs, devisees and personal representatives and their or any of their heirs, devisees, executors, administrators, grantees, assigns, or successors in right title and interest and any and all persons having or claiming to have an interest in the property described as:

***Unassigned, Lot 66 Block I, Longview Beach And Also Known As A/C 07-023650**

Defendants

The object of this proceeding is to secure the foreclosure of all rights of redemption in the following property, sold by the Collector of Taxes for St. Mary's County to the Plaintiff:

***Unassigned, Lot 66 Block 1, Longview Beach and also known as A/C 07-023650.**

The Complaint states, among other things, that the amounts necessary for redemption have not been paid. It is therefore on this 9th day of September, 2022, by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County, Maryland:

ORDERED, that notice be given by insertion of a copy of this ORDER in some newspaper having a general circulation in St. Mary's County once a week for 3 successive weeks, warning all persons interested in the property to appear in this Court by the 9th day of November, 2022 and redeem the property and answer the Complaint, or thereafter a Final Judgment will be entered foreclosing all rights of redemption in the property, and vesting in the Plaintiff a title, free and clear of all encumbrances.

Debra J. Burch
Clerk of Court for
St. Mary's County, Maryland

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
CASE NO: C-18-CV-21-000043

Alan C. Wetter et al.,
c/o Lucas I. Dansie, Esq.
406 5th St. NW
Washington DC 20001
Plaintiffs

The Estate of Bessie Wigglesworth
c/o Raymia Henderson, PR
14302 Hampshire Hall Ct.
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

and

St. Mary's County, Maryland,

and

all unknown owners of the property described below, their heirs, devisees and personal representatives and their or any of their heirs, devisees, executors, administrators, grantees, assigns, or successors in right, title and interest and any and all persons having or claiming to have an interest in the property described as:

***Unassigned, Lot 3 Block 5, Longview Beach and also known as A/C 07-014619**

Defendants

The object of this proceeding is to secure the foreclosure of all rights of redemption in the following property, sold by the Collector of Taxes for St. Mary's County to the Plaintiff:

***Unassigned, Lot 3 Block 5, Longview Beach and also known as A/C 07-014619.**

The Complaint states, among other things, that the amounts necessary for redemption have not been paid. It is therefore on this 9th day of September, 2022, by the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County, Maryland:

ORDERED, that notice be given by insertion of a copy of this ORDER in some newspaper having a general circulation in St. Mary's County once a week for 3 successive weeks, warning all persons interested in the property to appear in this Court by the 9th day of September, 2022 and redeem the property and answer the Complaint, or thereafter a Final Judgment will be entered foreclosing all rights of redemption in the property, and vesting in the Plaintiff a title, free and clear of all encumbrances.

Debra J. Burch
Clerk of Court for
St. Mary's County, Maryland

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County Times

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ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

Drug Raid Results in Arrest, Seizures

On October 6, 2022, after a month-long investigation the Vice/Narcotics Division, with assistance from the Emergency Services Team



(EST), the Criminal Investigations Division (CID), and the Patrol Division, executed search and seizure warrants related to the distribution of CDS (cocaine and crack cocaine) by Colin Dion Cutchember, age 44 of Lexington Park.

Search and seizure warrants were executed at a residence in the 21000 block of Weeping Willow Lane in Lexington Park and property located in the 26000 block of Loveville Road in Mechanicsville. Located and seized was over two ounces of suspected crack cocaine packaged for distribution, cocaine, suspected fentanyl, an ounce of marijuana, and \$660. Two vehicles used by Cutchember to distribute drugs were also seized and are pending forfeiture proceedings.

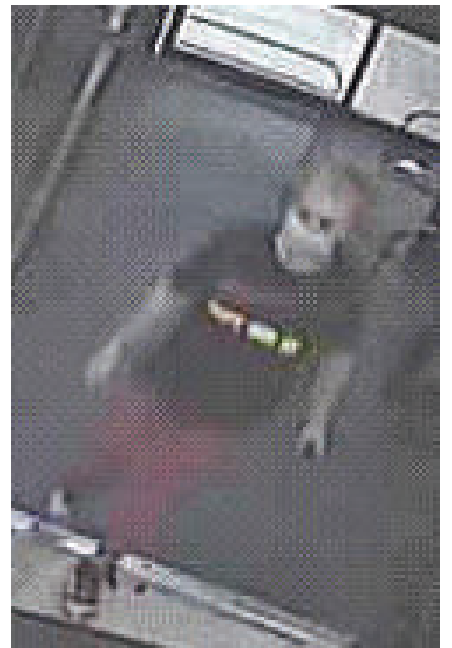
Cutchember was arrested and transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown and served a Circuit Court indictment for CDS-distribution of narcotics. He was also charged with CDS possession with the intent to distribute and other drug related charges. Cutchember remains incarcerated at the detention center on a no-bond status.

Criminal Arrests

Assault/Child Abuse- On September 28, 2022, Dep. Myers responded to the 42000 block of Moll Dyer Road in Leonardtown, for the reported assault. Investigation determined Quentin Xavier Chase Jr., age 34 of Leonardtown, as-



saulted the victim by throwing several eggs at the victim, striking the victim as well as striking a juvenile victim with the eggs. Chase also struck the victim's vehicle with a wooden statue, damaging the vehicle. Chase was arrested and charged with Assault 2nd Degree, Child Abuse 2nd Degree and Malicious Destruction of Property.



Identity Needed for Theft Suspect

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the person pictured in a theft investigation. On Saturday, Sept. 10, 2022, at 1:55 pm, the suspect loaded a shopping cart with merchandise at the Ollie's Bargain Outlet in Lexington Park and left the store without paying. The suspect was last seen leaving in a black Chevy Malibu.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect or this incident is asked to call Deputy Michael Walker at 301-475-4200, ext. 78092 or email michael.walker@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 46363-22

Citizens may remain anonymous and contact Crime Solvers at 301-475-3333, or text a tip to "TIP239" plus their message to "CRIMES" (274637). Through the Crime Solvers Program tipsters are eligible for an award of up to \$1,000 for information about a crime in St. Mary's County that leads to an arrest or indictment.

Editor's Note

The above arrests are not an indication of guilt or innocence as the cases have not been adjudicated.

Former Governor Rally's St. Mary's Republicans

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Former Maryland Gov. Robert Ehrlich told members of the St. Mary's County Republican Club last week that despite the political winds seemingly blowing their way this mid-term election cycle, Democrats have been far more successful on the national stage than many in the GOP want to admit.

Unchecked illegal immigration at the border, censorship by Big Tech, inflation, and alleged indoctrination of children in school with "woke" ideologies may turn voters to Republicans come election day Nov. 8, Ehrlich said, but much damage had already been done.

"This is a great environment to be a Republican in," Ehrlich said at the group's annual Lincoln/Reagan Dinner at the Olde Breton Inn in Compton Oct. 6. "We could go on and on about all these issues.

"But the problem is we stop."

All of the Democratic agenda on the national stage, which includes the federalization of elections, Ehrlich said, was more than just a political playbook.

"The agenda and these consequences... they are the goal," Ehrlich said. "These aren't failures.

"To them [Democrats] this is a list of successes."

Using a football analogy, Ehrlich said politics in America years ago was "played between the 20s," with both sides — Democrats and Republicans — differing on key issues but still having critical similarities.

"The old Democrats, they believed in pluralism and American exceptionalism," Ehrlich said. "Now, we're no longer playing in between the 20s.

"They've [Democrats] brought our country to the red zone."

Ehrlich lambasted the national and even some in the state Democratic party who were "defending the sexualization of first graders."

"This is a new team," Ehrlich said. "They don't share these [traditional] values."

If Republicans can come out in force to the polls nationwide, Ehrlich said, they could "restore the ball between the 20s."

While the party in power in the White House historically loses seats in both houses of Congress, voter turnout is often low compared to a presidential election.

"This is the most important race in our lifetime," Ehrlich said. "And it's a mid-term."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



The Way We Were...

HISTORY AND STORIES OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY FROM LONG AGO TO JUST YESTERDAY

A Novel About St. Mary's County During the Civil War



Birch Hanger Farm near Choptico

"Muffled Oars: A Story of St. Mary's County During the Civil War" was recently published by the St. Mary's County Historical Society.

A work of fiction by the late Annie Chunn Candee, who was born at Birch Hanger Farm near Choptico, the novel draws on Candee's memory of stories told by her mother, Ann Matilda Dent, and her oldest stepbrother John Henry Chunn.

Ann Dent was twenty years old when, in 1860, she married Judge Mark Chunn, 30 years her senior and owner of Birch Hanger Farm. After Chunn's death in 1875 and second husband's death in 1907, Ann Dent lived with daughter Annie at the farm until her death in 1922. John Henry Chunn was a Confederate soldier who spent his last days of the war in Point Lookout Prison Camp. It is probably no coincidence that in the novel, the principal character, Susanne, has older Confederate brother named John. Other characters in the book are undoubtedly named after Annie's real-life brothers including Susanne's younger brothers Ben and Joe as well as her romantic interest, Clay.

"Muffled oars" (a reference to the practice of putting cloth between the oars and oarlocks of a boat to quiet its passage across the river) is unapologetically pro-South.

During the Civil War, Maryland was a divided state with significant Southern leanings. Southern Maryland, and particularly Charles and St. Mary's Counties, were decidedly pro-South. President Lincoln took legally-questionable steps to prevent Maryland from seceding from the Union, including placing Baltimore under Martial Law, arresting members of the Maryland General Assembly, suspending the writ of Habeas Corpus, and stationing Union troops throughout the State. Union

soldiers were especially prevalent in Southern Maryland with orders to keep sympathizers and provisions from crossing the Potomac River to reinforce the Confederate army in Virginia. Despite their efforts, men and supplies continued to flow to the Rebels. This book tells that story.

As a confirmation of the pro-South activities described in the novel, there is a story about Birch Hanger and the Chunn family in Henry Clay Mettam's "Summary of Three Years' Service with the First Maryland Cavalry, CSA" Mettam tells of leaving Pikesville, Maryland, in 1862 on his way to the

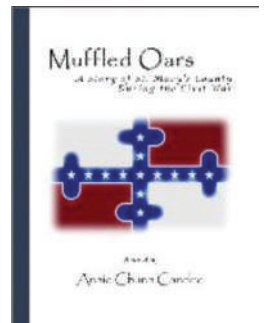
C o n f e d e r a c y, traveling into Southern Maryland to cross into Virginia:

"We started again on our way to 'Dixie' and after many adventures arrived at Mr. Mark B. Chunn's house near Choptico, St. Mary's County — an old friend of my father's. We spent a few days there [at Birch Hanger] with him and then went to Leonardtown with him, to find out how to get across the Potomac. Mr. Chunn introduced us to Mr. Moore, proprietor of Moore's Hotel in Leonardtown, and he informed us that there was a party of some 25 or 30 stopping at the hotel, and were awaiting on a certain vessel to take them across."

"Muffled Oars" casts Maryland's participation with the South in the Civil War as a necessary reaction to the Union troops occupying the State and wanting to maintain the State's right to self-determination. It is not portrayed as an effort to retain slavery.

Enslaved people do figure often in the pages of the book and are mostly portrayed as loyal to their owners (with one key exception.)

"Muffled Oars: A Story of St. Mary's County During the Civil War" is available from the St. Mary's County Historical Society's bookshop, its website, www.stmaryshistory.org, and as a Kindle book and in softcover from amazon.com.



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**Marjorie Elizabeth Quade,
"Margie", 75,**



Marjorie Elizabeth Quade, "Margie", 75, of Leonardtown, MD, passed away on October 4, 2022 at Hospice of St. Mary's, in Callaway, MD. Born on September 18, 1947 in Leonardtown, MD, she was the daughter of the late Edna Marie Woodburn Bell (Miss Edna) and the late Paul A. Bell (Podnah). Margie was the loving wife of Robert L. Quade, whom she married on June 21, 1969 in Leonardtown, MD. She is survived by her children John M. "Mike" Klear (Joan M. Wise) of Leonardtown, MD and Robert L. "Robbie" Quade of Leonard-

town, MD, her son-in-law Jay Bowles of Leonardtown, MD, her sister Mary Edna Bowles of Medley's Neck, MD, as well as three grandchildren Paul Klear, Lindsey Norris, and Brennan Norris. Margie was preceded in death by her daughter Deborah Marlene Norris and her siblings Jackie Bell and Potsie Dement.

Margie was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident. She was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. She was truly loved by her family and will be greatly missed by all. Margie loved being outside, whether she was gardening or doing heavy yard work. She enjoyed vacations in Ocean City, MD and West Virginia, and day trips anywhere with her husband, Bobby. She loved yard sales and flea markets, looking for anything related to Raggedy Ann and Andy dolls to add to her rather large collection. When asked what she wanted for Mother's Day, her birthday, or Christmas, she would always respond, "Anything Raggedy!"

Margie loved her three grandchildren, Paul, Lindsey, and Brennan; she was their Memaw. She loved the holidays, decorating the inside and outside of her home, cooking huge wonderful meals and having the entire family at home. Margie lost her only daughter, Marlene, to breast cancer in June of this year. So, now, both of our angels are in Heaven looking down on us. We love and miss you both.

The family would like to thank Linda Howe, her niece, and Jennifer

Dowell for their love and support of Margie during these last months. She looked forward to your visits so much. A special thank you to all the staff of Hospice of St. Mary's in Callaway.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, October 13, 2022 from 10:00

**Marian Elizabeth (Gray)
Murdock, 83**

Marian Elizabeth (Gray) Murdock, 83, of Mechanicsville, MD passed away on October 5, 2022. Marian was born December 26, 1938 and was the daughter of the late Albert Joseph Gray, Sr. and Ida Elizabeth "Bessie" (Hill) Gray of Chaptico, MD. Marian graduated from Margaret Brent High School in 1956. Marian married the love of her life Gail E. Murdock on February 11, 1965, they celebrated 57 years of marriage. Marian worked as a Procurement Contract Specialist at Patuxent River Naval Air Station, retiring in 2001 with 43 years and 5 months of government service. Marian was very active with the Ladies Auxiliary of the American Legion Post 221 of Avenue, MD, for 42 years, where she also served in the position of president for many years. Marian was an avid reader, she also loved to cook, and bake delicious cakes and pies. Marian enjoyed singing in the choir at church, watching Hallmark movies and collecting Angel figurines. Marian loved spending time with her family, especially her children, grandchildren and brothers and sisters. Marian is survived by her husband Gail, and her children Richard Murdock (Patty), Mark Murdock (Heather) and Jackie Choudary (Togi), her grandchildren: Marissa, Crystal (James), Mark Jr. (Angela), Aidan, Javed and Arsalana, and her great-grandchildren: Emmett, Scarlett and Beckett. She is also survived by her Siblings: Pat Gray (Betty Ann), Rita Murphy (Jack), Judy Frank (Charlie), Michael Gray (Debbie), Elaine Joy (John), Glenda Mast (Wayne) and Maureen Abell (Timmy), as well as numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

AM to 11:00 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 11:00 AM in the funeral home chapel. Interment will follow at Our Lady's Church Cemetery, Medley's Neck. Serving as pallbearers will be Mike Klear, Paul Klear, Robbie Quade, Brennan Norris, Josh Howe, and Jeffrey Quade.

Marian is predeceased by her parents, her sisters Barbara Ferguson (8/1/2022) and Ida Dishinger (1/12/2022), and her brothers-in-law: Dave Ferguson, Bill Dishinger, Bill Cole and David Anderson. The family will receive friends on Monday October 17 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home with prayers recited at 7:00 p.m. followed by Ladies Auxiliary American Legion Post 221 service at 7:15 p.m. A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated at Our Lady of the Wayside Church, Chaptico MD on Tuesday October 18 at 11:00 a.m. Interment will follow at Queen of Peace Cemetery, Helen, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Michael Gray, John Joy, Wayne Mast, Charlie Frank, Timmy Abell, and Jeffrey Gray. Honorary pallbearers are: Pat Gray, Jack Murphy, and her Grandchildren. Memorial contributions can be made to the Ladies Auxiliary, American Legion Post 221, Avenue, MD.



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Wednesday to aldailey@countytimes.net. Include photo and text. The Obituary publishes on Thursday.

Direct questions to aldailey@countytimes.net.

Check Theft Plaguing St. Mary's, Southern Maryland

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For months county residents, businesses and community organizations have been victimized by check theft, being taken for sometimes thousands of dollars time and again.

Local law enforcement agencies have been investigating and warning residents to avoid sending checks in the mail but the thefts continue.

Officials with the U.S. Postal Inspectors Service have confirmed local investigations begun by the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office but have not released details of how the thefts are committed or if there are any potential suspects.

According to law enforcement and victims, the thieves are intercepting the checks, either at a postal center or from individual mail boxes and "washing" — or altering — the payee names and monetary amounts on the checks and then cashing them.

Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron said anyone using the mail to send checks should reconsider.

"Some habits die hard," Cameron said. "People would really have to consider the security of their sent mail with checks.

"This is clearly a focused ring of people doing this."

"We've seen some massive amounts written on these intercepted checks," said Jason Babcock, spokesman for the county sheriff's office.

Dan Slade, a Leonardtown-based attorney, said several checks of his were stolen and altered in an attempt to bilk thousands from his accounts.

Only one check was fraudulently cashed, Slade said, but his bank was able to catch the rest.

"We were paying our monthly bills... and someone stole our checks," Slade told The County Times. "The next thing we knew we had checks being cashed all across the country."

The inconvenience of the thefts is coupled with paying a monitoring fee to the bank, Slade said — sometimes as much as an extra \$100 per month — to ensure against stolen checks being cashed.

"You get hit multiple times," Slade said. "You don't consider that when you put your mail in the U.S. Postal Service."

One employee of a local federal contractor said their business had been taken for many checks that they had sent out to vendors, who went unpaid for a time because of the theft.

They said the check thefts meant the company had to shut down multiple accounts, reopen them and pay back those vendors who had gone without remuneration.

The company effectively had to pay double, they said, because of the theft scheme.

"What we've been told is it's unsafe to put checks in the mail," the employee said. "It's [check thefts] been bad in this area, there's a lot going on."

The theft has hurt their employers credit rating, they said, and even resulted in bounced checks.

"It's been a tremendous amount of work and a great deal of strain," the employee said.

The employee said they had heard reports that there was a theft ring operating out of the postal hub in Waldorf or elsewhere nearby; they had heard reports of local victims' checks being cashed as far away as Florida and Ohio.

The U.S. Postal Inspector's Office has not confirmed this.

Jeff Dronenberg, a Lexington Park resident, said two checks he sent out from the California and Lexington Park post offices to two separate destinations — Baltimore and Delaware — had only two things in common his name and the Waldorf postal facility.

"They never made it to their destinations," Dronenberg said. "They hit me for \$13,000; they hit accounts hard and they hit them quickly."

His money was insured by the federal government and he didn't lose a dime, Dronenberg said, but he will never send a check through the U.S. Postal Service again.

"I've stopped," Dronenberg said. "I will not send a check in the mail.

"The postal service is broken."

"The US Postal Inspection Service is currently investigating theft of US mail in St. Mary's County and the surrounding area," said postal inspection representative Michael Martel in a prepared statement. "The US Postal Inspection Service is investigating these incidents along with our local law enforcement partners and the US Postal Service Office of Inspector General.

"Unfortunately, we are unable to share any details at this time, as the investigation is active and ongoing."

Both Calvert and Charles county sheriff's offices have warned residents of the trend in thefts.

"The [Charles County Sheriff's Office] encourages citizens to use alternative means of money transfer, such as paying bills online or electronic transfers, as this crime trend remains active," one notice stated. "It is imperative that citizens and businesses track the checks they have written and ensure that they have been cleared appropriately.

"By using these steps and remaining diligent, citizens can assist law enforcement in curbing this crime trend."

Charles warned their citizens last week while Calvert made their warning in mid-September.

The St. Mary's Sheriff's office released just a short list of recent check

thefts.

In recent weeks deputies have taken reports from:

- a business at 44000 block of Airport Road
- an individual at 25000 block of Morganza Turner Road
- an individual at 28000 block of Three Notch Road
- an individual at 21000 block of Primrose Place
- an individual at 20000 block of Clarence Gass Road
- a business at 26000 block of Friendship School Road
- an individual at 43000 block of Redmond Road
- an individual at 21000 block of Morris Drive
- an individual at 43000 block of Airport View Drive
- an individual at 22000 block of Three Notch Road
- a business at

44000 block of Commerce Avenue

These instances are from the month of September alone, sheriff's officials said. If you suspect you are a victim of mail theft you can report it to the US Postal Inspection Service by calling 1-877-876-2455 or online at USPIS.gov/report.

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CSM Considers Three for Top Leadership Post

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) Board of Trustees announced today that after an extensive nationwide search, three finalists have been named as candidates to become the next president of the college. CSM's current president Dr. Maureen Murphy announced earlier this year that she will enter retirement Dec. 31, 2022 after a lauded 35-year career dedicated to community colleges, students and equity.

"The presidential search committee has committed a significant amount of time, energy, and dedication to this process," said CSM Board of Trustee Chair Shawn Coates, who with immediate past Trustee Chair Jay Webster, co-chaired the search committee. "We are excited to share our progress and selections with the community."

The three candidates will each spend two full days touring CSM's four campuses and meeting with constituent groups before the CSM Board of Trustees makes its final decision. The finalists are:

Dr. Naydeen González-De Jesús



Dr. Naydeen González-De Jesús harnesses a unique blend of international public diplomacy, research and higher education experience to drive sustainable change management as Executive Vice President of Student Success at Milwaukee Area Technical College. In addition to bringing together academic

and student affairs in a collective bargaining environment rooted in shared governance, she oversees the vice presidents of Enrollment Management, Learning, and Retention and Completion, as well as the executive directors of the regional campuses. Believing in the power of education as the greatest equalizer, she plays a vital role in the college's commitment to the nationally recognized Guided Pathways framework to accelerate student success.

Dr. Tony Hawkins



ings in History, Political Science, World Languages, Philosophy, American Sign Language, Women's and Gender studies and two learning centers. He has performed other administrative assignments as a campus dean of Art, Humanities, and Social Sciences at the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus of Montgomery College and associate dean of English and Humanities

Dr. Tony D. Hawkins, Ph.D. is currently the provost/executive vice president of Academic Affairs, Continuing Education, and Workforce Development at Frederick Community College in Maryland. Prior to assuming this assignment, he was the college-wide dean of Humanities at Montgomery College in Maryland, with oversight of a division that included course offer-

at Hudson County Community College in Jersey City, N.J. Hawkins held the faculty rank of associate professor of Speech Communication and Theater at Prince George's Community College, teaching courses in Human Communication, Theater, and Radio, Television, and Film production.

Dr. Yolanda Wilson



years, beginning her career as an adjunct faculty member before moving into more progressive leadership roles in both academic affairs, student services, and campus operations. Her work in higher education has centered on creating a student ready college culture, mitigating institutional barriers to access, retention, and completion, and strategically focusing on programming and policies that support all students to success.

Dr. Yolanda Wilson currently serves as the vice president of Instruction, Ashe Campus and Alleghany Center at Wilkes Community College in Wilkesboro, North Carolina, and is a Leadership Coach for Achieving the Dream. She has worked in the North Carolina and South Carolina Community College Systems for more than 22

Learn more about each candidate, the role of presidential search firm RH Perry & Associates, and about the process to select the sixth president of CSM, by visiting csmd.edu/presidential-search/index.html.



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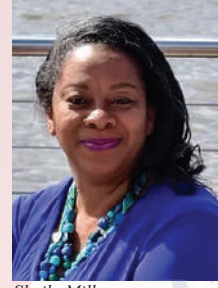
Mike Hewitt



Scott Ostrow



Steve Tuttle



Sheila Milburn



Eric Colvin

Do you believe the current tax rates for local government are too low, too high, or about right? What changes would you make? What departments or agencies would be affected by your tax policy?

Eric Colvin

No one enjoys paying taxes, but I am proud that we have been able to keep St. Mary's County as one of the lowest taxed counties in Maryland. My main budget priority is ensuring that all tax dollars that are collected are used as efficiently as possible. Every year I go through the county budget line-by-line to ensure the requests match the needs. I have identified thousands of dollars that was being budgeted but not utilized year after year, realigning those funds to ensure efficient use of our tax money instead of helping to build a larger fund balance.

Brandon Russell

I opposed property tax increases the Commissioners voted in favor of for the past two years. Our income tax rate is mid-range compared to other counties in the state, and the Commissioners only lowered it by 0.1%. On average that saved each person in the county about \$18. Meanwhile, property tax increases have cost hundreds. I support removing the energy tax. It is a regressive tax that often costs more for lower income individuals. I also support enacting tax breaks for veterans and police officers, two initiatives that have been sitting on the Commissioner's desk for several years.

Mike Hewitt

Local taxes are too high as regards the Income, Energy and Homestead taxes. These taxes can be lowered or in the case of the Energy Tax, eliminated. There

would be no impacts on existing services to constituents and no cuts would be necessary to any programs currently funded. The reason these taxes can be lowered is due to the rising income taxes collected by St. Mary's County since the enactment of the Federal Tax cuts of 2018, specifically the provision capping the maximum deduction for State and Local Taxes at \$10,000. The County has seen large increases in income tax revenues over the past five years. In 2018 income taxes amounted to just over \$90M dollars. In 2022 the amount collected was over \$130M dollars.

Randy Guy

Our main source of revenue in the county is income taxes and property taxes. We use this revenue on an annual basis to pay for our public services. Our current budget process occurs from December through May when we receive briefings from all of our agencies outlining their needs for the coming year. At the end of those briefings, we validate our most pressing needs and the commissioners must adjust those tax rates accordingly. My present board has lowered the income tax rate for 2022 and 2023. If re-elected, I would hope to be able to continue that trend as long as we can provide the needed services for our community.

Steve Tuttle

I feel strongly that the Board of County Commissioners should have already adopted HB224 to expand eligibility for a property tax exemption for disabled veterans. This bill would provide immediate relief to those who have sacrificed for our country. When elected, I plan on ensuring this board adopts this vital legislation to help our disabled veterans. I also believe this policy could be expanded locally to help recruit emergency services personnel who volunteer to help

their fellow citizens.

I believe our citizens need immediate relief, but I hesitate to commit to a specific plan without research. County taxes provide essential services, and it is important to spend significant time and effort to ensure we understand what tax cuts would impact services.

Ron Verbos

The simple and popular answer would be the taxes are too high and I will lower them. Unfortunately that would be foolish response without knowing the complete inner workings of the entire county budget. With that said, I do firmly believe the county budget needs a complete bottoms-up review for ALL departments and agencies. I want to make sure our investments are giving us the value the taxpayers deserve, want and need. I want to streamline government processes to minimize and possibly lower fees. I want to maximize tax incentives where possible especially for small businesses, law enforcement and our seniors.

Scott Ostrow

Economic growth is the preferred means of increasing tax revenue, not by increasing tax rates. The means of controlling and reducing taxes is by limiting the rate of increase in spending. Lowering the Homestead Tax Credit cap from 3% to 1.5% will reduce the rate of increase in property tax assessments and the rate of increase in property tax revenue without reducing services. When a large undedicated fund balance exists, I am in favor of adopting the Constant Yield Property Tax Rate to reduce property tax revenue.

Sheila Milburn

The county Income tax rate is lower for 2022 than in 2020 & 2021. Our Property tax rate, which has been con-

stant for the last 5 years, is 18th out of 24 jurisdictions, which is at the lower level of the state. Before making changes, I would encourage a deep dive of each budget item, to gain an understanding of how our special services are funded. The results of the review would determine if and how any departments or agencies are affected.

Rising crime has many citizens concerned. What will you do as Commissioner to assure safe communities and safe schools?

Eric Colvin

As Commissioner, I will continue to work with the Sheriff's Office, State's Attorney and Board of Education to ensure that the necessary resources are available so that we can all have a safe community with safe schools. The rise in crime is concerning, but I believe that, as a community, we can all stand up and say "This is enough, we will not accept this any longer". We must have the community working hand in hand with law enforcement in order to take back our county. I am proud to be endorsed by our local Fraternal Order of Police.

Brandon Russell

I will work with the Sheriff's Office to support strong recruitment and retention policies. We can't expect the Sheriff's office to provide adequate coverage across the county while they are still understaffed. I am in favor of exploring a housing stipend as a sign on bonus to encourage new recruits to work and reside in St. Mary's. I support SRO's in schools and I'm in favor of expanding the program so every school has an SRO. I would direct Economic Development to look into ways to attract youth-oriented businesses to provide a positive envi-

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ronment and activities for our youth.

Mike Hewitt

Rising crime is a major concern to everyone. It is the job of the Commissioners to adequately fund the elected Sheriff and the elected State's Attorney so their staffs can provide a safe community for all residents. It will be my goal to work with both these agencies to insure criminal activities are dealt with quickly and effectively. Our court system will need to make sure they do their part in keeping criminals off our street and in jail where they belong.

Randy Guy

Rising crime is a critical issue in our county. If re-elected as the County Commissioner President, I will work with the newly elected Sheriff and newly elected State's Attorney to provide the resources they need for crime prevention. Additionally, I will continue to work with the School Board to provide them the resources they need to make our schools safe.

Steve Tuttle

It is crucial for our citizens to feel safe in their communities. Therefore, a solid relationship with the Sheriff's office is very important, ensuring that our police force is well-funded and fully staffed. To support these officers, we must be sure they feel valued and can live in the communities in which they work. Additionally, initiatives such as National Night Out are a great example of the partnership opportunities available for the Sheriff's office to participate in community policing and for the officers to keep a pulse on the communities they protect. Lastly, supporting the SROs and their incredible work in our schools is paramount; students must feel safe to focus on their education.

Ron Verbos

I would like to have a four prong solution. 1: Making sure our law enforcement have the proper resources 2. Work with the school system and see what they feel they need. We also need to seriously consider reducing the school sizes especially at the high school level. Putting thousands of students in a single environment is a good recipe for trouble. 3. Getting families involved. It is in the best interest of all our citizens to be able to feel safe on the streets and for our children in the schools. 4. Prosecute criminals to the fullest extent possible.

Scott Ostrow

I will support the sheriff's office, the state's attorney, the courts, and the school board to ensure they have the necessary funding to maintain public safety. I will support the funding of public agencies and private sector organizations to counter criminal behavior recidivism through offenders' pre-release and community-based corrections programs. I will insist that the school administration fully complies with the requirements of the Maryland Safe to Learn Act and the memorandums of understanding with the sheriff's office and the state's attorney regarding school security, especially the initiative pertaining to gangs.

Sheila Milburn

I will support BOCC collaboration with the Sheriff's department to ensure they have the resources they need to recruit and maintain (physically, mentally & educationally) qualified personnel which in turn assists in protecting the community.

Parents are concerned about the curriculum being taught in local schools. What would you do as Commissioner to assure parents the school system is held accountable?

Eric Colvin

Parents have the right to aware of everything their child is being taught, and that is what makes local Board of Elections races and our state level races so incredibly important. Parents need to vote. I would encourage all parents to get involved in their children's schools so that they can be aware of everything happening and participate in the BoE meetings. As Commissioner I will maintain communication with the Board of Education and voice any concerns that are brought to me. We meet several times a year with the Board of Education and we discuss priorities during the budget.

Brandon Russell

I'm willing to listen to the concerns of any resident in St. Mary's County. The Board of Education has final say over school curriculum, and I believe they, along with our Superintendent, are doing their best to provide a learning environment that is welcoming to every student. Members of the Board of Education are elected, just like the Commissioners, and have a responsibility to respond to their constituent concerns. As Commissioner, I will be a strong advocate for the education of our kids, and to ensure our educators have the necessary resources to do their job.

Mike Hewitt

What is being taught in our schools is the responsibility of the elected members of the Board of Education (BOE). The Commissioners have consistently funded the BOE above State required mandates and citizens need to hold these BOE members accountable both at Public Forums and at the voting booth on election day.

Randy Guy

As a County Commissioner President, I have a good working relationship with the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Smith, and with the current School Board. If I receive concerns or complaints from parents, I immediately notify both. In addition, we have quarterly meetings with the School Board and the Superintendent and, if re-elected, I will continue to foster these open lines of communication.

Steve Tuttle

During the pandemic, educators turned from being heroes, learning how to teach from home in an incredibly short time to being villainized for wanting to protect themselves and their families. I trust that the educators in St. Mary's County, Dr. Smith, and our local board of education have your student's

best interests in mind. Every board meeting, every public appearance, and every conversation I have had with Dr. Smith or an educator has focused on how we can better help prepare our students for their futures. While I will still have questions when working through their budget, I trust that every day, student success is first and foremost on the minds of the educators working for St. Mary's County Public Schools.

Ron Verbos

Parents should have a huge say in what is being taught. I can tell you that I will challenge the School System to keep an open line of communications to the parents. The school system should be open and willing to show the community, this is what we are teaching. The school system should be teaching the essentials to help our students become adults and productive members of our society. They need to stay to the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. They should not be teaching materials without parental approval. I understand the state will mandate some things but the parents should know what that is.

Scott Ostrow

The curricula in the public schools is dictated by the enactments of the Maryland General Assembly, the Maryland State Board of Education, and the St. Mary's County Board of Education. The role of the county commissioners is limited to funding, which is largely dictated by the state. For parents to hold

the school system accountable, I suggest they bring pressure to bear on the school board, including at the annual school budget hearings. School board elections matter!

Sheila Milburn

The selection of curriculum is regulated by state guidelines and not the local BOCC. Concerned parents should become and stay engaged by attending Board of Education meetings and become active participants in their children's school.

Citizens are frustrated with the lack of transparency in county government. What actions would you take to make county government more open and transparent?

Eric Colvin

Every week I post on my Facebook page every action taken by your County Commissioners, so I encourage everyone to follow me on Facebook or on my website blog (www.VoteColvin.com) for a fully transparent accounting of all Commissioner actions. Additionally, I am working to provide "deep dives" into bigger issues so that citizens are aware of background issues and why certain decisions are reached. I also encourage anyone to reach out to any of the commissioners at any time, we are happy to respond to any questions you might have.

VOTE FOR THE HELP PLAN

Healthcare - expand healthcare access for all residents; attract mental health providers to our area

Education - meet Blueprint funding commitments; develop college/trade opportunities; implement life skills curriculum

Land Use - update zoning ordinances and the Comprehensive Plan so development is targeted - no commercial in residential areas; attract a variety of businesses to serve residents

Public Safety
- Support recruitment & retention policies; consider a housing stipend for new recruits; support the Crisis Response Team plan; strong EMS program

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**Election Day is
November 8**

By Authority Friends to Elect Steve Tuttle, Maya Hoagland, Treasurer

Brandon Russell

I am a firm believer that we need to make government more accessible. Information about decisions should be readily available and easily accessible for our residents. I am in favor of more public forums, and holding public forums during evening hours to allow for maximum participation by the public. I am committed to holding town halls to hear the feedback and concerns of our residents, and I'm willing to meet people where they are—whether that is in person, online, or both. Ultimately, Commissioners are elected to serve and represent the interests of the public.

Mike Hewitt

Transparency in local government can and should be reviewed and analyzed to make sure residents are aware of changes in their communities. The Comprehensive Plan gives the Director of Land Use and Growth Management wide discretion in Administrative Variances and decision making. It's important that the Director takes direction from the Commissioners and the citizens when making these types of decisions. When that trust is broken there should be consequences and changes should be made.

Randy Guy

During my last eight years, we have implanted a security system in our offices to protect our employees. This system requires any visitors to make an appointment or check in with a receptionist. Unfortunately, that has led many to believe we have a lack of transparency in county government and that we are trying to discourage visitors. I assure you, that is not the case. In fact, during my tenure we have televised every meeting on local stations and on YouTube. We have implemented a system called BoardDocs where we publish all meeting schedules 4 days prior for everyone's review and everyone is welcome to attend. After every meeting, we post full minutes for public review. If re-elected, I would like to post the minutes of each meeting quicker. In addition, our board holds 4 annual public forums and invite all citizens to attend (either in person or virtually) to discuss any issue they are concerned about. We also welcome any feedback from our citizens via e-mail to csmc@stmarysmd.com and work diligently to answer each correspondence. If re-elected, I will of course welcome comments on additional ways to make our county government more open.

Steve Tuttle

First and foremost, county commissioners must have a presence in their community. With my work with WARM and the homeless population in Lexington Park, I have been a constant presence in District 4. I have gained important relationships with church and community leaders in my district. I also believe it is the local government's job to communicate effectively with their constituents, which means having town hall meetings to communicate with citizens and hear their concerns regularly. I also think it means having more public meetings at times when the citizens can attend. So, therefore, I fully support having an open and trans-

parent government.

Ron Verbos

I am a firm believer in the government works for the people and not vice versa. I want to implement policies that will make everything more accessible to the people. I want to have more public forums, especially when it comes to the budget. I want to extend the governments social media profiles. Last time I checked, the County Commissioners didn't have a face book page. Individual Commissioners do but not as a collective organization. I would like to implement a policy of allowing citizens to "sit with the government" during a day of conducting business, similar to the ride along with law enforcement program the Sheriff's Department has occasionally.

Scott Ostrow

The basic standard must be a good faith adherence to the Open Meetings Act and its policy that "the people of the county, in delegating authority, do not yield their sovereignty or give public agencies the right to decide what is good for the people to know and what is not good for them to know."

Sheila Milburn

Work with my fellow commissioners to hold more frequent town hall meetings. I would support moving the Tuesday BOCC meeting to a time and/or day when more of our citizens are able to attend or tune in. I would support a digital newsletter or other form of regular communication that will allow the BOCC to share relevant information.

Many citizens are concerned about traffic and overall growth of our community. What changes if any will you propose to the current growth policy?

Eric Colvin

Growth and economic development are vitally important to our economy but comes with challenges and pitfalls, especially if not carefully thought out. I like to tell people "What good is increased tourism if my family and I can't get into the restaurant we want on a Friday evening?" The new commissioner board will be responsible for approving an updated Comprehensive Plan, and it is important that we receive community feedback as that process unfolds. Focus groups are reviewing various sections now, but there will be sufficient time for additional community input to shape growth in the future.

Brandon Russell

We need to update our Adequate Public Facilities ordinance to include feedback from the Sheriff's Office, medical providers, and other essential services. We must weigh new development against the ability to provide services for what we already have in place. Additionally, I'm in favor of updating our zoning ordinances as necessary to ensure we do not have commercial buildings built in residential areas. I want to update our Comprehensive Plan to focus and direct specific development priorities to our town, village, and rural centers. We've had to play catch

up due to poor planning. We cannot continue this trend.

Mike Hewitt

Completion of FDR Boulevard will alleviate some traffic congestion in the Lexington Park area but more needs to be done by the State Highway Administration to complete road projects in a timely manner. Working with our State Delegation we need to focus our attention on this matter. The current growth policy focuses development in our development districts where water and sewer are available. Comprehensive plans are updated every five years but we must continue to look at new challenges being introduced in the County. Specifically Airbnb and the growth of short term rental units in residential communities needs immediate attention.

Randy Guy

If re-elected as County Commissioner President, I will continue to work with the State Highway staff in Annapolis to help secure funding to fix the roads in St. Mary's County. To help alleviate the congestion on route 235, our boards have worked diligently over the past eight years to move towards completion of FDR Boulevard and, if re-elected, that will continue to be one of my priorities. The local planning commission reviews our zoning maps for the county on a regular basis and work to consolidate the majority of the growth in our main business areas. If re-elected, one change I would definitely

ly implement would be to have more public hearings to receive citizen input before any big construction project is approved.

Steve Tuttle

St. Mary's County is a unique blend of very rural and some urbanized areas, and I think that's why so many people love living here. There is something for everyone here, and it's essential to stick to our roots as a rural community while also providing services and supporting businesses that provide those services. "Smart growth" is a term used often, but without defining what that means to our community, it's just a buzzword. I believe we should have more citizen input on what land is developed within our communities; without it, you end up with a factory in a residential area or increased traffic problems. There are several empty commercial lots, especially along Great Mills Road. Instead of building new, I would like to see these vacant lots used and provide incentives to businesses who want to revitalize these empty parcels so that we can provide the services our citizens want.

Ron Verbos

I am a firm believer in responsible growth. The growth affects more than the roads. Our infrastructure is way behind. We have a single cable company; it takes a long time to see a doctor etc. We need to make sure our growth does not outpace our infrastructure. As to roads and traffic, we are challenged by



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- ✓ **Provide our police departments with the resources to hire and train qualified new officers**
- ✓ **Stronger sentencing guidelines for violent criminals and repeat offenders**
- ✓ **Relentlessly prosecute crimes against children**

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the landscape because our county is a peninsula. We are handicapped by the state on a majority of the roads so we need to make sure we stay consistent in letting them know our needs. Most of all, it is time to build a new Thomas Johnson Bridge. Enough with the studies.

Scott Ostrow

Traffic congestion is the adverse outcome of permitting new development that exceeds the level-of-service capacities of existing roads. I am in favor of strengthening the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance, which stipulates the minimum level-of-service standards for new development to proceed. It presently does not include level-of-service standards for Health Care, Police, and

Solid Waste Disposal.

Sheila Milburn

I will encourage my fellow commissioners to work in collaboration with the Department of Planning and Zoning and conduct a review of the economic growth plan to look for ways to alleviate some of the high density areas.

I would conduct a study on establishing dedicated Commuter transportation (buses/shuttles) to/from NAS Pax River from areas like Charlotte Hall, Wicomico, and Ridge in an effort to alleviate traffic congestion. This could be a quick interim fix while the other avenues are investigated.

CALVERT COUNTY GENERAL ELECTION

VOTERS GUIDE



Trish Powell



Todd Ireland



Mike Hart



Chelsea Montague



Buddy Hance

What skills, talent or experience do you think you bring to the table that will help you be an effective county commissioner?

At-Large Commissioner (2)

Emad Dides (D)

I have two Ph.D degrees, in computers and electronics and minors in math and physics. Even so, I have managed a lot of time share and condominium associations. Running a county requires a lot more. I can promise that I will look at every issue you have personally and come to resolution as fast as possible, without going to legal path.

Earl "Buddy" Hance (R)

In my life I have been very active in many local and state organizations which helped me develop the necessary skills to be a County Commissioner. Having been on the board for the last four years, I have learned how many processes and procedures work in county government. Being Board President for the last two years has greatly expanded my knowledge of citizen needs and finding effective solutions.

Todd Ireland (R)

I spent the last 29 years serving our citizens as a Calvert County Deputy

Sheriff. I served in the capacity as a commander for 15 years. I was tasked with managing budget issues, upper-level decision making, handling personnel matters and managing grants. I am extremely familiar with the geography of Calvert County and have a pretty good understanding of how the Calvert County government operates. I have formed numerous relationships with our citizens and businesses which allows me to keep in touch with what is happening in our county

Chelsea Montague (D)

I come from a background in mutual aide and am on the ground working with marginalized communities daily which gives me a direct connection to people and what they are looking for in their county government. I frequently bring different groups of people to work towards a common goal that may not normally work together otherwise and this allows for new ideas to flourish. I am direct with the people I work with and people will always know where I stand on an issue.

Commissioner 1st District (1)

Mike Hart (R)

My experience over the last eight years as county commissioner. I have had to face many challenges and I have

learned from them all. And my 20 plus years as a small businessman has helped me stay in touch with so many changes from state and federal government.

Tricia Powell (D)

I have 10 years' experience working in County government. During my tenure with the County, I prepared and developed multi-million-dollar budgets, conducted cost/benefits studies, and policy analysis. In addition to this, I understand the government system, local and State, I know all of our elected officials and I have a good working relationship with them. My skill set is such that I will hit the ground running when elected.

What are the three most important issues facing Calvert County in the next year that should be addressed by the county commissioners?

At-Large Commissioner (2)

Emad Dides

Budgeting "recession is coming", furthermore, affordable housing in very big need in the county.

Earl "Buddy" Hance

The first top issue would be implementation of the Kirwin Blueprint for

Education. The funding and implementation to best meet our children's educational needs. Second is maintaining our AAA bond rating and keeping our tax rate low. Last is continuing to address infrastructure needs. Some of these issues have been concerns for many years and will have to be solved.

Todd Ireland

Blueprint Maryland is going to significantly impact our budget. There is going to be a need for more paid EMS, to save lives of Calvert citizens. Sewer issues need to be addressed so we can plan for our future plants and to ensure our waterways are protected. The pie is only so big. The various departments will come to us with their requests and justifications for their needs. Unfortunately, costs are steadily increasing, making the slices of the pie larger and the overall size of the pie is not getting any bigger. We need to work on making the pie larger without raising taxes.

Chelsea Montague

Finding new income revenue streams via tourism and agriculture so that our taxes can remain low, repair the relationship between the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education, and finally to begin laying the groundwork for preparing our county to live with the impacts of our changing

Tricia
POWELL
for *County*
Commissioner

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- **Controlled growth.** Preserving the rural character means taking a hard look to determine what should be preserved and what should be developed, and the impact that both have on the environment and the community.
- **Pursuing the building of attainable housing** for all citizens of Calvert County including professionals, senior citizens, and families.
- **Evaluating, monitoring and reevaluating County budgets** to ensure funds are spent reasonably.
- **Taking a look at Calvert County's traffic conditions**, with focus on safety and reasonable commute times for our citizens.
- **Advocating and supporting our schools** in retention and recruitment of educators and their support staff. Ensure the schools obtain what they need to provide our children the best education.

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climate.

Commissioner 1st District (1)

Mike Hart
Kirwan, growth, and public safety.

Tricia Powell
The three most important issues facing Calvert County in the next year that need to be addressed are: growth management, managing the tax base, particularly because we don't have Dominion to rely on, and funding for our schools.

What changes if any would you make to the way things are currently operating in county government?

At-Large Commissioner (2)

Emad Dides
Planning and Zoning need a total overhaul, easing on people and developers to bring business to the county.

Earl "Buddy" Hance
Continuing to address customer service for our citizens. They deserve the best that our staff can give and there's always room for improvement. Whether it's permitting, recreational activities, or infrastructure it's our obligation to be the most effective and efficient we can be.

Todd Ireland
I believe we can always do better, particularly when it comes to customer service. I want to ensure our citizens needs and expectations are taken into consideration when decisions are being made. Calvert County government employees do a great job maintaining our county facilities. I have seen many of them go above and beyond to help our citizens, particularly at our compactor sites. Everyone in county government needs to ensure our county tax dollars are being spent wisely.

Chelsea Montague
More transparency on how processes in various departments work and how long they can take, and to look at how we can automate and move some things to having an additional online option for the convenience of our citizens, such as payments and forms (not all of them allow for work being done online).

Commissioner 1st District (1)

Mike Hart
It's a change we are working on now, updating our technology to be more efficient.

Tricia Powell
There needs to be an increase in transparency which is very important to me because with transparency you get citizen feedback. As a Commissioner I will push for Board of Commissioner meetings to be at least one evening a month so working class citizens can attend.

How much growth should Calvert accommodate in the next 10 years?

At-Large Commissioner (2)

Emad Dides
The smart way to look for 10 percent growth in the next 10 year and be evaluated in five years.

Earl "Buddy" Hance
According to the most recent census in the past ten years we grew by 4.5 percent. Yearly that works out to .45 percent, which is manageable while we still continue to address past infrastructure demands. The rate of growth is important but also the type of growth that occurs and the needs it creates can be a bigger challenge. We must continue to take steps to maintain our rural character and meet our 40,000-acre preservation goal.

Todd Ireland
We need to make sure that our infrastructure keeps up with our growth. This hasn't been done in the past. We need to have accurate and up to date studies done on traffic, sewer, and water supply before we can approve any future developments or comprehensive plans. I don't believe a number can be placed on how much growth in the next ten years. We must have smart, planned growth and we must evaluate the wants and needs of our citizens when making these decisions.

Chelsea Montague
We need to take a big picture approach and prepare for the growth of our neighboring counties while we work maintain the levels we have at a minimum. By working to set our infrastructure to be ready for higher volumes (water, sewage, roads, etc) even with keeping our own in-county growth at the low rate it currently is, we will be able to stay ahead of our neighbors and their citizens who visit or work in our area.

Commissioner 1st District (1)

Mike Hart
The county can't handle a lot more growth. We don't have the infrastructure or resources to support that.

Tricia Powell
Match state planning has agreed to in Master plan. The County needs to study how much our infrastructure can accommodate in the way of population. Currently our housing units are at 33,308 and according to the Comprehensive Plan our goal for 2040 is 37,600. The rate of building on an annual basis has been around 400. At this rate we will go beyond what our infrastructure can accommodate. We need to follow our own Comprehensive Plan which calls for a lower rate of building.

Editor's Note: We will feature the Commissioner Third District and school board races in the Oct. 20 issue of the Calvert County Times.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

Thank you for your article about the problem in our Public Schools. To be clear, the vast majority of the kids in our Public Schools such as Great Mills are good kids seeking a good education.

There is an old saying that our Public Schools mirror the Community it is within. There seems to be some truth behind this saying. More and more children are experiencing little to no family structure at all. The following is just a small part of why our Schools continue to have problems. - They are raised by grandparents. Others have just a mother which usually balances more than one job and is therefore not home. This leaves one or more children raising themselves while not doing a very good job of it. For whatever reason, some men feel it is acceptable to have sex with a woman and then leave her if she becomes pregnant. In some cases there are men that go from woman to woman in "several States" and sweet talks the woman. When she becomes pregnant, he leaves her for the next woman and then the next and so forth. The State is left providing support. Our tax dollars pay for their children. There are lots of women in this predicament.

In another scenario, the parent or parents of children are addicted to drugs. And therefore are raised by grandparents or the drugged parents. In our County and other areas we have a problem with women selling their bodies for drugs. They have sex for money to support their habit. Then the State gives them more money which is intended for the support of each child, knowing full well that the child does not see one penny of it. Then this scenario repeats itself over and over. The State becomes complicit in an ugly scenario by providing the drugged mother and or father money for their children. In addition, it is expensive to detoxify and infant from drugs. Once again, the taxpayer pays for this as well. Some mothers have half a dozen or more children before one of the children becomes old enough for school. Social Services may or may not intercede. The lucky ones has Social Services investigate the situation. Others fall through the cracks. Other children may live on the street and have no roof over their head. Then there are parents that are not actually parents. They have the kids but they are too busy calling their child "buddy." For whatever reason,

the parents want to be a "best friend" to a small child instead of providing the proper guidance and structure a young child needs as he grows. When children never hear the word "no" at home, how do you think he reacts at school when a young teen girl tells a boy "no", she doesn't want to date him? Depression? Violence? Or, both? There have been cases where the boy goes home and gets his father's "unsecured gun", even though it is supposed to be secured and goes to school and shoots the girl. Children with no family support become part of gangs. Gangs are formed to provide support to each other within the gangs. Gangs are typically violent, depending upon the level of violence they introduce. All of this is unacceptable. We are Country this gives billions of dollars to support wars in other Countries but yet we can't figure out our own problems at home.

What I have listed are just "some" real life scenarios. There are others. Over the last few years I have observed that our Public Schools are in a decaying state. Parents now are aware of Public School systems attempting to indoctrinate children instead of providing a good education. Unfortunately, the political agenda of some politicians has entered in to our Public Schools across our Nation. In increasing numbers, parents are taking their children out of Public Schools to go to Religious or Private Schools, or to teach their child at home. It is my opinion that Public Schools may meet their own demise when parents get fed up with the political correctness and unsafe schools.

Parents are told their schools are safe. They are not. The schools are a microcosm of society. It is my opinion that Great Mills in particular will continue to get worse for a wide range of reasons. Some of which I have mentioned. Eventually, I do not believe our police will be able continue to keep up with the violence as any resemblance of a family structure continues to crumble. There are some solutions. But the solutions are costly and counter the political correctness of our State. Therefore, any solution will be ignored. And thus the violence will get worse.

v/r,
Roy Fedders
Dameron, MD

To the Editor,

I've often said I have lived on the tip of a Russian missile for 60 of my 76 years. Today, it is on the tip of a Russian or Chinese missile or both together.

As a history teacher at Chopticon in 1970, I was sent to a workshop on nuclear war. I was to use the information with my students. We learned all kinds of dreadful things. I believe the hope was if anyone contemplated using nuclear weapons that they would soon surmise that the consequences were so grave that it would not happen. Mutually Assured Destruction has prevented it so far. The theory is that no one wants to die, and use of these would kill both adversaries. NO WINNERS! So far, the United States has been the only country to use it. The United States was the only country that had it. We have had two situations involving nuclear war.

One, in order to defeat Japan in WWII, and save the lives of thousands, of American soldiers who would have to fight on the Japanese mainland, atom bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Two, we managed to avoid an atomic war with Russia in 1962. We both had the bomb. It is known as the Cuban Missile Crisis. I was 16 at the time and living in a suburb of the nation's capital. I feared atomic destruction. I prayed to the Lord to allow me to grow up, marry, and have a family. I have been given all these things. Now, I pray that all of us will continue to prosper and to enjoy life in the world's greatest country.

What are some things we know about nuclear war? At Hiroshima, 80,000 were killed instantly. There was utter and complete destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. People were vaporized

one half mile from ground zero. There is the shadow of a woman on a concrete wall in Japan. She was vaporized. If one is exposed to a certain amount of radiation, certain death. Remember, today's weapons are much more powerful. Bomb shelters and "Run duck and cover are useless."

I have laid out a brief history of my

experiences with the topic of nuclear war. What has happened currently that brings back the specter of nuclear war?

Putin, dictator of Russia wants to bring back Imperial Russia. He wants to annex the Ukraine, which was a part of Imperial Russia; it has become an Independent nation and no longer part of the Soviet Union. A war has ensued. Putin held dishonest referendums where four occupied Ukrainian regions voted to be annexed by Russia. They are not under complete control by Russia. The Ukrainians are in the process of recapturing these regions. We support the Ukrainians. We have trained them to defend themselves in recent years. We therefore are pitted against Russia. We are both "armed to the teeth". Putin believes the Ukraine is part of Russia. Vladimir Putin has threatened nuclear weapons if his territorial integrity is threatened.

What can we do? First, we can continue to support the Ukrainians without joining the fight ourselves. Second, we must get the most competent negotiators from all parties concerned and perhaps the United Nations. We need to facilitate disseminating information to the Russian people. Thousands are against this war and fleeing to nearby countries to avoid the war. Many are Internet savvy and know the truth about this war. Young Russians are coming home in body bags. The Ukrainians are pushing them back. We must discourage China from joining Russia. I, for one, can buy products from other countries instead of China to help make it a bad idea to join Russia. The United States must make our strength absolutely clear. We must again rely on Mutually Assured Destruction to prevent a war. The fate of our world is at stake.

Last, and in my opinion most importantly, we need to pray to God to guide us to peace so our posterity can enjoy the benefits of our great nation as we have. Amen

Marilyn Crosby
Lexington Park, MD



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State's Attorney Candidates Trade Barbs

Candidate's Forum Turns Testy

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The race for Calvert County State's Attorney between incumbent Republican Bib Harvey and challenger Democrat Rick Piereck became testy during a League of Women Voters forum Oct. 6 at the Harriet E. Brown Center in Prince Frederick.

Although there had been some back and forth in several previous questions, things really heated up when one of the moderators asked the question: "In the aftermath of the Leah Clark case, what would you do differently?"

Clark was struck and killed while walking along Dares Beach Road by a vehicle driven by off duty sheriff's deputy Joseph Migliaccio, who was found guilty of negligent driving and driving a vehicle on the highway while exceeding the speed limit. That outcome led to him serving no jail time and has resulted in considerable community criticism of the sheriff's office for their handling of the case.

Harvey responded to the question by saying, "First and foremost, because my opponent has been spreading dis-

information, I had nothing to do with that case. That case happened when Mr. Rappaport was the state's attorney. The case was investigated under Mr. Rappaport's, tenure. After Mr. Rappaport became a judge, the state's attorney's office was taken over by Jennifer Morton. Jennifer Morton agreed that the case should be shipped out to an outside prosecutor. And that's what happened. I had nothing to do with it.

"What I did do, however, in the aftermath of that case, my staff and myself developed a PowerPoint presentation. We went to each roll call of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office, and we said, 'This is how you do it right. This is the way you do it in the future. You get a search warrant if you want to draw blood in a case involving a fatality, and you do it the right way.' They know how to do it now, and we've had another case, similar situation, was prosecuted by my office and ended up working out just fine."

Piereck responded, "I take a little offense to the fact that Mr. Harvey says he had nothing to do with this case, when he, in fact, was this police officer's defense attorney, just prior to him being



Bob Harvey



Rick Piereck

appointed as state's attorney. The case ended up in a \$600 fine for this officer during Mr. Harvey's term, and what you're going to do about this issue is present a PowerPoint one time to police officers. This needs to be an ongoing thing. I would call for the commissioners to hire an outside agency to conduct a thorough investigation from the moment the accident happened to the moment the juror verdict came in, and figure out where along the line, both of these, because the sheriff's office issue is a state's attorney's issue. State police was involved. So, we've got to get all of these agencies to figure out, how we can do better in the future. We owe the people better than that."

The back and forth prompted moderator Len Zuza to say, "I would like to remind both candidates that this forum is intended to give the audience, and give the average voter, insights into your positions. We really encourage you not to attack each other, because that is not in the spirit of this particular forum."

Piereck later brought up the Clark case again in response to the question, "What do you think are the most difficult parts of the state attorney's job?"

He responded, "I think having an ongoing, honest communication with the citizenry. What does that mean? That means that we don't use the grand jury

to hide behind when we have to take unpopular positions. That means that if we choose not to go forward on a case, we need to go out and communicate to the community that we're going to go forward, or not go forward on a case. When something goes terribly wrong in court, like we saw with the Leah Clark case, we need to communicate with the public what went wrong and what we're going to do better in the future and that it's hard to stand up to that criticism. It's hard to face down to the folks that would have you do something different. But the law is the law and the public needs to understand why it is that we're taking actions that we are, because otherwise, it erodes the trust that the public has in us."

Harvey said, "I actually am the incumbent state's attorney, so I can tell you there are no easy parts to this job. It's a 24/7 job. You're never off duty. It's not unusual to get a phone call in the middle of the night about some crisis where the police need some advice or guidance. There are difficult decisions that are made every day. You have to decide on people's lives. Should somebody go to jail. Should somebody be prosecuted? It's a very, very difficult job."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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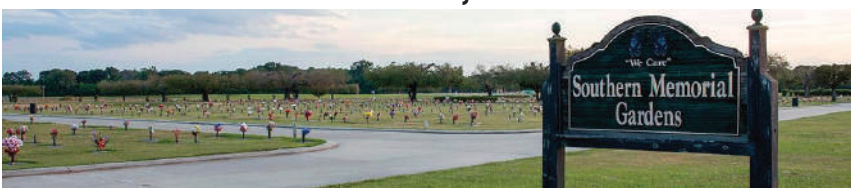
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County Times

CalvertHealth's Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care: Dr. Arati Patel Heads a Holistic Approach

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

After attending Albert Einstein Medical School in New York, Dr. Arati Patel received her residency and fellowship training from New England Medical Center in Boston.

She said, "My very first rotation as an internal medicine physician was on the bone marrow transplant unit in Boston. That was a very highly specialized portion of oncology where people who had blood disorders, leukemia and lymphoma, were getting a blood transplant. And I fell in love with the patients and the medical team. I felt that those doctors were rigorous in their scientific approach to caring for the patient, but they had just big hearts and really focused on the patient as a whole. And I felt like that was why I went into medicine. And so, those were my people."

When she and her husband, an orthopedic surgeon, finished their medical training at the same time in Boston, they were looking for some place on the East Coast to locate close to their families, and settled on Calvert County 21 years ago. "I think we both felt like we wanted to go into a community where we could really make a difference. And they were looking for both orthopedic and oncology. And we just landed here," she said.

Dr. Patel is a board-certified medical oncologist and was instrumental in establishing the Sheldon E. Goldberg Center for Breast Care, which opened doors in 2010. She serves as the Medical Oncology Director for the Breast Center and her medical practice is concentrated on breast oncology.

She described getting into her primary field of practice as "kind of serendipitous. When I first got here, Dr. Abbott was the only oncologist, and he is male. And so, I started out and quickly became very familiar and close with the female patients. And over a very short time, I developed a relationship with Dr. Sheldon E. Goldberg, a prominent breast surgeon at the time. And so, it was just the right timing, right place, and it really suited my enjoyment of being with that patient population. So, the breast cancer patient is a little unique. They're not just dealing with their oncology situation, but there is a tremendous impact for most patients, but particularly breast cancer patients, on their whole wellbeing—physically, emotionally, spiritually, financially. These are often women who are working in their careers, raising a family, their sexual health."

In addition to being a good niche for her, she said, "I think patients felt comfortable speaking to a woman about certain personal issues, and they wanted someone who was going to take the time to really delve into their needs."

The Goldberg center was established after he passed away. It's a brick-and-mortar location that has a dedicated breast surgical oncologist (Dr. Theodore Tsangaris) and high-level accredited radiology "with state-of-the-art detection," she said.

Also at the center is a "nurse navigator and our physical therapy program for breast cancer patients. Our genet-

ics program is housed in that location, but also our breast center encompasses many other people like our medical oncologists, radiation oncologists, pathologists, and our administration at oncology clinics. We're all on campus, not in that building, but we all work sort of multidisciplinary."

The oncology program is accredited by the Commission on Cancer (COC). She said, "In order to be accredited by this program, you have to meet certain academic standards for high quality patient care delivery."

Such a center is unique for such a small community. "That just goes to show you how much interaction there is between the physicians, the medical team, and the administration. So, I think there is something that is very unique about our CalvertHealth system, and that I think everybody is just laser focused on bringing high quality oncology care to our community."

Calvert is a community with a higher-than-average incidence of breast cancer. Dr. Patel said, "The most common risk factors for developing breast cancer in general are female gender and age. And then of course, there's a hereditary predisposition, but only five to seven percent of women with breast cancer have those very few genetic mutations. So that is not as common as we thought. And then there are all these other lifestyle risk factors, which definitely put women at higher risk for developing breast cancer...things like poor nutrition, sedentary lifestyle, tobacco use, stress of course, and just not necessarily having the genetic preposition, but having a family history."

She said they are focused not just on treatment but also prevention. "So, we spend a lot of time with our community and trying to reduce the risk of breast cancer and other cancers. We partner with our physical therapists, our nutritionist, we have a whole survivorship care team that goes out into the community to help people get more active, make better choices, having a whole clean diet, less processed foods, even like being more self-aware, spirituality, restoration, those things really make a difference"

There isn't as much emphasis on self-breast examination as there used to be, she said, "because it's not as reliable. Although anybody in the medical field will encourage women to understand the natural texture and feel of their breasts, and if there's any change to seek medical attention. But the most predictable and reliable way to detect breast cancer is through mammogram screening. And depending on if you are a high risk or low risk individual, the screening starts anywhere from age 35 to 45, and it is recommended that women undergo every single year, even without symptoms to go for that screening mammogram. Here at Calver County, we are one of the first to incorporate tomosynthesis or 3D mammograms. What that does is it really enhances our ability to detect really small abnormalities in the breast."

As to blood tests, Dr. Patel said they "often do not indicate that someone has breast cancer or any type of cancer often."

Patients with more aggressive types of breast cancer, she said, "have a much higher risk of having an advanced disease at the time they present. And they also have a much higher risk of dying from their breast cancer."

The research in those cases shows the need for "a lot of personalized medicine. We do molecular therapies, immunotherapy. We have a lot of biomarker testing, which helps guide our treatments so that the treatments are now much more effective and less toxic. So, depending on the type of breast cancer, it's a much more personalized way of treatment."

She added, "We're helping patients live longer, even with some of the less aggressive breast cancers. Like the most common type of breast cancer is a hormone receptor positive breast cancer. And we are learning that those types of individuals don't necessarily need as much chemotherapy. So, we're extending their quality and quantity of life with utilizing treatments that manipulate estrogen and progesterone. And so really the prognosis of later stage breast cancer has improved tremendously. People are living longer, feeling healthier, and having better quality of life with, even with an advanced breast cancer situation."

There's also a concept called "survivorship," she said. "There are 18 million cancer survivors in America today and counting."

So, at CalvertHealth they have programs addressing the needs of survivors. She said, "A lot of the people who are living in our county are cancer survivors. And so, at CalvertHealth, we have developed programs which actually address the needs of a cancer survivor, including lifestyle changes and we help them live a good quality of life and heal from the effects of the treatments and the cancers."

Dr. Patel observed, "What we're learning is that breast cancer is more like a systemic disease, not as much local like we used to think of it. Often the first person a breast cancer patient meets as a breast surgeon. And our goal is to try to maximize the removal of the disease without over operating on someone. And the reason why is because we don't want to create more trauma and injuries than necessary. So, what we typically try to do is least aggressive surgery, and we follow that up with radiation, hormone blocker therapy, chemotherapy, antibody therapy, all depending on the type and aggressiveness of the cancer that was detected. And, that's wonderful for patients because their healing is usually much better."

"Support groups allow cancer patients to learn from each others and support each other and exchange information. And then also it gives them another link to our CalvertHealth system," Dr. Patel explained.

Dr. Patel is a strong proponent of an integrated and holistic approach to medical care.

She used as an example one of her patients. "I've been taking care of this breast cancer patient for four and a half years. She was a teacher during that time with metastatic breast cancer. She has retired from work, her husband passed



away, one of her daughters got married, another daughter had two children."

She added, "Every so often her treatments stop working, and then we have to sit down together and plan what we're going to do next, and how we're going to find that sweet spot between the risk of the disease and the risk of the treatment," she said, adding "Just last week we sat down and we talked about she's in pain, her liver was progressing. So, we sat down and talked about different options, and I picked a treatment for her that I thought was going to work for her. And this was sort of a brand-new treatment, hadn't been out for very long. And so, I picked up the phone and my nurses, the pharmacists, the finance department, they all got together, quickly approved this drug, talked to her insurance company, got it approved. We ordered the medication and put it on our formulary, which we never had before. And then we picked up the phone and spoke with our colleagues at Duke, and they helped us with onboarding this drug and giving us a template and training our nurses on how to administer this medication."

CalvertHealth's new partnership with Duke University, she said, "It's a phenomenal opportunity for us."

She said of Duke, "They are top in the nation for research treatment, clinical trials, education, knowledge."

The breast cancer center in 2021 did 9211 mammograms, diagnosed 125 breast cancer cases and 350 breast cancer cases were discussed in the multidisciplinary tumor board.

Dr. Patel said, "We have built such a comprehensive oncology program here. I think what's most important is we do a really good job of what we do here, but I think we're acutely aware of what we don't have available. And now we've partnered with Duke Cancer Network to be able to provide those resources to our patients. So really, patients don't need to do their own homework. If they come to us and let us evaluate them, assess their situation, and come up with a multidisciplinary approach, we can reach out to the resources that we need to get them the help they need."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

CALVERT COUNTY SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

During the week of September 12, 2022 – September 18, 2022, deputies of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office responded to 1,769 calls for service throughout the community

During the week of September 26, 2022 – October 2, 2022, deputies of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office responded to 1,520 calls for service throughout the community.

Attempted Burglary: 22-56090

On September 26, 2022, Deputy Strong responded to the Health Department Building located at 975 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of an attempted burglary. Investigation revealed an employee was cleaning after hours and observed a white male with a beard, light brown hair pulled back into a ponytail, wearing a red shirt attempting to force entry into the locked building. The suspect was observed walking around the building and removing window screens in an attempt to break in. The suspect had fled the area prior to the deputies' arrival.

Damaged Property: 22-56769

On September 29, 2022, Deputy Zinn responded to the 600 block of Red Rock Road in Lusby, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised sometime between 7 p.m. on Sept. 28 and 11 a.m. on Sept. 29, an unknown suspect (s) broke a window to the exterior of the residence and broke the front door frame. Nothing appears to be missing from the residence. The total value of the damaged property is \$500.00.

Theft: 22-56944

On September 30, 2022, Deputy Hudson responded to the 7-Eleven located at 685 Prince Frederick Blvd. in Prince Frederick, for the report of theft. The complainant advised an unknown black male, approximately 5 feet 8 inches tall wearing a blue hooded sweatshirt, gray shorts, and black crocs entered the store and approached the counter to purchase electronic cigarettes. The store manager placed two electronic cigarettes on the counter and the suspect snatched the electronic cigarettes and ran out of the store without making payment. The total value of stolen property is \$48.00.

Theft: 22-56026

On September 26, 2022, Deputy Hudson responded to the 1400 block of Georgianna Lane in Owings, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised sometime between Sept. 20 and Sept. 26, an unknown suspect (s) stole 6 bags of water softener from the residence. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$48.00.

Theft: 22-56314

On September 27, 2022, Deputy Hudson received a report of mail tampering and theft. The complainant advised an unknown suspect (s) stole a pre-ordered purple iPhone 14 pro from a mailbox in the 1000 block of Westfield Drive in Prince Frederick. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$1099.00.

Theft: 22-56515

On September 28, 2022, S/DFC Aurich responded to the Safeway located at 10276 Southern Maryland Blvd. in Dunkirk, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed a white or light-skinned male with a mustache and beard, a mark or tattoo on his neck, wearing a red shirt entered the store and filled up a shopping cart with 8 packs of salmon, 1 pack of shrimp, 3 packs of Huggies, and 3 large jugs of Tide laundry detergent. The male suspect was observed pushing the cart full of merchandise past all points of sale and exiting the store without making payment. He was seen entering a silver Nissan or Ford passenger car operated by a dark-skinned black male with a beard. Both suspects fled the scene in an unknown direction or travel. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$455.00.

Editor's Note: The above arrests are not an indication of guilt or innocence as the cases have not been adjudicated.



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Saturday, Oct. 29, 2022
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
No questions asked!

- Remove unused and expired medications from your home.
- Keep prescription medications from being abused.
- Prevention, treatment and recovery information will be available.
- Syringe disposal and Narcan training will be available at Northeast and Southern Community Centers.
- Detera medication drug disposal packets will be available free of charge for county residents. The packets allow medications to be deactivated and thrown in your household trash. Limit of three packets per family, while supplies last.

Drop Off Locations:

- Calvert County Sheriff's Office Prince Frederick
- Maryland State Police, Barrack "U" Prince Frederick
- Northeast Community Center Chesapeake Beach
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STEP-BY-STEP 5K RACE

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\$30 in advance, \$40 day of race
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\$20 students 21 and younger

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North Beach Ponders Fate of Six Trees

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

I think that I shall never see, a news story as lovely as a tree.

They are lovely to look at, but in the case of six street trees in North Beach, they have become a hazard. The tree roots are impacting their next-door-neighbor sidewalks, creating cracks and walking hazards. North Beach Mayor Mike Benton says they have to go.

Benton explained the situation at the Oct. 6 town council work session, and it'll be further discussed at the Oct. 13 town council regular meeting.

Benton is working with the town's tree committee to come up with a plan to find more suitable hones for six tree replacements, but not along the sidewalks, he insisted.

North Beach Public Works Director Donnie Bowen, in a memo to the council, said, "The Public Works Department has identified and completed an assessment of trees that are located within town sidewalks as requested by the town council at the September 2022 work session meeting."

He added, "There are currently six trees located within the sidewalks that are creating a hazard to people. These trees limit the width of the sidewalk which affects people with accessibility constraints and/or causes uneven ('popped up') sidewalks which pose a

trip hazard and make it difficult for people in wheelchairs or pushing strollers. As such, these trees must be removed."

Bowen said, "All trees in the public domain of the Town of North Beach are considered a part of the town's urban forest and are subject to the provisions of Chapter 103 of the North Beach Code. The next step in the process is to forward to the North Beach Tree Committee the six trees for removal and request a recommendation from the committee on the removal and replacement species."

Bowen noted, "The town is also awaiting proposals for the cost of tree removal, sidewalk repair, and replacement cost of the trees once the number and species has been determined. Given all the issues that must be worked through regarding the removal of these trees, the town will provide an update on their removal of these trees once the project has been sent to the Tree Committee and a recommendation has been given."

The trees are at:

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- 9200 Atlantic
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Public Transportation Coverage Called 'Excellent'

Plan Cites Need for Greater Frequency

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The consultant working on a revision of the county's public transportation plan has praise for the current system, with a caveat.

Will Sutton of the KFH Group told the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) at their Oct. 4 meeting, "Calvert County Public Transportation Service is rather robust. There are eight different routes and shuttles with service ranging from about 6:30 to 7a.m. to 3 to 5 p.m."

But the wait times for the next bus at the same location range from one to two hours, he said, and there is interest for that to be more frequent.

Ridership fare is 75 cents for the shuttle and \$1.50 for the through routes.

The study has occurred through the prism of the pandemic, Sutton noted, "Ridership had dropped on several of the routes and services, so there was a real big interest in making sure that they keep going to ensure that they are available for residents. And we also wanted to improve the transit system by exploring the possibility of having time transfers between the regional routes that come from in the rural areas of the county into Prince Frederick and Solomons themselves, so that people can hop off of one bus and hop onto the next bus without having to wait extended periods of time."

The county's public transportation director Sandy Wobbleton says prior to the pandemic there were nearly 120,000 annual rider trips and it dropped off by half. The last fiscal year ridership was back to 64 percent. "It's steadily increasing. So, we're coming back. We're just not there yet," Wobbleton said.

The study notes that transfers oc-

cur at Calvert Pines Senior Center, but space is limited and there is need for a new transfer station.

Sutton said, "Population growth that has been experienced over the last 20 or 30 years is expected to slow, not to stop. It is still growing, but a real key piece of that is the senior population, 65 and above. is expected to grow by 30 percent looking out to 2045. So, we're seeing that cohort really expand in population numbers, and you know, that being one of the primary users of public transit in the county, that's something that we definitely want to keep our eye on."

The consultant noted, "There really isn't a ton of transit infrastructure within the county. And by that, I mean bus stop signs and poles and things like that. So, if you are along a transit route, you can go out and just flag down the bus anywhere you would like, which is a very convenient thing. But it also generates some confusion as to where people might be able to get on and off the bus."

Sutton said the investigation included, "the feasibility of on-demand transit or micro transit, and really putting hourly service on all routes."

Of course, improving service comes with a cost. "Typically to add a new vehicle and a new operator, it's about \$170,000 to \$180,000 a year, and that does not include the actual capital investment of the vehicle itself," he said.

So, Sutton concluded, "The current service is excellent. There's coverage everywhere. Virtually every major trip generator in the county is covered. All of the demographic areas that we examine have transit service, so there is coverage, but it might not be the fastest coverage that people want."

"Coverage is excellent, really one of the best in, in Maryland," he said.

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“We really encourage you not to attack each other, because that is not in the spirit of this particular forum.”

State’s Attorney debate moderator Len Zuza to both candidates seeking the state’s attorney’s office.



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WEEKLY FORECAST

THU 10/13		71° / 52°	Morning showers	MON 10/17		67° / 46°	Clouds and sun
FRI 10/14		70° / 49°	Mostly sunny	TUE 10/18		61° / 42°	Morning rain; clouds breaking
SAT 10/15		72° / 59°	Nice with plenty of sunshine	WED 10/19		59° / 44°	Mostly sunny
SUN 10/16		75° / 55°	Considerable cloudiness	THU 10/20		60° / 45°	Mostly cloudy

Provided by www.accuweather.com

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