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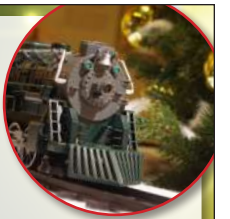
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St. Mary's County Times

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2023

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Photo by Erin Whipkey

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“OUR WORK FOR TRANSFORMING THE FACILITY HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.”

MARYLAND SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS ANTHONY WOODS



LOCAL 5
Secretary talks veterans home



LOCAL 8
Search goes on for missing man



ON THE COVER
LHS wins first state soccer championship

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, NOV 23 Sunny Hi: 56° Lo: 40°	FRI, NOV 24 AM Clouds, PM Sun Hi: 54° Lo: 33°	SAT, NOV 25 Partly Cloudy Hi: 43° Lo: 33°	SUN, NOV 26 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 51° Lo: 38°
MON, NOV 27 Mostly Sunny Hi: 53° Lo: 33°	TUE, NOV 28 Partly Cloudy Hi: 47° Lo: 32°	WED, NOV 29 Mostly Sunny Hi: 50° Lo: 30°	THU, NOV 30 Sunny Hi: 47° Lo: 29°

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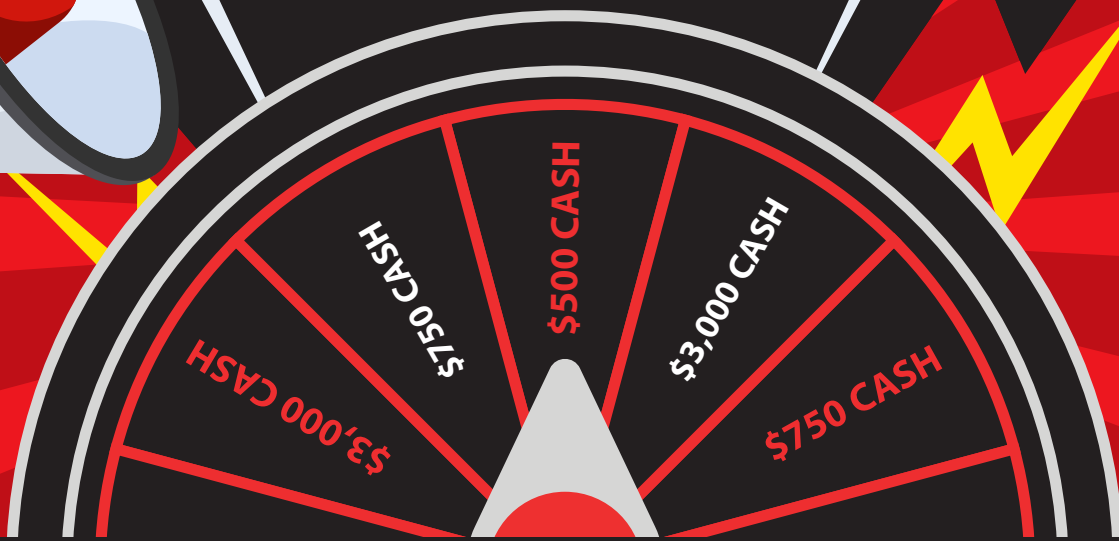
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VA Secretary: Restoring Veterans Home Will Take Years



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Maryland's top official in charge of veterans' affairs said recently that marked progress has been made in improving the woeful treatment of residents at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home (CHVH) that earned the facility a one-star rating from Medicare as well as warnings that some living there faced abuse and neglect.

"I would say we're making good and continued progress," said Veterans Secretary Anthony Woods to the House Government and Operations Committee of the Maryland General Assembly last month. "But it will take years to return to a five-star level rating."

There have been several reforms undertaken by the administration of Gov. Wes Moore to improve the situation at Charlotte Hall, Woods said, including hiring a new director for the facility.

"He brings a wealth of experience and a compassionate heart for veterans," said Woods of the newly hired retired Col. John Lombardi, who is in charge of veterans' programs there.

In May, the state hired a new management company to run the facility, Pruitt Health, which runs some 150 nursing homes throughout the southern portion of the country.

While their hiring was hailed as an improvement, several of Pruitt's facilities have also fallen in the low-ratings category set out by Medicare, records have shown.

Still, Woods expressed confidence to members of the committee that Pruitt Health would be up to the task to restore confidence in the beleaguered veterans' facility.

Pruitt Health has transitioned all medical records at Charlotte Hall to a digital format, Woods said, and have hired 22 new health

care workers, including nurses and assistants in the last four months, bringing back stability to the workforce there.

Before they took over, there had been no new permanent hires, the secretary said, and the facility became increasingly reliant on temporary nursing staff.

Woods said that under the old contract management firm, almost 90 percent of clinical care was being administered by temporary nursing staff.

"When you have a temporary nurse, that person is not building personal relationship with that patient," Woods said, noting that the percentage of temporary staff at the facility has been rapidly reduced to 55 percent.

Some staff, he said, who had left the facility, were coming back because they were encouraged by the positive changes there.

Del. Matt Morgan (R-Dist. 29A) in whose district sits the veterans' home, was pleased with the administration's handling of the reforms.

"You've done an outstanding job as far as I'm concerned," Morgan told Woods.

"Our work for transforming the facility has only just begun," Woods reiterated.

The latest inspection of the facility found that more effort needs to be put towards cleanliness and pest elimination, Woods said, noting that the most recent deficiencies did not rise to the level that led to the termination of the contract for the prior management company, RMH Health.

Immediate remedial action taken by the veterans' affairs department and Pruitt Health led to the termination of the contract for a tertiary vendor of custodial and nutrition services, said Woods, as well as a nurse who gave the wrong medication to a patient there.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Leonardtwn Takes State Soccer Championship



Photos by Erin Whipkey



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Leonardtown High School boys' soccer team won the 4A state championship over the weekend, beating Northwestern High School in a match in Baltimore by a score of 4-to-2, winning by penalty kicks in double overtime.

The team started off strong with a two-point lead but that melted away as the game progressed with both teams entering into what would be two, 10-minute overtime rounds and the Raiders would be forced to play without one player.

Neither team scored in the overtime

rounds so the win came down to penalty kicks which went the Raiders' way.

The victory that almost wasn't was the first soccer state championship for Leonardtown High School; their opponents came into the championship game undefeated.

Luke Kokolios, head coach, said this was his first year as coach; he praised his players for their skill and tenacity.

"It was a tight game against a really talented North Western team," Kokolios, a career technology educator with the St. Mary's school system, said of their opposition. "We started out well... but with 11 minutes remaining and Northwestern took a free kick and took it a lot faster than we

thought they would.

"They gained a ton of momentum with that goal."

The team's first goal was scored by Lincoln Bauer, Kokolios said, with Devin Ledman taking the second score.

When the game went into overtime, Adam Labows saved the Raiders from two penalty kicks and kept them in the game, Kokolios said.

Noah Phillips scored the winning goal.

The coach said the state championship was a tremendous achievement for the team but he cherished training the players the most.

"I love it," Kokolios said. "The best part is building a relationship with the players."

Even when the game was not going their way and much of their energy believed to be expended, the team pressed on, even with one of their players sidelined for a red card.

"They showed tremendous character to play 20 minutes while down a man," Kokolios said. "When I looked in their eyes, I could see they had a positive mindset."

Kokolios said his players had the mental edge despite their fatigue.

"We had to play an extra 20 minutes on tired legs," he said. "Our boys had a confident look."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Search Continues For Missing Man

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

About a month ago, a Charles County man went missing in the Scotland area of St. Mary's County.

Sheriff's deputies conducted a search of the area where Gil McDonald, 56, was last reported seen Nov. 17 but, said Sheriff Steve Hall, the search turned up nothing.

"There was nothing found of any evidentiary value of any kind," Hall told The County Times. "There's still some investigative work to be done."

McDonald has been missing since Oct. 28, he is described as a white male, standing 6-feet, 3-inches tall and weighing about 220 pounds.

He reportedly has several medical conditions that make it difficult for him to speak.

McDonald has a history of going missing.

In March he was reported missing from the Bryans Road area of Charles County but was found soon after.

Investigators are unsure why McDonald went missing after he came to St. Mary's last month.

"He just drove down here," Hall said, noting McDonald's fiancé was the one who reported him missing. "We have theories, but we're keeping those as part of the investigation."



Gil McDonald

Hall asked anyone who may have any information or knowledge, "no matter how scant" that might aid investigators in the case.

"It's important for people to call us with anything they may have seen or heard," Hall said. "We're scouring everything, anything connected to him to figure out what happened."

Anyone with information on McDonald is asked to call the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office at 301-475-8008.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Deputy Chided for Not Checking Warrant During Arrest

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A deputy who arrested a woman because they thought an arrest warrant was in effect, though it in fact was not, avoided being charged with violating that woman's constitutional rights, according to documents from the county's Police Accountability Board.

But charges were sustained against that deputy for not properly verifying the warrant before making the arrest, which occurred back in February in the vicinity of St. Mary's Square in Lexington Park.

The deputy was disciplined by having losing two days of leave.

The identities of both the arresting deputy and the suspect in question were redacted in the investigation documents; the investigation started internally within the sheriff's office and then went before the Administrative Charging Committee ACC for review.

"I share the same concerns as Major [Clay] Safford in that [the deputy] activated his body worn camera) BWC late while initiating contact with the both [women]," this needs to be corrected and remedial training will be administered..." wrote Sheriff Steve Hall. "Further, I have additional concerns regarding poor office safety skills exhibited by [a deputy] informing [the woman who was arrested] she was under

arrest while he was engaged in a conversation with an officer using his cell phone.

"This practice is unprofessional and not safe at a critical point when engaging with a potentially wanted subject."

The deputy in question, once they realized that they had arrested the subject in error, self-reported the violation in sheriff's office policy, the determination of the Administration Charging Committee stated.

The deputy under investigation had been told by two people the woman in question had a warrant out for her arrest and the deputy also received a "hit" on his mobile data browser from the suspect's name, the report continued.

The record showed the deputy did not act out of "malice or ill-will," the ACC report stated.

But the ACC noted in their report that the body worn camera footage that day revealed the arresting officer, who was talking with another officer on his cell phone, may have been ordered to make the arrest during that conversation.

"The Administrative Charging Committee would be alarmed to see any arrest, even a lawful one, conducted in this manner," the report stated, noting the officer appeared distracted during the incident and therefore was at risk.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Giving Thanks This Holiday Season

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

This year The County Times reached out to community leaders and asked them what they were thankful for. Here are their responses.

Sheriff Steve Hall

I am thankful for my devoted family whose name I proudly carry, whose sacrifice is never taken for granted, and whose example I try to emulate. I am grateful for my incredible friends who have enriched my life with laughter, love and the honesty I need. I am blessed to be a citizen of the greatest country on Earth and the good fortune of being raised in St. Mary's County Maryland. I am thankful for the privilege to serve her as Sheriff, leading America's first and finest in law enforcement. To our Sheriff's Office professional staff, correctional officers and deputy sheriffs and the families that support them—thank you and God Bless.

County Health Officer Dr. Meena Brewster

I'm thankful for my family, my awesome SMCHD team, and our wonderful St. Mary's County community.

School Board Member Cathy Allen

Personally, I'm thankful for family and friends, and thankful to live in a community that cares about others. I'm reminded of it every day which helps me maintain a more positive outlook.

Leonardtown Administrator Laschelle McKay

"I am grateful for my incredible husband, wonderful family and amazing friends. I am thankful for the abundance we are blessed with in this beautiful community we call home!"

Planning Commissioner Chair Howard Thompson

There are so many things to be thankful for this year. We have such a nice county to live in. Others, in our country and the world, are not as fortunate. We look out for each other in our county through the many organizations that give back to those in need. Christmas In April is moving forward with the great help of our volunteers and generous donors.

I'm blessed with a loving wife, family, and friends. My health has rebounded, through the wonderful care of my doctors and medical staff. God Bless everyone over the coming Holidays.

County Commissioner Eric Colvin

I'm especially thankful for the time I have with family and friends. Being able to watch my son grow up and discover new things. For the ability to give back, serve, and make a difference. For a county that, while not perfect, has many blessings. And for time to sit and be still and reflect on the blessings that I have.

County Commissioner Mike Alderson

First, I am thankful for the grace of God that has given me so many gifts over the course of the past year. I am thankful for my family, I would not be where I am today without their support. This has been a whirlwind year for us, both professionally and personally and I know that I will always have that strong foundation of my family there when I need it. I am also thankful for my friends, old and new, they keep me grounded and sometimes everyone needs to just hang out and decompress every once in a while. I was truly blessed by the folks of St. Mary's County a little over a year ago when they showed enough confidence and faith in me to put me on the commissioner board. I cannot emphasize enough what an incredible honor this actually is for me and I am truly appreciative of that. Lastly, I am

thankful to call this country and this county, home. It might not be the perfect place but the great thing is this, you all have the ability and freedoms to make it perfect for you. I hope everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving and a joyous Christmas season.

Pastor Greg Syler

This year, I am especially thankful to be part of a dynamic and inclusive community — certainly my own growing family, and the faith community I'm proud to serve as pastor, but also our wider St. Mary's County community. Look, the world is hard sometimes, and we all know how easily it can break your heart and test your patience. It'd be easy to see geo-political strife across the globe and political division within our nation as signs of something fundamentally broken. But about Jesus, whom I and my faith community know as Lord, scripture says: "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness could not overcome it." (John 1:5) That last verb also means "comprehend" or "understand." In other words, darkness does not, cannot understand or comprehend light. Get that: we can't always understand what is good and growing and inclusive in our community. Look too long at problems, and that's all you'll ever see. But as for me, I've been looking at my 'downtown' for years now, and all I can see is goodness and potential and community. You see, I'm part of a growing, mobilized, empowered network of people who see the future success of St. Mary's County taking shape (or, someday, failing to take shape) in the moral choices we make with regard to downtown Lexington Park, our County's most wonderfully diverse set of neighborhoods. Neighbors and businesses and faith-based organizations in downtown Lexington Park are coming together to influence moral decision-making and exert calls for leadership based on just principles, not simply political or economic reasons. I'll bet some see what they've been told to see when it

comes to downtown Lexington Park. But know this: light is shining; of course, some don't want to see it and others cannot understand it even if they notice it. But for these powerful, nascent flickers of light -- pointing toward inclusion and equity, diversity and justice -- I am so very grateful.

County Commissioner Mike Hewitt

This Commissioner is thankful for the excellent employees who work in County Government to service the needs of our citizens. Also thankful for all the people who live and work in our County and make it a wonderful place for everyone. Lastly, I'm thankful for all the clean water, abundance of food and the opportunities available to our Citizens. St. Mary's County is a great place to live, work, raise a family and have a productive life

County Commissioner Scott Ostrow

1. I am Thankful for God's saving grace
2. I am Thankful for my beautiful wife.
3. I am Thankful for my children and grandchildren
4. I am thankful for The Blessing of good health
5. I am thankful for this wonderful county we live in.
6. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve as commissioner.
7. I am thankful for the freedom we have here in America.
8. I am thankful for being able to spend the holidays with family and friends.
9. I am thankful to have a nice home.
10. I am thankful that my children and grandchildren all live close by.

County Fair Board Chair John Richards

So many things it's mind boggling. Let's just say I am thankful that we have so many dedicated volunteers in this community working to make St. Mary's a wonderful place to live.



Sheriff Steve Hall



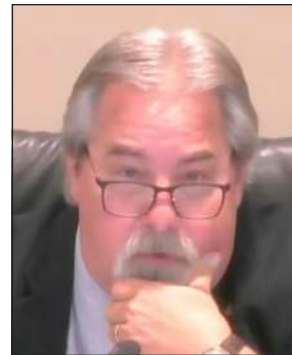
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County Commissioner Mike Alderson



Pastor Greg Syler



County Commissioner Mike Hewitt



County Commissioner Scott Ostrow



County Fair Board Chair John Richards

ST. MARY'S COUNTY CRIME BLOTTER

Deputies Investigating Fatal Crash in Lexington Park

At approximately 8:59 a.m. Monday November 20, 2023, Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the report of a head on motor vehicle collision in the area of Three Notch Road and Expedition Drive.

A preliminary investigation revealed the operator of a Honda Accord was traveling southbound on Three Notch Road in the area of Expedition Drive when for unknown reasons, the vehicle crossed into the northbound lanes and struck a Jeep Grand Cherokee. The operator of the Honda was found unresponsive and life saving measures were initiated.

The operator of the Honda succumbed to their injuries and was pronounced deceased on scene. The operator of the Jeep Grand Cherokee was flown to a nearby trauma hospital for precautionary reasons. The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Accident Reconstruction Team responded to the scene and has assumed the investigation.

At this time operator error appears to be a contributing factor in the crash. Anyone who may have witnessed the collision and has not provided a statement is asked to contact Cpl. Rachael Roszell at 301-475-4200 ext.8108 or rachael.roszell@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Sheriff's Office Investigating Lexington Park Assault



At approximately 8:58 p.m. Tuesday, November 14, 2023, Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the 46000 block of Midway Drive in Lexington Park for a 911 call from a resident who observed an assault on a home security camera.

Deputies reviewed the video, and a preliminary investigation indicated that an unidentified white male was walking in the area when a vehicle stopped; two unidentified subjects then exited the car and assaulted the victim.

The vehicle is described as a light-colored, short-bed, two-door truck, as seen in the accompanying photo.

Detectives from the Criminal

Investigations Division have assumed the investigation and have requested anyone who may have information related to this incident, please contact Corporal Tyler Payne at Tyler.Payne@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 8010.

Individuals can also call Crime Solvers 24/7 at 301-475-3333 or text Crime Solvers at 274637. Type "Tip239" in the message block and select SEND. After receiving a response, continue the conversation. Note: Tip239 is case-sensitive and must be typed in the message block as shown.

With Crime Solvers, you never have to give your name. You may be eligible for a cash reward if your information leads to an arrest.

Tips Sought in Car Break-In Investigation

On Friday, November 10, 2023, the subject pictured entered a parked vehicle located on North Coral Drive in Lexington Park, MD, removed several items from the vehicle, and fled toward Great Mills Rd.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect and/or this incident is asked to contact Deputy Toni Hunsinger at Toni.Hunsinger@stmaryscountymd.gov or call 301-475-4200, ext. 8015. Please reference Case #63039-23.

Citizens can also call Crime Solvers 24/7 at 301-475-3333 or send a text to Crime Solvers at 274637. Type "Tip239" in the message block and select SEND. After receiving a response, continue the conversation. Note: Tip239 is case-sensitive and must be typed in the message block as shown. With Crime Solvers, tipsters may remain anonymous.

Tipsters may be eligible for a cash reward if the information leads to an arrest.



Identity Sought in Hollywood Shore Theft

On Monday, November 13, 2023, at approximately 2:42 p.m., a package containing an Apple Ultra 2 watch was stolen from the front steps of a residence in the Hollywood Shores neighborhood in Hollywood, MD.

The suspect was driving a dark-colored SUV when he parked and walked across the street to steal the package from the victim's residence.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect and/or this incident is asked to contact Deputy Dianne Hersh at Dianne.Hersh@stmaryscountymd.gov or call 301-475-4200, ext. 8155. Please reference Case #64499-23.

REMINDER: As the holidays approach, thefts from residences increase; protect yourself by scheduling deliveries when someone is home to bring them in immediately.



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Legal Notices

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
CASE NO: C-18-FM-23-000735

TO: CHRISTOPHER JAMES FINN, JR.
IN THE MATTER OF RYLAN MARIE FINN

**NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF A MINOR
(Md. Rule 15-901(d))**

FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO: Rylan Marie Bowles

A petition to change the name of Rylan Marie Finn to Rylan Marie Bowles has been filed with this court.

You must consent to (agree) or object to (oppose) the petition in writing no later than 30 days after being served (receiving) this notice and the documents filed in this case. **If you do not file a written consent of objection within 30 days of being served with this notice, the court will consider your silence to be consent and may grant the name change.**

You can use form CC-DR-063 (Parent's/Guardian's/Custodian's Consent/Objection to Change of Name of a Minor).

Any objection must be supported by an affidavit (a written statement signed by oath or affirmation) and served on all parties. (Md. Rule 1-321.)

Changing the name of the minor will not change and existing child support obligation or paternity.

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

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR SAINT MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
CASE NO: C-18-FM-23-000736

TO: CHRISTOPHER JAMES FINN, JR.
IN THE MATTER OF HARLOW LAINE FINN

**NOTICE OF PETITION FOR CHANGE OF NAME OF A MINOR
(Md. Rule 15-901(d))**

FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO: Harlow Laine Bowles

A petition to change the name of Harlow Laine Finn to Harlow Laine Bowles has been filed with this court.

You must consent to (agree) or object to (oppose) the petition in writing no later than 30 days after being served (receiving) this notice and the documents filed in this case. **If you do not file a written consent of objection within 30 days of being served with this notice, the court will consider your silence to be consent and may grant the name change.**

You can use form CC-DR-063 (Parent's/Guardian's/Custodian's Consent/Objection to Change of Name of a Minor).

Any objection must be supported by an affidavit (a written statement signed by oath or affirmation) and served on all parties. (Md. Rule 1-321.)

Changing the name of the minor will not change and existing child support obligation or paternity.

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



Letters to the Editor

The End of the Washington Post in Rural Maryland

I received a letter from Joy and Amy Delahay of Avenue Maryland that their last delivery of the Washington Post newspaper to my home would be Sunday October 29th and beginning the following Monday I would receive that newspaper by USPS mail delivery. I called the Post to complain and in response it assured me I would continue to receive same-day delivery except for Sunday that I would receive on Monday that I expect also would pertain to holidays. Joy and Amy have faithfully delivered the Washington Post to my home 365 days a year even in the worst weather conditions for over a dozen years, and as saddened as I was for them at their loss of income, I was distraught that no longer did I have a such a reliable home paper delivery service.

Since that time, in the early evenings, USPS delivered a Monday Post to my home on a Thursday and the next Sunday paper also on a Thursday. In further speaking with both the Bushwood and Avenue USPS offices, they said they do not always receive the newspaper on the intended day of delivery. As USPS mail delivery is not always timely, the Post's failed delivery to USPS only compounds the newspaper delivery problem.

This is personally unacceptable to me as I expect is true for other St. Mary's and Calvert County residents caught in the Post's misguided even foolish cost reduction efforts to maximize profits at the expense of its statewide rural readership. One cannot even go to a retail store such as a major grocery store that once carried the paper to buy a daily morning Washington Post newspaper. This imprudent action by the Post surely shall result in a reduction in rural readership as confirmed by my local post office as many have cancelled their Washington Post subscriptions as who wants Newspaper delivery four days late due to unreliable newspaper delivery service.

While I cannot yet criticize our national, state, and local elected officials for not intervening on behalf of Washington Post readers in St. Mary's County, Calvert County, and other rural counties elsewhere affected, hopefully at some point they shall do so at their peril recognizing the harm to their constituents and their duty to act on our behalf.

Richard Lord
Bushwood

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Side Dishes
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Smashed Burgers
9.96

Fresh, Bone In
Whole Corned
Ham
2.99lb.

1 Lb., Tail On Frozen
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Delicious!
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.26lb.

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2/\$3

12-Oz. Bag
Ocean Spray Fresh
Whole Cranberries
1.98

Farmer's Finest
Tender
Asparagus
2.98lb.

3-Lb. Bag, All Purpose
Medium Yellow
Onions
2.48

4-Lb.
Domino Pure
Granulated Sugar
2/\$6

40-Oz., Selected
Crisco
Cooking Oil
3.98

10.5-Oz., Cream of Mushroom Or
Campbell's
Cream Of Chicken
4/\$5

15.25-Oz., Selected
Duncan Hines
Classic Cake Mix
4/\$5

16-Oz., Selected
Duncan Hines
Frosting
2/\$4

3.78
5 To 6-Oz., Selected
Pam
Cooking
Spray

5-Lb., Selected
Pillsbury
Flour
3.78

24.5 To 25.6 Oz.
Maxwell House
Ground Coffee
5.98

12.9 To 13.7-Oz., Selected
Ritz
Crackers
2/\$7

8.5 Selected
Nabisco
Triscuit
2/\$7

60 To 64-Oz., Selected
Ocean Spray
Cocktail Juice
2/\$5

12-Oz., Selected
Heinz
Gravy
2/\$4

3 Oz. To 3.9 Oz. Selected Pudding Or
Jello
Gelatin
4/\$5

7-Oz.
Jet-Puffed
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2/\$3

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2/\$4

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2/\$4

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4.98

48-Oz., Selected Breyer's Ice Cream
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Deli Fresh
Kretschmar Yellow or White American Cheese
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8-Inch Pecan Pie
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Pumpkin Or Sweet Potato Pie
3.98



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3.78



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6-Count Croissants
4.48

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750 ML
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750 ML
Loosen Brothers Riesling
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750-ML
Kendall-Jackson White Wines
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750-ML
Kendall-Jackson Red Wines
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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Celebrating 45 Years of the Navy's First Multirole Aircraft

Born out of necessity and innovation, the U.S. Navy's F/A-18 Hornet introduced a level of aircraft superiority that had not been seen before and set the standard for future development of next-gen fighters. Now, celebrating the 45th anniversary of its first flight Nov. 18, the original strike fighter aircraft is affectionately referred to as the "Legacy."

Appropriately coined, the nickname encapsulates not only the cutting-edge capabilities of the aircraft at the time, but its place in history as the first in its class that would pave the way for future aircraft platforms.

Before the creation of the Legacy Hornet, the Navy's fighter air wing consisted of multiple aircraft, each with a specific skill set and mission. The arrival of the F/A-18 Hornet ushered in a generation of carrier-capable, multirole fighter aircraft that were all-weather and attack, designed for traditional strike applications and close air support without compromising fighter capabilities.

"It showed a great understanding of what a strike fighter mission requires," said Cmdr. Tim Tuschinski, Integrated Product Team Lead for Radar/Fighter Electronic Warfare in the F/A-18 and EA-18G Program Office (PMA-265). "It allowed pilots to move quickly and efficiently between the air-to-air combat mission and the air-to-ground mission; it's the flip of a switch."

The Hornet cut its teeth during Operation Desert Storm, proving its lethality and versatility. Pilots could engage adversary fighters in the air and take out ground targets during the same mission. The aircraft's survivability and easy repair only proved to further solidify its role as the preeminent aircraft in the carrier fighter air wing.

This aircraft was born at Naval Air Systems Command and developed to be a



strike fighter.

"It's fast! When you slick this thing up, it flies like a bat out of hell," said Tuschinski. "It paved the way for the multi mission platform aircraft that we see with the Super Hornet, the F-35 and the next generation fighters."

Originally created by McDonnell Douglas and Northrop Grumman, the versatility of the aircraft came from its avionics, cockpit displays, excellent aerodynamics and its capability to carry a variety of weapons. It was built for pilot interface with a hands-on throttle and stick incorporation, as well as a digital cockpit.

"The most rewarding missions were the ones when we were able to locate and neutralize high value assets to keep our guys

on the ground safe," said Tuschinski, when reflecting on his time in the cockpit.

Today, the Legacy Hornet is no longer the preeminent strike fighter in the carrier air wing, that role has been passed along to its offspring, the Super Hornet. The Navy retired its last remaining legacy aircraft in the spring of 2023. However, the Hornet remains a workhorse for the U.S. Marine Corps and the militaries of several allied nations.

"We're poised to continue sustaining this platform, keeping it lethal and survivable until its sundown," said Tuschinski. "It's going to continue its mission for the Marine Corps."

Tuschinski flew the Legacy Hornet for 15 years and supported missions in Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. His squadron pro-

vided close air support for troops under fire and completed pre-strike missions to set up ground troops for success. He now works in PMA-265, leading the team focused on radar and electronic weapons for the F/A-18 and the EA-18G.

This year not only marks the 45th anniversary of the Legacy Hornet's first flight, but also the 50th anniversary of the establishment of PMA-265. For a half-century, the men and women of the program office have provided critical capabilities, cradle to grave, for the Hornet, Super Hornet and Growler.

"Our team continues to move fast and take risks to support, sustain, and advance the fleet," said Capt. Michael Burks, PMA-265 Program Manager. "The technologies and capabilities that we develop are reliable, maintainable, and upgradable, allowing constant improvement, so that we can best support the Sailors and Marines in the fleet."

The Hornet was just the beginning and set an expectation for fighter/attack aircraft that continues today. Over the past decade the U.S. Navy fully transitioned from use of the Hornet to the Super Hornet. This includes its use by the Blue Angels. The F/A-18 family of aircraft has surpassed 11 million flight hours. Through initiatives like Service Life Modification, the Super Hornet will be the numerically predominant aircraft in the carrier fighter air wing into the mid-2030s and will provide significant combat capability for the air wing into the 2040s.

"It is a privilege to be at the helm of this esteemed, dedicated workforce," said Burks. "PMA-265 continues to ensure responsiveness, innovation, expertise, professionalism and priority when addressing the needs of our warfighters and the challenges facing our international partners; that legacy continues."

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Christmas on the Square

November 24, 2023 • 4:30 pm - 8:30 pm



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SOMD Holiday Events

Christmas on the Square

Leonardtown Square
November 24
4:30 PM to 8:30 PM



The holiday season begins in Leonardtown when Santa arrives for the annual Christmas Tree Lighting in the Town Square. The festivities begin at 4:30pm with holiday music, entertainment, horse and carriage rides, sleigh rides, train rides, hayrides, live nativity, petting zoo, face painting, children's crafts, hot drinks, fresh kettle corn, and other fun activities! Many downtown

restaurants and shops around the Town Square will be open and decorated for your holiday pleasure.

Attendees are encouraged to use the free round-trip shuttle service to go to and from the event and to park at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) and the Governmental Center from 4:30 to 9:30 p.m.

The Grinch Movie Night

The Fenwick Inn
41685 Fenwick St., Leonardtown
4:30 PM to 8:30 PM



Cozy up with the whole famile for a movie night at The Fenwick Inn! They'll

be screening The Grinch (2018), with additional Grinch-themed activities and extras.

Holiday Exhibit @ Piney Point Lighthouse Museum

Piney Point Lighthouse
44720 Lighthouse Rd., Piney Point
November 26 - January 1
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM



Visit the museum for a family-friendly holiday exhibit where you can tour the museum, lighthouse, and historic park.

Open daily from Sunday, November

26 to Sunday, January 1 from 10am-5pm. Admission is \$7.00 for adults; \$3.50 for seniors, students, and military; and 5 and under free. The Museum Store will be open during museum hours for holiday shopping. Exhibits are closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

39th Annual Holiday Bazaar

Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary
28165 Hills Club Rd., Mechanicsville
November 26
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Handmade crafts and vendors.

Holiday Horse Drive Thru

The Greenwell Foundation
25450 Rosedale Manor Ln., Hollywood
November 30
12:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Continued on page 4, Holiday Events

HOLIDAY MARKET

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November 4, 2023 until December 16, 2023

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Christmas Hours

Prince Frederick Garden Center	Oakville Garden Center
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Sat. 9-6 & Sun. 9-5	410-535-3664
	866-535-3664
	41170 Oakville Road, Mechanicsville, MD
	301-373-9245
	301-373-9245
	800-451-1427

WentworthNursery.com ShopWentworthNursery.com

Holiday Events

Continued from page 3



Enjoy the opportunity to meet, interact with, and get close to a holiday-inspired horse or pony while staying comfortably in your vehicle.

This is a drive-through style event for those who may not be able to attend traditional events due to mobility, health, and/or medical concerns. It is also perfect for people who prefer to stay in their vehicle.

Greenwell Foundation's Equestrian Program Barn is located inside Greenwell State Park in Hollywood, Maryland. The park charges a \$3.00 per vehicle parking fee when entering the park; cash or check is accepted.

Christmas Doll & Train Exhibit

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd., Colton's Point
December 1 - January 1
10:00 AM to 5:00 PM



Families can enjoy a holiday exhibit of antique and collectible dolls like Barbie and American Girl, classic trains, and other vintage toys in this festive holiday display. The cost for this exhibit is \$3.00 Adults, \$2.00 Seniors and Military, \$1.50 Children, 5 and under are free.

The exhibit is open daily from 10am-5pm from December 1, 2023-January 1, 2024. The Museum Store will be open during museum hours for holiday shopping. Exhibits are closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Light Up Leonardtown First Friday

Downtown Leonardtown
December 1



Take free trolley rides through Town to view Leonardtown done up in its holiday best, vote for your favorite decorated businesses and residences (the winners will receive grand prizes and will be all aglow with the holiday spirit), browse and shop our specialty shops and art galleries for one-of-a-kind gifts for everyone on your list, enjoy live music, sweet treats, holiday eats and more!

Southern Maryland Farm & Country Christmas Auction

Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn
26689 Laurel Grove Rd., Mechanicsville
December 9
9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

This holiday auction showcases a variety of locally made items and consists of handcrafted, live evergreen wreaths and centerpieces, locally grown poinsettias, handcrafted quilts, furniture, locally made Maryland and St. Mary's County themed items including benches, signs (some by local sign painter Donnie Poe), and framed prints by local artist Mary Lou Troutman, and much more. A community auction event that showcases and supports our local growers, producers, and craftsmen.

Auction Preview will be on Friday, December 8, 2023, from approximately 3pm to 7pm. Check out the Poinsettia Tree comprised of almost 80 Poinsettias! Auction begins at 9am on Saturday, December 9th.

Fly-In Farmers Market @ AeroPark

St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Terminal Building
44200 Airport Rd., California
December 17
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Fly, drive, bike, or jog your way to the Fly-In Farmers Market @ Aeropark! This distinctive farmers market was originally created for area aviators to fly by and shop for local produce and goods, but all are welcome no matter the mode of transportation. You can expect to find local produce, flowers, craft beverages, and more! The market also supports the significant work of Historic Sotterley.

Christmas Market

Dixon Family Farm
27075 S. Sandgates Rd., Mechanicsville
December 23
11:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Need a last-minute Christmas gift? You're in luck! Dixon Family Farm is hosting a Christmas Market on Saturday, December 23rd. Find handcrafted, unique gifts for your family and loved ones at their farm store and artisan vendor stalls.

Flat Iron Christmas Continues, In a Different Form



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

This year the famed drive-thru phenomenon pantheon of Christmas lights and displays won't be at Flat Iron Farm in Great Mills but that doesn't mean the iconic holiday spot won't be in a festive mood.

With the main show that wowed crowds for decades now retired, the new show — A Quiet Flat Iron Farm Christmas is set to take its place as craft vendor show.

Featuring pony rides, pictures with Santa Claus, a petting zoo, mechanical bull rides, hot chocolate and hot cider and vendor shopping opportunities, the event plans on being a more subdued but still joyous celebration of the holiday season.

The new event opens Nov. 23 and runs through Nov. 26 before closing; hours are

5p.m. to 9 p.m. weather permitting, according to event organizers at Flat Iron Farm.

The farm reopens Dec. 1 and Dec. 2, Dec. 8 and Dec. 9, Dec. 15 and Dec. 16 and finally Dec. 22 and Dec. 23.


The set dates diverge sharply with the old ways at Flat Iron Farm when visitors would come drive through the winding property throughout the day and most of the night all week long through the holiday season to see the famous local Christmas light show.

In the months leading up to the event beginning this week, event organizers have said on social media that they will include at least a portion of the Christmas light displays from years past for the new Flat Iron Christmas.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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December 1, 2023

- Unique shopping and dining
- Festive Atmosphere
- Extended Hours

Small Business Saturday

November 25, 2023



- Trolley 11am - 5pm
- Pop-Up Vendors
- Special offerings throughout the town



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Parking and Road Access for Christmas on the Square, Tree Lighting

The Town of Leonardtown is ringing in the holiday season on Friday, November 24th from 4:30 PM – 8:30 PM with the traditional “Christmas on the Square and Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony”. Event activities start at 4:30 PM and include live entertainment, rides, balloon art, a living nativity, a holiday light maze, food and much more!

Come early so you have time to park and make your way to the Square to enjoy all the exciting activities, and don't miss Santa's arrival and the lighting of the Town Christmas Tree at 7:00 PM by the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department!

Thanks to the cooperative efforts of Town officials, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, the St. Mary's County Emergency Management Division, Maryland State Police, Maryland State Highway, St. Mary's County Public Works, Fire and Rescue Chiefs, the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department and other local volunteer fire departments and rescue squads, plans are in place for increased safety and security. Please note the following measures that will be in effect for this year's event:

Closures and Restrictions:

- Downtown Leonardtown Square – including Washington Street and Fenwick Street – will be closed to through traffic from 2:00 PM – 10:00 PM

- Courthouse Drive, Guyther Drive, Camalier Drive, and portions of Park Avenue, Shadrick Street, Pope Street, and Church Street will also have extremely restricted access before and during the event.
- Residents living around Tudor Hall should enter Town via Lawrence Avenue to access their neighborhood, as access to Courthouse Drive will be restricted.

Parking/Shuttles:

- Parking can be found at St. Mary's Ryken High School, the Blackbelt Academy lot on Gregory Drive, and the grass lots on either side of Courthouse Drive near Fenwick Street. Once the parking lots are full, spectators will be directed to park at the auxiliary lots at CSM, the Governmental Center or the Leonardtown Library/Garvey Senior Center Lots.
- Spectators are encouraged to park at the auxiliary lots noted above and take advantage of the free shuttle bus service which runs between CSM, the Governmental Center, the Leonardtown Library/Garvey Senior Center and the Olde Town Pub parking lot from 4:30 PM – 9:30 PM. Shuttle service for the evening is courtesy of

Patuxent Transportation, International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers Winpisinger Education & Technology Center and Carter Bus Service.

- Handicap parking is also available in Town at the Mattingley Gardiner parking lot on the corner of Fenwick St. and Lawrence Ave. and in the public lot next to the Hair Company on Washington Street. Once these lots are full, spectators will be directed to park in one of the auxiliary lots noted.
- For cars to exit Town efficiently and safely after Santa's arrival, the fire truck rides will be shutting down completely at 6:45 PM. Please plan accordingly.
- For event safety, spectators are asked to obey all posted No Parking and Reserved Parking signs as well as police and volunteer instructions.

Note: there is no rain date for this event. In the event of inclement weather, a decision will be made as to whether the event will need to be cancelled by 9 a.m. on Friday, November 24, 2023. The decision will be announced on VisitLeonardtownMD.com/ChristmasontheSquare and the Town of Leonardtown Facebook page.

Christmas on the Square is sponsored



by the Commissioners of Leonardtown, the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department, and the Leonardtown Business Association. For further information, please visit: VisitLeonardtownMD.com/ChristmasontheSquare.

FAMILY HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
AT PINEY POINT LIGHTHOUSE MUSEUM
 44720 Lighthouse Road • Piney Point, MD
 Sunday, November 26, 2023 • 10 AM – 5 PM
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FAMILY HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE
AT ST. CLEMENT'S ISLAND MUSEUM
 38370 Point Breeze Road • Colton's Point, MD
 Sunday, December 3, 2023 • 10 AM – 5 PM
 FREE ADMISSION • FAMILY ACTIVITIES • FUN INTERACTIVE CHRISTMAS DOLL & TRAIN EXHIBITS
 REFRESHMENTS • GREAT FOR FAMILIES AND KIDS
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Museum Store at St. Clement's Island Museum 38370 Point Breeze Rd., Colton's Point, MD 20626 301-769-2222	Museum Store at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum 44720 Lighthouse Rd., Piney Point, MD 20674 301-994-1471	Museum Store at The Old Jail Museum 41625 Court House Dr., Leonardtown, MD 20674 240-925-3427
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Fresh Local Produce • Meats • Cheeses
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Something there for everyone!

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- Nov. 24 & 25 Holiday market with The Grinch & Cindy Lou Who
- Dec. 1 Movie festival evening showing The Polar Express
- Dec. 9 Holiday market & fur baby pictures with The Grinch
- Dec. 9 & 16 Gingerbread house decorating contest
- Dec. 16 Christmas shopping & pictures with The Grinch

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Now Taking Christmas Orders

Open Monday–Saturday 8am–5pm



Museums Announce Free Family Holiday Events & Exhibits

St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division, which oversees Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, St. Clement's Island Museum, and the Old Jail Museum is pleased to present special events and exhibits during the holiday season at each historic site.

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum

- *Holiday Family Open House (Sunday, November 26, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.):* Kick off the holiday season with family activities, refreshments, and more! Get a jump on your holiday shopping at the Museum Store. Admission is free for the day.
- *Holiday Exhibit at Piney Point (daily from Sunday, November 26, 2023, until Sunday, January 1, 2024, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.):* Join us for a family friendly holiday exhibit where visitors can tour the museum, lighthouse, and historic park. Admission is \$7.00 for adults; \$3.50 for seniors, students, and military; and 5 and under free. The Museum Store will be open during museum hours for holiday shopping. Exhibits are closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

St. Clement's Island Museum

- *Christmas Doll & Train Exhibit Opening Event (Sunday, December 3, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.):* The museum will offer fun for the entire family, including kids' activities,



music, refreshments, and much more. Run the model trains, see vintage dolls like Barbies and American Girls, and more! Get a jump on your holiday shopping with a wide variety of unique and local items inside the Museum Store. Admission is free for the day.

- *Christmas Doll & Train Exhibit (daily from December 1, 2023, to January 1, 2024, from 10 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.):* Families can enjoy a holiday exhibit of antique and collectible dolls like Barbie and American Girl, classic trains, and other vintage toys in this festive holiday display. The cost for this exhibit is \$3.00 Adults, \$2.00 Seniors and Military, \$1.50 Children, 5 and under are free. The Museum Store

will be open during museum hours for holiday shopping. Exhibits are closed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Old Jail Museum

- *First Friday in Leonardtown & Daily (December 1, 2023, from 10 a.m. – 7 p.m., or daily from 10 – 5 p.m.):* Come take a tour of this fascinating historic site or shop at the Museum Store for a variety of unique gifts. Admission is free.

November 26, 2023, is also Museum Store Sunday at all three museum sites: Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, St. Clement's Island Museum, and the Old Jail Museum in Leonardtown. Our museums join over 700 museum stores to offer relax-

ing, inspired shopping inside your favorite St. Mary's County museums. Museum Store Sunday offers a special shopping experience in our one-of-a-kind stores, showcasing a broad assortment of unique, mission-specific gifts. From books to jewelry, to children's products, to home accessories, and offerings by local artisans and authors, there is something for everyone. Shop knowing you are supporting the museum mission and programs! If you cannot make it to any shop during the month, you can shop at the online Friends Museum Store 24/7, which offers contact-free local delivery and free shipping to friends and family outside the area: <https://friendsmuseumstore.square.site/>.

At the stores and online, you can pick up the 2023 Friends Christmas ornament. This special edition ornament features the unique stained-glass window at St. Clement's Island Museum which depicts the Ark and the Dove. Each year, the Museum Store designs a new ornament as the Friends' collectible ornament. Ornaments featuring the Drayden African American Schoolhouse, Piney Point Lighthouse with Keeper's Quarters, Old Jail Museum, Blackistone Lighthouse, Fresnel Lens, and Moll Dyer are also available.

For more information on hours of operation, programs, events, admission prices, and more, follow the Museum Division pages on social media at Facebook.com/SCIMuseum, Facebook.com/1836Light, and Facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum.

Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary

39TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR

Sunday, November 26, 2023

10 AM to 3 PM

28165 Hills Club Road, Mech. Md

Crafters and Vendors Wanted!

For more information:
Send an email bazaar@mvfd.com

Be sure to include craft type/direct sales company in your request.

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SUN & MON: 7AM-3PM | TUE: CLOSED
WED & THU: 7AM-3PM | FRI & SAT: 7AM-7PM



COOKIES WITH SANTA
Join us for an afternoon of cookie decorating with Santa!
cookie kits come with 3 sugar cookies with unlimited access to our cookie decorating station
\$20
grab one of our new regular or spiked hot chocolate while you decorate!
Friday, November 24th 12-4pm

Uptown Girl BOUTIQUE PRESENTS
Holiday Sip & Shop
Thursday November 30th
4:30-7:30PM
at flour DONUTS & BAKERY
Save the Date!

Annmarie Garden in Lights Returns



Are you ready for a truly unique holiday event full of joy and whimsy?

Join us for the most magical time of year as the grounds of Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center are transformed into an outdoor twinkling wonderland! Annmarie Garden In Lights will transport you and your family to an enchanted world full of glowing "light sculptures" and wondrous light installations. Discover magical creatures, wintery wonderlands, musical holiday scenes, deep sea treasures, sparkling trees, and so much more! You'll find dazzling delights and fun photo ops around each corner! Click the button above for a schedule of special nights, including Santa Nights, the Holiday Train Display, Special Needs Night, Local Heroes Appreciation Nights, Teen Night, Golf Cart Tours, Pet Night, Holiday Pop-Up Shops, and more!

What's new in 2023? Every year, our talented staff creates new "light sculptures" and dreams up new installations to keep our devoted fans coming back year after year! That's right, we make everything ourselves - this is not a commercial show. For 2023, guests will explore the ocean depths, travel to outer space, flit among the butterflies, frolic in the snow, enjoy a tea party in wonderland, and learn their A-B-Cs! Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for sneak peaks! Get your tickets now for this charming and whimsical show that will lift your spirits and put joy in your heart!

BUNDLE UP! Most of the light show activities are outside, including admissions, holiday pop-up shops, food & drink service, and of course, the light show! The Arts Building will be open for holiday exhibits, shopping, restrooms, and warming up!

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Light up the Town and Christmas Market

Visits with Santa, Ice Skating, Shopping and Holiday Cheer



Join the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Chesapeake Beach for the annual Light up the Town and Christmas Market on November 26, 2023. The Light up the Town is a free community event budgeted by the Town Council, offering community celebration and gathering as the Mayor switches on the Town's lighting display for all to see.

During the November 7, 2023, Town Council work session, Council Vice President Charlie Fink announced an exciting new addition to the Light up the Town event: an ice skating rink equipped with skates. Ice skating and fun for all ages will be available in the Kellams Complex Parking Lot from 3-7 PM on November 26, 2023.

The Light up the Town and Christmas Market will be open from 4:00 - 6:30 PM with activities taking place at Town Hall and the Kellams Complex Parking area. The Light Up the Town event kicks off with live performances by the Beach Elementary School String Orchestra and leads to an evening filled with the sounds of Christmas carolers, visits with Santa, a live 360-holiday photo booth, ice skating, sweet treats from local bakeries, and a Christmas market filled with greenery, wreaths, and gifts from local businesses.

You will not want to miss this year's event and the holiday cheer and gathering it provides at the center of the Town of Chesapeake Beach!

The Holiday Season Comes to Leonardtown



Home Grown Farmers Market

Open All Year Round

Saturdays • 9AM-1PM

**Closed Christmas & New Year's
Reopening Jan. 6 • 10AM-1PM**

Fresh Produce | Flowers | Plants

Meats | Cheeses | Baked Goods



Holiday Market

Sun, Dec. 3rd • 11:30AM-3:30PM

Local Artisans • Kids' Crafts

Visit with Santa 11:30AM-1PM



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Farm & Country Christmas Auction

Our Most
Exciting Auction
of the Year!

100's of Locally-Made, Live Evergreen Wreaths & Centerpieces ♦ Locally-Grown Poinsettias ♦ Handcrafted Quilts ♦ Furniture ♦ New Tools ♦ Toys & Other Items ♦ Framed Prints ♦ Signs ♦ More

Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn
26689 Laurel Grove Rd – Mechanicsville, MD
Saturday, December 9, 2023 – 9 am

Many New Items
added this Year!

Live, Evergreen Wreaths & Centerpieces; Poinsettias (various sizes); Handcrafted Quilts; Furniture & Crafts (including Custom-Made St. Mary's Co. Benches, "Live-Edge" Amish-Made Tables, Hall Trees, Poly Glider Rockers/Rocking Chairs; Rocking Horses; Youth Chair); **New Tools & Items** (Pressure Washer, SOLO Yukon Outdoor Fire Pits, Coleman Drink Coolers, Clamp Sets, Lights, Air Hoses, SOG Knife Sets, Heaters, Goodyear Air Compressors, Mini Lanterns, LED Cap Lights, Electric Outlet w/Timer, Hand Warmers, Jump Cables, Snow Shovels, Power Outlets, Luggage Sets, Gun Safes, Portable Document Safes, Heaters, "E" Bikes, Metal Décor Signs, Youth Lifetime Picnic Tables, Power XL Vacuum Sealers, Vacuum Seal Bags, Smokeless Grills, Water/Feed Buckets, Horse/Pony Blankets, Lifetime Camping Tables, Door Mats, Fishing Poles, Beach/Camping Totes, Iron Christmas Silhouettes, Metal Stake Wagon Wheels, Winchester Brand Boots, Wind Chimes, Muck Boots, Pop Up Tents, Tools from J&S Tools, Concrete Items, More); **New Toys & Games** (Corn Hole Boards, Scooters, Monopoly, Building Block Games, Ride On Toys including JD Combine, Pedal Car, 3n1 Trike Toy, Snow Tubes & Sleds, Magic Tracks Toy Set, Ninja Warrior Competition Set, Yard Games, Farm & Country Play Sets, More) **Wagons and Tri-Cycles with Cart (Amish-Made); Custom Painted Signs by Donnie Poe; Framed Prints by M. L Troutman; New Tack** (Buckets, Lead Ropes, Grooming Items); **Gun Safe (25 Gun); Baked Goods, More.**

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that showcases & supports local
craftsmen & producers.*

Thank you for supporting our local community.



***Auction Preview on Friday
from 3 pm to 7 pm.***

Absentee Bidding Available: If you are unable to attend the auction on Saturday, stop by Friday evening to preview items and leave absentee bids. A member of our staff will assist you with the absentee bidding process.



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WARM Program Seeks Volunteer Drivers

With colder weather settling in, St. Mary's County Government's Department of Aging & Human Services (DAHS) is seeking volunteer drivers for the Wrapping Arms 'Round Many (WARM) program, which provides emergency shelter during winter months for homeless individuals in St. Mary's County.

DAHS coordinates transportation for the WARM program, to include the recruitment and scheduling of volunteer drivers. Drivers must be 18 years of age or older and have a valid driver's license. Volunteers will be given access to a county-owned van. Volunteer slots are open seven days per week while WARM is operational. Volunteer drivers are divided into evening and morning shifts. Evening drivers pick up WARM guests at the Church of Ascension at 5:30 p.m. for transportation to their host site for the evening. Morning drivers arrive at the host site by 7 a.m. the next morning to transport guests back to the Church of the Ascension.

The WARM program is a partnership

between the faith community, local human service agencies, and citizens to provide safe shelter and hot meals to homeless citizens during the coldest months of the year. The first WARM season took place in October 2009, and since has become very successful with over 50 participating churches working together to provide food and shelter. WARM operates in close partnership with St. Mary's County Government's Department of Aging & Human Services and Department of Public Works & Transportation, as well as with the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, St. Mary's County Department of Social Services, Pyramid Walden, Three Oaks Center, and MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. This year's WARM season began Sunday, November 12, 2023, and will end Sunday March 31, 2024.

This is your opportunity to make a difference for those experiencing homelessness in our community. To volunteer, contact Ursula Harris at (301) 475-4200, ext. 1658, vis email to Ursula.Harris@stmaryscountymd.gov.

St. Mary's Ryken Takes AP Exam Top Honor

In the 2023-24 school year, St. Mary's Ryken achieved the highest honor among all 18 Southern Maryland high schools by securing a coveted spot on the College Board's AP School Honor Roll with the prestigious Gold status! St. Mary's Ryken is the only high school in the Southern Maryland area with the gold distinction and is in the top 6% of all schools in the nation that received AP School Honor Roll Gold recognition. Additionally, among the 18 Catholic high schools within the Archdiocese of Washington, St. Mary's Ryken is the only high school to attain Gold status.

In 2022-23, 70 percent of enrolled students took at least one AP exam.

The AP School Honor Roll recognizes schools "whose AP programs are delivering results for students while broadening access. Schools can earn this recognition annually based on criteria that reflect a commitment to increasing college-going culture, providing opportunities for students to earn college credit, and maximizing college readiness." The AP School Honor Roll offers four levels of distinction: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.

"St. Mary's Ryken's achievement not only reflects its dedication to academic excellence but also positions it as a leader



in advancing college readiness and educational opportunities for its students," said St. Mary's Ryken Principal Catherine Bowes. "We are especially proud of our ability to provide each child with the care it takes to move them to their full potential."

For a school to be recognized on the AP School Honor Roll in a given year, it must:

Meet each of the following criteria for their students in the most recent graduating class; these criteria are anchored in research-based relationships between AP and college outcomes:

- College Culture: 40% or more of the graduating cohort took at least 1 AP Exam during high school.
- College Credit: 25% or more of the graduating cohort scored a 3 or higher on at least 1 AP Exam during high school.
- College Optimization: 2% or more of the graduating cohort took 5 or more AP Exams during high school. At least 1 of those exams was taken in 9th or 10th grade, so that students are spreading their AP experience across grades rather than feeling disproportionate pressure in any single year.

Pet OF THE WEEK

MEET APPLEJACK



It's ADOPT A SENIOR month! Looking good, feline good!

Hello, my name is Applejack and I'm the epitome of FELINE GRACE at the ripe old age of 9! I'm a CALICO BEAUTY who has graced this world with my presence long enough to master the art of indifference. Kids, other cats, toys? Pff, what's the point when you can have a sunbeam, am I right? I'm a senior cat with a LIFETIME OF EXPERIENCE in napping and avoiding the frivolities of the world. So, if you're up for the challenge of adopting a cat who's mastered the art of nonchalance, I'm definitely your gal!

I'm 100% ready to meet you during adoption hours, Monday-Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday 10am-3pm. BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! ALWAYS OPT TO ADOPT, please don't shop!!

To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Charles County Animal Care Center or view us on our website at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/animal-care-center>



Here for You



This is the place to create, relate and express yourself.

Visit your public library to reconnect.



Books ■ Music ■ Movies ■ Events for All Ages ■ Computers
Free Wi-Fi ■ Gaming ■ Research and Career Resources

Potomac Speedway Wraps Up 50th Season

By Doug Watson
Contributing Writer

The second longest active speedway in the state of Maryland played host to their 50th anniversary season in 2023. The shorter than usual season found only 13 completed shows, but produced multiple first time feature winners and six first time ever track champions. This season would also be unique in the fact that the once headline Late Model division did not crown a track champion since the track opened in 1973. Rumors still surround that the speedway grounds will be taken over at the end of the 2025 season by the adjoining motocross complex, but still no official word has been released on the future of the speedway. In spite of the off-season chatter, promoter and general manager Denise Hollidge, plan to host the tracks annual awards banquet in December, and will outline plans for the upcoming 2024 campaign. Late Models- Just four events were run for the class this season, but did produce four different winners along the way. Delaware's Trevor Collins collected his first-ever Late Model win when the class made their season debut on memorial day weekend. Veteran Jamie Lathroum drove to his 19th career Late Model win in the second event of the season that fell on July 3rd. Kenny Moreland banked \$5000 during the "Larry Hills Memorial" on July 22nd, with a 525 Crate power plant, to secure his 10th career division win. Derick Quade won the final event of the season on Labor Day Sunday as he drove to his first ever division feature win, with his Limited Late Model legal no.74, during the "Huey Wilcoxon Memorial." Limited Late Models- Six events were run for the class this season and would produce four different feature winners. Former three time track champion Derick Quade would be the only repeat winner of the season as he clicked for 3 wins, including the southern Maryland nationals in October, upping his career division total to 33. Derick's banner season would also see him crowned the 2023 "Steel Block Bandits Series" champion. Eventual track champion Kyle Lear drove his Ray Ciccarelli owned no.49 to his 26th career win in May which would propel Lear to his second career division crown with his first coming in 2013. Lear had a banner season as well as he scored 2023 feature wins at Potomac, Hagerstown, Winchester, Path Valley and Bedford. Jamie Lathroum took the season opener in May for his 36th career class triumph and former two time track champion Brandon Long would post his solo victory of the season in August. The quartet of 2023 feature winners have combined for 10 track titles and 97 feature wins. Crate Late Models- This class was the one that had the most parity as six events were run and featured six different winners. Cody Dawson Brooke through for his first career Potomac win in the track season opener. Veteran Mike Walls also became a first time division feature winner with a May feature win. Kyle Hardy posted his 9th career division victory after he won the RUSH Battle of the Bay series event in April. Former two-time champion Jeremy Pilkerton's August triumph would be the 12th of his career, placing

him second all time. Ben Scott secured his elusive first career Potomac win on August 25th and Trevor Collins took the southern Maryland nationals victory for his second career division feature win in October. Consistency paid dividends for Ed Pope Jr as he was crowned the 2023 Crate champion. Street Stocks- After an early May win, the Potomac faithful would get a glimpse of what they would see quite often as the season progressed, Wyatt Hanson in victory lane. Overall Hanson would collect 5 feature wins, including the southern Maryland nationals, in route to his first career division championship. Three time track champion PJ Hatcher drove to three wins on the season, giving him 33 for his career. Mason Hanson was the early-season star as he won the first two events of the season with Scotty Nelson scoring his 11th career win with an August 4th verdict. The victory's for Wyatt and Mason Hanson would be their career first wins with the Street Stocks. Hobby Stocks- Mikey Latham took a win in the season opener in March and would add two more during the season upping his career output to 25 class victories. Second year pilot Justin Hatcher drove to his first career division win on April 21st and would add two more during the season, including the southern Maryland nationals, tying Mikey Latham, for the most wins in the division. Mason Hanson also found success with the Hobby Stocks producing two wins. Colin Long was also a two time winner during the season as he would also claim his first career division championship. Eric Hanson was the only single event winner during the season with a July 22nd victory. Strictly Stocks- After finding victory lane in the first event of the season High School Junior Jayden Hatcher would collect a division leading 6 wins, including the Friday night portion of the southern Maryland nationals, and would go on to claim the 2023 division title. Former track Champion Greg Mattingly would be the only other multiple winner of the season as he scored two wins, raising his career total to 25. John Hardesty broke a one year win drought with a May feature win, the 28th of his career. Veteran Billy Tucker scored his first ever division win in May and Johnny Hardesty took his lone win of the season on July 22nd. UCars- Some new faces found success in the class that produced five different feature winners. Richard Insoe scored his first career division win in April and would back that up with two more trips to victory lane to score his first career track championship. Kelly Crouse was also a 3 time winner during the season and took third in points. Eventual point runner up Faith Lacey came within 58 points of her first Career Championship, but her season will be rewarded with her first ever feature on July 22nd. Rookie Keith Brown added his name to Potomac win list with a July 28th victory and Earl Whitehouse IV joined the division win list with a victory in the southern Maryland nationals. Roadsters- Four drivers found victory lane in the five events the class competed in this season. Cody Bottorf was the only repeat winner of the season, scoring two wins.

A View From The BLEACHERS



THE STANDARD

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

At some point, the sun set. The exact moment is foggy, shrouded by years of ineptitude. Such details are irrelevant. What does matter is that, for a time, it was bright – squint, reach for some cheap convenience store glasses, blinding bright. Sundays would come and good times would roll. Stressed vocal cords required days of recovery. The stadium was packed by the blessed souls in attendance (there was a decades-long season ticket waiting list). Games were appointment television for those lacking a ticket to ride. Fans of division rivals were sent home in shame and with a regrettable beer buzz on the regular. It was a destination town for players, a place they longed to be; the team turned the marginal into solid contributors and the good into masters of their craft. The organization was run with class and ranked among the league's very best. Characters with character filled the locker room. Supporters felt like more than just fans; we were part of something – our region, our town, our team. A family.

And then? Darkness. The sun dropped below the horizon. The light faded. The beautiful colors glistening off the clouds disappeared. Coaches departed. An owner passed away. Cornerstone players moved on without comparable backfills. The head coaching gig felt like a series of temporary hires. Big name players came to get paid, not to perform. The losses mounted. The business ethics disintegrated. The passion faded. The ticket waiting list disappeared. There was no apparent accountability on the field or within the organization. There was no legitimate ability to imagine anything beyond mediocrity. There was, after three decades of rot, no hope... for the Washington D.C. football team.

About six hours northwest of Southern Maryland, there's a place that's like ours used to be. The journey there wraps around D.C., heads up the I-270 corridor, snakes through Hagerstown into southwestern Pennsylvania and due west on the PA turnpike. After a short drive down I-376, it appears: Pittsburgh... Black and Gold country. There, the beloved Steelers are in the midst of recording another winning season (they haven't finished below .500 since 2003!) and are firmly in playoff contention – again and, seemingly, as always. The fanbase is passionate. The stadium is packed. There is a palatable energy exuding from the franchise, into the city's pores and through a nation of fans across the globe.

But there is a fly in the ointment. The Steelers are hardly winning in style this season and, by any objective measure, haven't been Super Bowl contenders in years. The alibies are sound. The late-career version of Ben Roethlisberger was choppy, and transitioning from a Hall of Fame quarterback is often difficult. Accelerating Pittsburgh's fall from the league elites was Antonio Brown's disturbing career self-sabotage and Le'Veon Bell ruining a budding legendary Steelers career in a bizarre contract squabble. Regardless, for a city that is accustomed to winning titles, frustration has grown with the good/not great Steelers of recent vintage. And now there's this: the once whispered calls for head coach Mike Tomlin's job are now aired openly.

Such are the quibbles of the uninitiated to the depths of NFL despair.

Removing all emotion, it's remarkable what Tomlin has done in Pittsburgh in recent years. The gap between roster talent and on-field results is significant – the latter being greater than the former. But the importance of Tomlin to the Steelers transcends the overachievement of his teams. Tomlin inherited a unique, winning culture in Pittsburgh and has dutifully sustained it. When faced with adversity, he defiantly refers to "The Standard" – a level of expected performance regardless of circumstance. Tomlin maintains a link to the franchise's decorated past and is a cornerstone for a brighter future. He's a foothold for the organization: an example for new arrivals and a conscience for veterans with wavering commitment.

Lose a foundation like Tomlin, and it becomes easy, perhaps inevitable, to remain adrift. Same applies in any professional setting. Same applies in life. Without a North Star, so to speak, it can all go dark – trust me. If you can be a beacon like Tomlin, do so; if you find one, grasp it tightly.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

Gayle Paust, 79



Gayle "GiGi" Rick Paust, 79, of Leonardtown, MD passed away November 6, 2023 at her home with her loving husband by her side.

Born April 20, 1944 in Norfolk, Virginia, she was the loving daughter of the late Walter Henry Rick and Evelyn Land McKnight, and stepdaughter to the late William Richards McKnight.

Gayle was a devoted wife, loving mother, adoring grandmother, and most recently a great-grandmother. Her devotion to serve and love people extended well beyond her immediate family. She was an active member of Mt. Zion UMC and volunteered for many local charities and community events. She particularly enjoyed volunteering her time to support Red Cross Blood Drives. Our beloved GiGi had a deep-rooted faith in God, an intense dedication to her family and her legacy of being the steadfast rock and servant to all she knew will forever remain.

Gayle is survived by her cherished Navy retired husband of 55 years, John Michael Paust, Sr., her three children, John Michael Paust, Jr. of Mechanicsville, Maryland, Christopher William Paust and his wife Lindsey of Madison, Alabama, and Lisa Gayle Erdman of Cockeysville, Maryland; her eight grandchildren, Jace, Michael, Teagen, Nathan, Carson, Madyn, Talan, Peyton; and one great-grandchild, Sutton. She is also survived by one sister, Joanne Kinder, and her husband Marc of Staunton, Virginia.

Family will receive friends on Tuesday, November 14, 2023 at 10am at Mount Zion Methodist Church, 27108 Mt. Zion Church Rd. Mechanicsville, MD 20659 for a funeral service to begin at 11am, officiated by Reverend Darryl Kemp. Interment will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions may be made to:

Mt. Zion UMC
27108 Mt. Zion Church Road
Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Condolences to the family may be submitted to www.brinsfieldfuneral.com

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Bill Gast, 93



William George "Bill" Gast, 93, of Scotland, MD passed away November 17, 2023 in Leonardtown, MD.

He was born on May 15, 1930 in Pittsburgh, PA to the late William Michael Gast and Esther Bensen Gast.

Bill is a 1952 graduate of Duquesne University where he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in history. Following graduation, he was commissioned in the U.S. Army and proudly served his country until his Honorable Discharge in October 31, 1955. On June 23, 1956 he married his beloved wife, Margaret A. Gast, at St. Mary's Catholic Church in McKee's Rocks, PA. Together they celebrated over 38 wonderful years of marriage before her passing. He was employed as a Financial Analyst for many dedicated years with the Department of Defense at Patuxent River Naval Air Station until his retirement.

He was actively involved serving his community as a long-time parishioner at St. Michael's Catholic Church where he served as a Eucharistic Minister, Lector, and taught CCD for many years. His favorite things were his family, friends, reading and baseball, especially the Baltimore Orioles.

He is survived by his children: Mary Hafner (Ronald) of St. Inigoes, MD, Suzanne Maiorana (Kenneth) of Pawley's Island, SC, William Gast (Karen) of Loxley, AL, Martha Rymer of Huntingtown, MD, Richard Gast (Annie) of Hollywood, MD, Joanne Trindel (Mark) of Grasonville, MD and Carol Besse (Bray) of Relay, MD. Also surviving him are his 12 grandchildren: Amy Kim, Elizabeth Rymer, Kelly Gast, Paul Hafner, Thomas Rymer III, Stephen Gast, Gretchen Hafner, Benjamin Gast, Samuel Besse, Maggie Besse, Lena Gast and Rene Besse and five great-grandchildren. In addition to his parents he was also preceded in death by his son-in-law Thomas Rymer Jr, and his beloved wife Peg.

Family will receive friends on Monday, November 27, 2023 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m., with Prayers at 7:00 p.m., at St. Michael's Catholic Church, 16566 Three Notch Road, Ridge, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will

be celebrated by Reverend Peter Giovanoni on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at St. Michael's Catholic Church. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers will be Paul Hafner, Gretchen Hafner, Thomas Rymer III, Stephen Gast, Benjamin Gast, Kelly Gast, Samuel Besse and Rene Besse.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Michael's Catholic Church, P.O. Box 429, Ridge, MD 20680, Ridge Volunteer Fire Department, P.O. Box 520, Ridge, MD 20680 and Friends of Cedar Lane, 22680 Cedar Lane Court, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Condolences to the family may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown, MD.

Dollie Hill, 92



Mary Rose "Dollie" Hill, 92, of Leonardtown, MD formerly of Great Mills, MD passed away Friday, November 17, 2023, at her home. Born on August 16, 1931, in Leonardtown, MD, she was the daughter of the late Mary Violet Bean and Elmer A. Norris. She grew up on her family farm in Great Mills, MD and was the sister of the late Elmer Lee Norris, Margaret Norris Russell, James Norman Norris, and Olive Norris Seppe. She was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident and graduated from Great Mills High School in 1949.

Dollie was the loving wife of James St. Clair Hill whom she married on March 30, 1949, at Holy Face Catholic Church in Great Mills, MD. Together they celebrated 69 years of marriage prior to St. Clair's passing on April 8, 2018. They shared two children, Mary Belle Hill Combs, and the late Joseph St. Clair Hill.

Dollie wore many hats to include being a wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, a wonderful cook, and a business proprietor/owner just to name a few. She was a devoted Catholic and enjoyed doing crossword puzzles and word searches. Known as MomMom, by her granddaughters and great grandchildren, she would often prepare for them her signature dishes

of silver dollar pancakes, shrimp dip, rosemary potatoes, her famous crab ("material") imperial and the best egg nog during the Christmas season.

In 1950, Dollie and St. Clair became the proprietors of Hills Club Restaurant and Bar in Mechanicsville, MD, where she cooked many good meals for patrons who came from near and far. In 1972, they became the owners/operators of the Western Auto Hardware Store in the Leonardtown Square, retiring in 1994 after nearly 50 years of serving her community with good food, drinks and everything from toys, bicycles, automotive needs, and fishing items.

Dollie is survived by her daughter Mary Belle Hill Combs (dec'd Richard S. "Stormie" Combs), two granddaughters, Vicki Combs Stevens, and husband Scott; Cindy Combs Morgan and husband John; four great grandchildren, Joseph Combs and Chloe, Chelse and Chayne Stevens. She was preceded in death by her parents, siblings, husband, son, and son-in-law Richard S. "Stormie" Combs.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, November 28, 2023, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 6:30 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, November 29, 2023, at 10:30 AM at St. Aloysius Catholic Church Leonardtown, MD with Father David Beaubien officiating. Interment will follow at St. Joseph's Catholic Cemetery Morganza, MD. Pallbearers will be grandson-in-laws Scott Stevens and John Morgan, great grandson Joseph Combs, Aloysius Butler, Bill Simpson, and Willie Buckler. Honorary Pallbearers will be her great granddaughters Chloe, Chelse and Chayne Stevens.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Leonardtown Volunteer Rescue Squad P.O. Box 299 Leonardtown, MD 20650, Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department P.O. Box 50 Leonardtown, MD 20650, Hospice of St. Mary's P.O. Box 625 Leonardtown, MD 20650, and St. Aloysius Catholic Church 22800 Washington Street Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Condolences may be made to the family at www.mgfh.com.

Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.A., Leonardtown, MD.

In Loving Memory of
Mary Catherine Kane
Sept. 18, 1924 - Nov. 22, 2019

Four years ago you went to be with your loved ones and the Lord. I know it was a blessed reunion for all, but for us, the special person in our lives was gone. On this day and every day we will think of you. Thank you for all the love you have us and for raising us to be who we are. It is hard to forget someone who gave so much.

Thank you, Mama. Love,
Ellen and Larry

In Memory of Shawn Douglas Bailey
Nov 15, 1994 - July 30, 2021

When I came into the Green family, Shawn Douglas Bailey was only five months old.

As I watched him grow up, I was witness to a compassion and curiosity about him that would be hard to forget.

He was full of innocence, almost like washed in snow. He was always a joy to be in his presence, always satisfied with whatever he gave attention too. Shawn Douglass was such a gift to the world, a new breed, unselfish and not full of self worth. He was concerned about others and searched out those who understood him.

His work ethic was superior, he gave his all during a work day. He wanted to go into the service to protect and serve others where unity

would be a common goal.

He was about to be wed to the love of his life. A place was waiting for them to have a family and for him to experience what it would be like to be a father, maybe even a grandfather. I know he would have been good at this because the gave his heart to Jesus before he was to be wed.

Shawn Douglas was a Christian gentleman who will be hard to replace and no one I know could ever fill his shoes.

His family and friends miss him dearly. He will never be forgotten for contributing so much to this world in the short time he had been given.

Grandma Green

St. Mary's Department of Aging & Human Services

Programs and Activities

Loffler Senior Activity Center 301-475-4200, ext. 1658
Garvey Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4200, ext. 1080
Northern Senior Activity Center, 301-475-4002, ext. 3101

Unless otherwise specified, all activities are open to Senior Activity Center participants ages 50+. Please call your local Senior Activity Center or visit StMarysMD.com/aging for the most up-to-date information.

Senior Activity Centers Closed Nov. 22-24

St. Mary's County administrative offices, including all three Senior Activity Centers, will be closed Nov. 22-24 for the Thanksgiving holiday. There will be no congregate or Home-Delivered meals. County Government will re-open for normal operations on Monday, Nov. 27.

For more information, including a full list of holiday operations, please visit <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/pio/docs/2023-189NewsReleaseSMCGOperationsThanksgiving.pdf>.

We wish everyone the happiest of holidays!

Medicare Minute

Join us for coffee and conversation during the Medicare Minute at Garvey Senior Center on November 29 from 9 a.m.-10 a.m. This month's topic will be How to Afford Prescription Drug Costs—under-

stand the Extra Help program and if you may be eligible, learn if your state has a State Pharmaceutical Assistance Program, and learn about using other strategies and programs to save on drug costs.

Basket Weaving – Woven Snowflake

Join Pam King at Garvey Senior Center on November 29 at 5:30 p.m. and weave a beautiful Snowflake for winter. Use basketry reed and glue to create your own door decoration or even a tree topper. This is a quick project using some basic techniques that will be taught. Some choice of colored weavers will also be available if desired. Instruction and a complete kit for the project will be provided, along with written directions. Advance registration is required. Cost is \$20

Loffler Book Club

During the month of November, the Loffler Book Club is reading Mad Honey by Jodi Picoult and Jennifer Finney Boylan

(Fiction). Discussion will take place on Friday, Dec. 1, at 2 p.m. Contact Sheila. Graziano@stmaryscountymd.gov to learn more about joining this casual group.

Basket Weaving: Candy Cane Door Décor

Experienced basket artisan, Pam King, will instruct how to weave a candy cane door decoration at Northern Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. This craft is perfect décor for the winter months! Register and pay the \$30 fee by visiting www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs." If assistance is needed, leave a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

Chair Dance Connection: Jingle Bell Rock

Happy holidays! Join Judi Lyons & Paty Massón for a fun afternoon of dancing to

your favorite holiday hits at the Northern Senior Activity Center on Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 2-3:30 p.m. Engaging movement sequences that are full of life and passion will revitalize and lift your spirit while enhancing blood flow and mind-body coordination. All movements are supported by a chair in seated and standing positions. Chair Dance begins with a warm-up, follows with several exciting selections to spice up your mind, body, and spirit, then concludes with a centering cool down. Judi Lyons/Mindful Motions Md. is YACEP®, E-RYT® 200, EMYoga® Certified, RYT® 500 Therapeutic. Paty Massón is certified in RYT® 500, CBT, and Qigong. Register and pay the \$15 fee by visiting www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs." If assistance is needed, leave a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

UPCOMING EVENTS



St. Mary's County Library Closures

All three locations of the St. Mary's County Library will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, November 22, and will remain closed on Thursday and Friday, November 23 - 24 for Thanksgiving and Native American Heritage Day. All locations will be open on Saturday, November 25.

All three locations of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Friday, December 1 for staff development. All locations will be open regular business hours on Saturday, December 2.

Westwood: An Ancient Native American Site

Join Dr. James Gibb for this virtual presentation on Monday, November 27 from 7 - 8 p.m., in which he'll discuss findings from an archaeological site known as Westwood North. Westwood North, originally identified as a multicomponent Early and Late Archaic site, is a single-component Brewerton Complex site blanketed by redeposited sands and gravels with Transitional and Late Woodland inclusions. The buried

A horizon and BE horizon yielded 21 heavily reworked notched projectile points of quartz, quartzite and rhyolite. These buried deposits also produced 150 kg of fire-cracked rock and 6500 pieces of flaked stone, but there is no clear patterning evident across ten 5 ft by 5 ft excavation units. The site is adjacent to a relict tributary of Mattawoman Creek on the Chesapeake coastal plain. Register on www.stmalib.org with an email address to receive the Zoom link the day before the event.

English Conversation Hour

Practice your English speaking skills in a group at Lexington Park Library on Thursdays from 6 -7 p.m. This is a fun, casual atmosphere to practice and improve your English. Speakers of all levels are welcome. There will be a new topic for every meeting. Activities will be provided for accompanying children. No registration. (No meeting on November 30).

Using Google Docs Templates for Resumes

In this lecture, we'll demonstrate how to make the most of Google Docs templates for resumes at Leonardtown Li-

brary on Tuesday, November 28 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Templates are a great option for resumes because they take the guesswork out of formatting! We'll review some of the helpful features of Google Docs, like sharing, reviewing, and commenting privileges, as well as how to save and share your doc as a PDF. Finally, we'll go over some dos and don'ts for resume content. A Chromebook is not required, but if you would like to bring yours, please do! Register on www.stmalib.org.

D&D at Your Library!

Learn and play Dungeons and Dragons at the Charlotte Hall Library on Saturday, December 2 from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Attendees under 14 must have an adult present. Characters will be available to be chosen from. No experience needed! Register on www.stmalib.org.

Roads to Political Action: Engaging in Our Communities

Ever wondered what you could do to make a difference in your community? Join Dr. Diana Boros, Professor and Chair of the Political Science Dept. at St.

Mary's College of Maryland for a virtual discussion on Wednesday, December 6 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., and get inspired to be an informed and involved citizen! This virtual talk will discuss how change is made in our community - from the most local to national, and how to get involved - from voting to activism to community leadership. Be empowered to learn more, share more, and interact more with the many issues that affect us all. Register on www.stmalib.org with an email address to receive the Zoom link the day before the event.

Friends of the St. Mary's County Library Winter Book Sale

Gently used books and other materials, great for gift giving! Join the Friends at Leonardtown Library on Saturday, December 9 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Members Only from 10 a.m. - 12 noon

Open to the Public: 12 noon - 3 p.m. Memberships available at the door or join online on www.stmalib.org in advance.

St. Mary's Community Calendar

To submit your event listing to go in our Community Calendar, please email timescalendar@countytimes.net with the listing details by 12 p.m. on the Monday prior to our Thursday publication.

Fri, Nov 24

Hearth & Home: Historic St. Mary's City

Historic St. Mary's City
18751 Hogaboom Ln., St. Mary's City
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Join Historic St. Mary's City for one last open weekend of 2023 and take a leisurely walk through the beautiful museum grounds. Breathe in the crisp fall air and enjoy the comforting smells of home, as interpreters prepare historical meals inspired by the life ways of English colonists and Indigenous people from the 1600's. Take a recipe booklet home to recreate these delicious meals with your family.

Bring a canned good for Chaplin House and save \$1 on admission.

General admission: \$10/adults, \$6/children, under age 5 free.

Free for HSMC members.

Tickets may be purchased in the Visitor Center or Shop at Farthing's Ordinary. No advance ticket sales.

Leonardtown's Christmas on the Square & Annual Tree Lighting

Leonardtown Square
4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The holiday season begins in Leonardtown when Santa arrives for the annual Christmas Tree Lighting in the Town Square on Friday, November 24, 2023. The festivities begin at 4:30 p.m. with holiday music, entertainment, sleigh rides, train rides, hayrides, live nativity, petting zoo, face painting, children's crafts, hot drinks, fresh kettle corn and other fun activities! Many downtown restaurants and shops around the Town Square will be open and decorated for your holiday pleasure. For more information visit: www.visitleonardtownmd.com/christmasonthesquare (Raindate: Saturday, November 25th—Tree Lighting only at 7 p.m.)

28165 Hills Club Rd., Mechanicsville
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Holiday Craft Bazaar All different sorts of Vendors

Holiday Open House at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum
44720 Lighthouse Rd., Piney Point
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

INFO: www.facebook.com/events/280312431616295

We're kicking off the opening of the holiday season inside the museum and Keeper's Quarters here at Piney Point Lighthouse with family activities, refreshments and more. This event is a special opening that encourages the public of all ages to come experience this unique Christmas setting in the museum.

Free admission & refreshments available for all visitors. Get a jump on your holiday shopping inside the Museum Store, including the special edition 2023 museum ornament.

For more info, call 301-994-1471. Celebrate all season long with Holidays at Piney Point (November 26, 2023 –January 1, 2024): fb.me/e/1wJ2OKZ6K

This day is also Museum Store Sunday, so complete your holiday shopping inside the Museum Store and support your local museum. Can't shop in-store? Shop on our online museum store: friendsmuseumstore.square.site/

Hollywood VFD Christmas Tree Lighting

Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department
24801 Three Notch Rd., Hollywood
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Rain or Shine.

Parking lot opens at 4 pm. Santa arrives about 5:30 pm.

This is a Parking Lot Event! Each child will receive a goodie bag filled with crafts.

Santa and his Elves can't wait to see you. Bring your camera for a picture.

Sun, Nov 26

MVFDA 39th Annual Craft Bazaar

Mechanicsville Vol. Fire Dept.

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC



Happy Thanksgiving

We hope your home is filled with family and friends sharing joy and laughter this Thanksgiving holiday.



David McDonough
Financial Advisor

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301-997-1707

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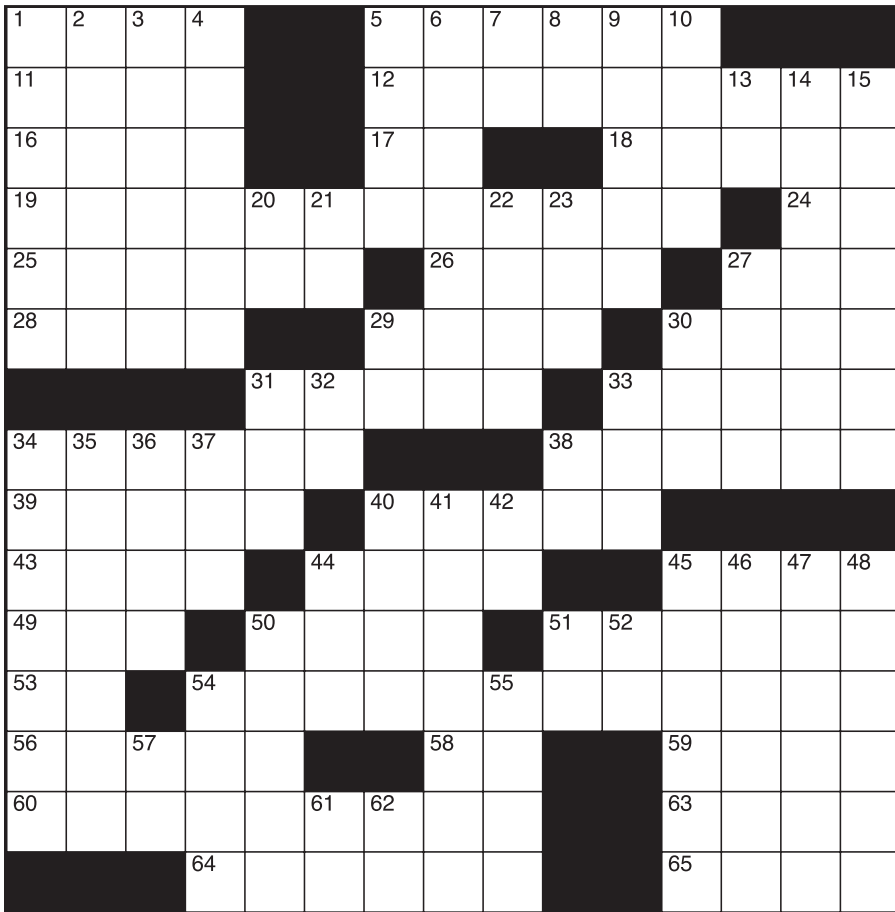
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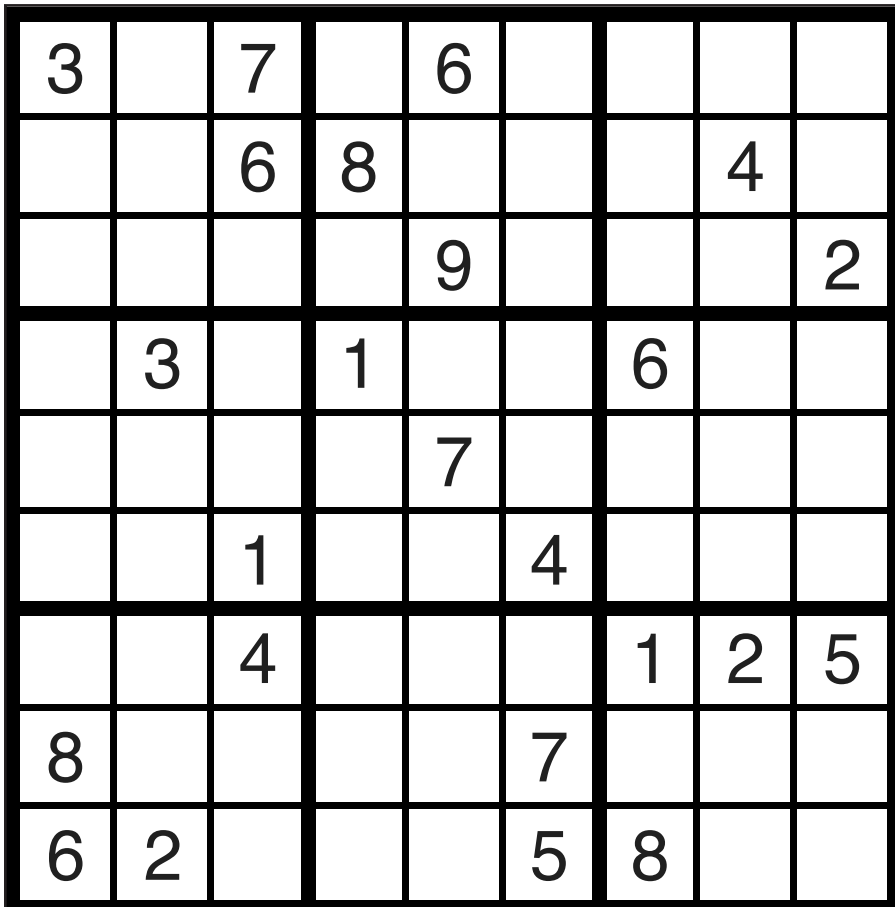


CLUES ACROSS

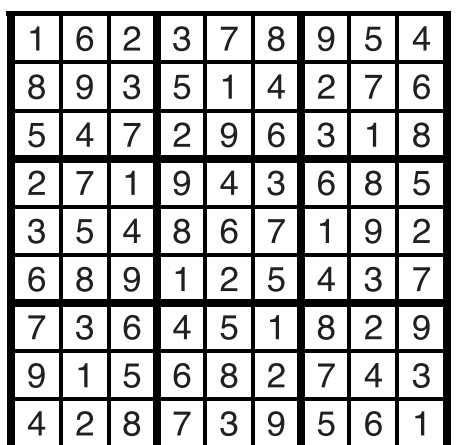
- 1. Nocturnal S. American rodent
- 5. Requesting
- 11. Give temporarily
- 12. Happiness
- 16. Military branch
- 17. - ___, denotes past
- 18. Middle Eastern city
- 19. Air hostesses
- 24. Partner to Pa
- 25. Percussion instrument
- 26. Popular computers
- 27. Decrease light
- 28. Valley in the Osh Region
- 29. "To ___ his own"
- 30. Absence of difficulty
- 31. Notice announcing intended marriage read out in church
- 33. Trims by cutting
- 34. Impact
- 38. Military member
- 39. A French river
- 40. Member of prehistoric people in Mexico
- 43. Messenger ribonucleic acid
- 44. Musician Clapton
- 45. Greek sophist
- 49. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)
- 50. Narrow valley
- 51. A way to disentangle
- 53. Indicates not an issue (abbr.)
- 54. Recommending
- 56. Genus of legumes
- 58. Friend to Larry and Curly
- 59. Off-Broadway theater award
- 60. Fencers
- 63. Small Eurasian deer
- 64. Denoting passerine birds
- 65. Separate by category

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Colorless fluid part of blood
- 2. Of a main artery
- 3. Photographic equipment
- 4. Confirms a point
- 5. Developed over time
- 6. Not the leader
- 7. ___ Lang (country singer)
- 8. Adults need one
- 9. Nests of pheasants
- 10. Antelopes
- 13. One quintillion bytes (abbr.)
- 14. Japanese three-stringed lute
- 15. Type of cat
- 20. Cools your home
- 21. The ancient Egyptian sun god
- 22. Pouches
- 23. Trigraph
- 27. Form of Persian spoken in Afghanistan
- 29. ___ route
- 30. Body part
- 31. Bridge building degree
- 32. Indicates position
- 33. Political action committee
- 34. Tasty snack
- 35. Part of a quadruped
- 36. Locate
- 37. Pitching statistic
- 38. Of I
- 40. City in Utah
- 41. Football players in the trenches
- 42. Hammer is one
- 44. A "nightmarish" street
- 45. Performers
- 46. Slang for cut or scrape
- 47. More breathable
- 48. Most slick
- 50. Provokes
- 51. Home to college's Flyers
- 52. Sodium
- 54. Large fish of mackerel family
- 55. Zero
- 57. ___ and behold
- 61. The Palmetto State
- 62. Popular Tom Cruise movie franchise (abbr.)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS



Calvert Community Calendar

To submit your event listing to go in our Community Calendar, please email timescalendar@countytimes.net with the listing details by 12 p.m. on the Monday prior to our Thursday publication.

Sun, Nov 26

Wreath Making Weekend

American Chestnut Land Trust
Office parking lot
9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Volunteers and their guests make wreaths for ACLT's sale on December 2. Free.

Mon, Nov 27

Grooving and Moving: Ages 0-2

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
9:15-9:35 a.m. for ages 0-2
10-10:30 a.m. for ages 3-5

Join us for Grooving and Moving where we will use music and movement to start the day! Fans of Storytime will enjoy this 4 week session as we move, play instruments and sing together. For ages 0-2. Registration required. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch,
3819 Harbor Road, Chesapeake Beach,
6:30-7:30 p.m.

Does your K-5th grade child love to read out loud, or struggle with reading confidence? Here's the chance for everyone to practice in a safe and welcoming space! At this event, elementary aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! Want to work with elementary aged kids and help build their confidence while they read aloud? Become a Teen Reading Buddy! Teen volunteers can earn one service learning hour for participating. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Nov 29

Grooving and Moving

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
9:15-9:45 a.m. and 10-10:30 a.m.

Fans of Storytime will enjoy dancing, singing and playing as they learn about music. For ages birth - 5. Join us for Grooving and Moving Mornings where we will use music and movement to start the day! This program features opportunities for children to explore music elements such as rhythm, tempo, and dynamics. Registration is required. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Does your K-5th grade child love to read out loud, or struggle with reading confidence? Here's the chance for everyone to practice in a safe and welcoming space! At this event, elementary aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! Want to work with elementary aged kids and help build their confidence while they read aloud? Become a Teen Reading Buddy! Teen volunteers can earn one service learning hour for participating. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Thu, Nov 30

Little Minnows: Good Morning Yoga

Calvert Marine Museum
10:15 & 11:15 a.m.

This month's theme is Good Morning Yoga, for preschoolers ages 3 - 5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story

time and a craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. The cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive.

Reading Buddies

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
6:30-7:30 p.m.

Does your K-5th grade child love to read out loud, or struggle with reading confidence? Here's the chance for everyone to practice in a safe and welcoming space! At this event, elementary aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! Want to work with elementary aged kids and help build their confidence while they read aloud? Become a Teen Reading Buddy! Teen volunteers can earn one service learning hour for participating. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Ongoing

Annmarie Garden in Lights

Annmarie Sculpture Garden
and Arts Center
Solomons
Nov 24, 2023 - Jan 1, 2024
5-9 p.m. nightly; closed some evenings
Advance timed-entry tickets required

Join us for the most magical time of year as the grounds of Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center are transformed into an outdoor twinkling wonderland! Annmarie Garden in Lights will transport you and your family to an enchanted world full of glowing "light sculptures" and wondrous light installations. Discover magical creatures, wintery wonderlands, musical holiday scenes, deep sea treasures, shimmering trees, and so much more! You'll find sparkling delights and fun photo ops around each corner! Check out the full schedule of special nights,

including the Holiday Train Display, Santa Sundays, Local Heroes Nights, Special Needs Night, Golf Cart Tours, and more! Advance timed-entry tickets required; \$15/person (\$17 at the gate, if not sold out).

Reduced cost tickets for SNAP card holders available. Rain or shine event, no pets, no smoking. Details: www.annmariegarden.org.

Upcoming

Christmas Caroling

St. Leonard Polling House Holiday
5095 St. Leonard Road, St. Leonard
Sunday, December 3
4:30 p.m.

22nd annual event. Join in the Spirit of the Season with Cookies, Cocoa, and Song. Santa will make a special appearance at 5 pm! Sponsored by the SLVG. For questions, contact Nancy W. Zinn, 410-586-0682.

Holiday Market

Annmarie Sculpture Garden
and Arts Center
Solomons
Saturday, December 2
9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Admission to the market areas is free

Join us for an indoor and outdoor market where you'll find a variety of gifts made with love. Outside, guests can browse a festive variety of vendors selling unique jewelry, pottery, beauty products, home decor, small batch foods, and more. Inside, you will find more shopping in the Annmarie Gift Shop, the Holiday Gift Show, and the Ornament Show & Sale. There'll be something for everyone on your list! Well-behaved pets on a short leash are welcome outside; rain or shine event; no smoking or vaping. Food and drink will be available. Details: www.annmariegarden.org

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County Times

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Building Something with Their Hands

'Not Just on a Screen'



Educator Jesse Howe calls for students' attention during their reef ball project.



Fifth graders and their parent-chaperones work on making reef balls during the recent reef building program at Mutual Elementary School.



Students proudly pose with the finished reef ball they built. Left to right: Anya Butler; Presley Duff; Eric Edwards, Jr; and Charlotte Brockinton. In the background is Eric Edwards, Sr, who served as a parent-chaperone for the team.

By Tim Flaherty
Contributing Writer

"What do we call baby oysters?" asked educator Jesse Howe of a group of 76 fifth-graders at Mutual Elementary School in Port Republic.

"Spats," was the joyous, shouted reply.

"Say it again?"

"SPATS," shouted even more enthusiastically.

This exchange was part of the opening instruction to Mutual's fifth grade during their recent two-day reef ball building project. The project saw the children build 19 concrete reef balls that will be sunk in the St. Mary's River and other locations in the Chesapeake Bay watershed to provide habitat for marine life, most notably oysters.

The reef ball building program is conducted by the Maryland Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association, or CCA, a non-profit whose goal is to engage in grass-roots, science based advocacy for the sustainable and wise use of marine resources. For the past three years, the CCA has conducted the reef building project with fifth graders at every Calvert County Elementary School. Schools in the southern half of the county are done in the fall, with the northern half schools participating in the spring.

On a recent, chilly, morning at Mutual, the students were led outside to the playground where they found all the tools and materials they would need to build the concrete reef balls. The balls are flat bottom, hollow, cone-like structures that are about two feet high and two feet in circumference. The students would use a variety of tools to assemble molds, mix and pour concrete, inflate small buoys to create the hollow space in the reef balls, create holes in the sides where marine animals can enter, and to remove the cured balls from their assembly pads. The building project was conducted for about two hours per-day over the two days.

"I love this!" exclaimed fifth grader Quentin Poe, a member of Ms. Blackstone's homeroom class. "I'm having so much fun!" When asked what he learned from helping his classmates build reef balls, he said, "I

learned to use some tools, and learned to use wedges. And I learned reefs form a home for oysters and other animals."

Quentin and his classmates actually began learning about oysters and their role in the Chesapeake Bay's ecological system at the beginning of the school year. All Calvert County fifth graders began the year with a course on oysters, their place in the ecosystem, the economy, and in the culture of Maryland. The reef ball building project fits nicely after the initial course is through, according to Tom Harten, a Calvert County Public Schools teacher who is assigned to the school system's CHESPAX environmental education program.

"The reef ball project is kind of a tangible action project the kids do after they learn about oysters," said Harten, one of two teachers assigned to CHESPAX. "We ask for feedback from the kids, and two things are gratifying. First, they recognize why they are doing this and that it will have an impact that will last for years. Second, for a lot of kids it is a sense of pride. It's the first time they've ever built something. We get that comment frequently.

"They get to do something with their hands," Harten added, "and not just on a screen."

The kids at Mutual were divided into teams of four or five to build a reef ball at each construction station. Each team was overseen by a parent or other volunteer, and Howe and another CCA educator provided roving instruction. The same scene has been and will be created at all Calvert public elementary schools this school year.

The children at Mutual displayed that they understood what functions the reefs will undertake when submerged in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, and they also seemed enthusiastic about skills they acquired during the construction.

"I learned many marine animals can live in an oyster reef," said Gabe Sabrini, a member of Ms. Kay's homeroom, "and I learned how to make a reef! And I learned that when it comes to making reef balls, many tools are involved."

Katlyn Gray, Gabe's teammate and also a

member of Miss Kay's class, added, "They (the reefs) create habitat for other species like naked gobies, mud crabs, blue crabs, and grass shrimp."

"It's Hard Work," classmate Taelynn Bosch chimed in. She added that she "learned to be careful with tools."

Jesse Howe, the CCA instructor who teaches the kids the reef ball building process, is also the Assistant Director of CCA of Maryland and is a Calvert County resident.

A Maryland native who grew up fishing and crabbing on the bay, he has a background teaching elementary school students in other countries. He returned to Maryland with his family at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic and took on a variety of roles at CCA until his promotion to Assistant Director in July.

The fall portion of the reef ball building project will finish in mid-November at Calvert Elementary School. The project will pick up again in late March at Plum Point Elementary.

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Chesapeake Beach Board of Port Wardens Proposed

Would Approve Waterway Construction

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Chesapeake Beach Mayor Pat Mahoney and town staff have proposed reconstituting a board that has been dormant for 16 years. The proposal to establish the Board of Port Wardens was presented at the Nov. 7 town council work session and will be discussed at a future town meeting.

Town Administrator Holly Wahl explained in a memo that the board would “provide for the orderly development, control and management of the placement, erection, and construction of structures and to provide for safe harbors, free of congestion and navigational hazards within or on the waters, within the municipal corporate limits of the Town of Chesapeake Beach.”

At the work session, Wahl said, “The Board of Port Wardens has been a body that the town council has talked about often. This has been a body that was previously in place and then a very long pause of not having this board in place. The board has come up in the comprehensive plan, but also in the town’s coastal resiliency plan that we’ve been working on. The board has been mentioned in many different portions of that plan because of the impacts of construction on and around our waterways. So, we felt this was a, a good opportunity to discuss mak-

ing this board active. That process would be that applicants that are constructing in and around the waterways would need to come to town hall and submit a permit and this board would work in conjunction with the town council to define what that fee is. There would be a fee for review, and then it would allow the town to have some input into what is constructed. Currently, we do not have any input. So, it is approved by the state and often the Army Corps of Engineers as well. So, this would allow that the town input in those decisions also.”

Council member Valerie Beaudin expressed serious reservations about the board’s powers. She said, “It seems like we’re basically separating out a series of decision-making bodies that are not working holistically.”

Beaudin noted that the town council only got involved in the decision-making process if an applicant appeals the Board of Port Wardens decision. “So, the town, like the town council planning and zoning have absolutely no part in this. And I find this problematic.”

She was also concerned about the potential lack of public input. Beaudin noted, “I find it really concerning that three people would be controlling all our waterway licensing and permitting. I find that there’s no insert here for public comment, public hearings, anything like that. Like even if we have a board of so many people on planning

and zoning, if it’s a large project, it again has a public hearing, and the public are provided an opportunity to provide comment. And I don’t believe that’s part of the process as I read it here, problematic.”

She argued that the section of the town code that includes the board needs to be reviewed.

Mahoney said, “It’s my understanding that the town needs a Board of Port Wardens. It’s sort of like a requirement and we’ve been negligent for quite some time in not having this.”

Wahl explained, “There’s been lots of applications for jetty walls being built, revetments,” adding, “so basically the town, as it stands right now, actually don’t even receive those plans. so, they coordinate directly with the state. We have zero approval process, zero review. The only time we receive information is if we request it from the state. So, there’s definitely a gap in terms of the town’s engagement in these activities.”

Wahl added, “The code does specifically state that rules and regulations of the Board of Port Wardens shall be adopted, rules and regulations and procedures in terms of how they’re reviewing these projects, what the fees will be.” She said those regulations would include public participation and would be approved by the council.

Beaudin asked that those regulations be approved before the new board starts



Chesapeake Beach Councilwoman Valeries Beaudin

reviewing cases.

Three members have been recommended by Mahoney for the new board: Kathleen Berault, Jay Berry and Wayne Newton. Berault is chairperson of the planning commission. Berry is the town’s public works administrator. Newton is the town engineer. None of the council members expressed any reservations about the appointment of those members.

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Indictment Issued for Shymanski Murder

Brandon Ross Holbrook, 48, of Reedsville, PA, was indicted on Nov. 20 by a Calvert County Grand Jury and formally charged with the murder of Joseph Shymanski of Huntingtown. A total of 5 charges were returned by the Grand Jury, to include common law murder, first and second-degree assault, and use of a firearm in the commission of a felony.

Holbrook is due in Calvert County Circuit Court on Dec. 4 for an initial appearance/arraignment. He is being held at the Calvert County Detention Center.

An indictment is simply a method of charging an individual and does not constitute a finding of guilt or innocence.



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To Start Early or End Late

School Board Weighs Calendar Options

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of Education is seeking public input on two options that have been presented to them for the school calendars for the next two years. One would have a week tacked on at the beginning of the school year in August and the other would have that week at the end of the year in June.

Director of System Instructional Performance Jacquelyn Jacobs presented the options at the Nov. 9 school board meeting. Jacobs explained, "For the 24-25 calendar, option A...has students beginning on August 21st with the last day of June 5th, and option B...has students beginning on August 27th with the last day of June 11th. For the 25-26 calendars. Option A...has the students beginning on August 20th with the last day of June 4th and option B...has students beginning on August 26th with the last day of June 10th."

Jacobs said the reaction she has received had teachers and administrators favoring the early start and support personnel a more mixed reaction.

Board member Lisa Grenis said learning is better earlier rather than later. "I think if you look at the best interest of children, we're better going in early and getting them out early. So that's just my thought process with it, just to take advantage of as many

instructional days as possible. Not that you're not teaching at the end of the year, but it becomes so much more challenging," she said.

This is the first year that the committee tasked with developing the calendar has done it for two years, which brought kudos from the board members because it assisted in parental planning.

Jacobs said an effort has been made to coordinate the calendars with neighboring counties, although St. Mary's calendar is not yet available. She said much of the calendar is dictated by state law and negotiated agreements with their unions.

She said state law requires "school must be 180 days within a 10-month period, may not be open on Saturdays, Sundays are holidays. And the state statute actually says what are public school holidays. So those include Thanksgiving Day and the day after, Christmas Eve and from then through January 1st, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, the Friday before Easter, Memorial Day and primary election and general election days. Minus the election days, 13 are required to be no school for students. When we include Labor Day as one of those days, that gives us 14 days that would not be designated as student days. There is a provision in the statute that specifically points for Calver County Public Schools could remain open during primary

and general election days. We are one of six districts that have that provision."

Additionally, she said, "Those that are 10-month staff work 190 days. So, we have to build the calendar for 190 10-month staff days. Twelve-month staff work 245 days." The calendar also had to recognize those who work 11 months.

She explained, "All four proposals have the same winter recess dates. For the 24-25 calendar, the recess dates are from December 23rd through January 1st and the 25-26 calendar winter recess is from December 24th through January 2nd. So, whether option A or option B, winter recess stays the same in both. That is similar for spring recess. So, for in the 24-25 calendars...spring recess is April 14th through the 21st and the 25-26 calendar (is) between March 30th and April 6th. The committee did speak with Charles and St. Mary's counties regarding how they determine spring recess because we know that is something that came up last year."

Jacobs said, "All four proposals have six teacher workdays known as pre-service days prior to the first student day and one teacher workday after the last student day. All four proposals have three professional development days, one sometime in October that aligns with the MSEA conference, one in November aligned with Veterans Day and is typically used at the elementary level for parent conferences, and one in January, which half of that day is

typically for elementary parent conferences and professional development. All four proposals have two days designated for inclement weather. These are days when schools would be closed for students and 10- and 11-onths staff unless the system would close on a prior date due to inclement weather. In the 24 25 calendars, they are both in March and in the 25-26 calendar, one is in March and the other occurs in May. If additional inclement weather makeup days are needed, the recommendation by the calendar committee would be to amend the days after the last student day."

Jacobs said, "All four proposals have 12 days designated as early dismissal or late arrival days. Six of the 12 days are designated in the no negotiated agreement... Two of those days are designated for graduation. One of those days is for parent conferences, and that day is similar to this year's calendar, which occurs in October lined with Columbus or Indigenous Peoples Day. We've received positive comments about utilizing that day for parent conferences this year and having conferences with those students that need it versus waiting until November."

The calendar options are posted on the school system website for comment. The board is expected to finalize the calendars next month.

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Holiday Inn Rezoning Denied

Commissioners Reject Planners Vote

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A request for two rezonings that would have paved the way for redevelopment of the Holiday Inn site in Solomons was rejected by the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) after a Nov. 15 joint public hearing with the planning commission. Before the commissioners' vote the planners recommended approval on a split vote after a motion to deny it failed 4-3, with Chairperson Maria Buehler breaking the tie. Commissioner Mark Cox abstained from voting.

The proposed project involved replacing the shuttered 326-room hotel with: a new 107-room, national brand hotel; 1140 luxury, age-restricted one- and two-bedroom apartments; and an 80-bed assisted-living and memory care facility.

The hotel and assisted-living facility are allowed under the 11-acre site's existing zoning, but the luxury apartment units weren't. The rezoning would have allowed for them and also increased the density on the property from seven units per acre to 14.

The public hearing featured developer's representatives supporting the rezonings and several citizens opposing it. Developer's representative John Dixon said, "The market for a 326-room hotel diminished with the construction of numerous hotels in St. Mary's County and within Calvert County, which changed the economics, the viability of the Holiday Inn, which led to it being put on the market and looking for a redevelopment partner."

He said the redevelopment would include renovation of "a portion of the existing conference center, so that'll be capable of hosting over 250 guests. We're going to repurpose and redevelop the old Isaacs restaurant to become a destination restaurant, to serve not just the hotel, but the entire Solomons community and to help bring peo-



ple to the area for a destination dining experience on the water."

He added, "The existing hotel configuration includes 326 hotel rooms, which is much larger than the market can support historical occupancy rates. And our marked study shows that a hotel of 150 to 175 rooms is financially viable with this location. However, the economics of the renovation of the amenities, conference center and restaurant, as well as amortizing the underlying value of the land requires more development density, specifically residents who will utilize the amenities and the restaurant that are going to be refurbished on the property. After commissioning a market study, it was determined that an active adult multi-family rental community targeted to higher wealth residents would be successful due to the proximity of the water, on-site marina and active lifestyle in Solomons Island."

Dixon said the restrictions with the rezoning, such as tying it to redevelopment,

would not extend to many other properties in Solomons.

Nearby resident John Roberts disagreed. He said increasing the density to all properties in the affected zoning category would have a domino effect. "Single-family homes on small-to-medium-sized lots, that's going to disappear," he said, "adding, 'The money just screams out for that kind of an investment. And once it happens in our community, it's going to snowball because nobody who still has their single-family home in that community wants to be the last one standing.'"

Roberts asserted, "The total nature of the community will have changed."

Planning commissioner Chris Gadway led the questioning of the applicant and made the motion to deny the rezoning request. He observed that the 55-year age restriction for the apartments could only apply to the head of household under federal regulations and others living in the units could be younger and even children.

Gadway's motion said the proposal was inconsistent with the county's master plan. After his motion failed, planning commission member Lisa Williams moved the rezonings recommended approval and that prevailed by a 4-2 vote.

The commissioners who were listening then took over with Vice President Mike Hart leading the questioning. He wanted to know how kids with their parents in the hotel would interact at the pool with the older residents of the apartments desiring to be free of kids. He said, "Could you imagine you're 55 and older, you're retired, you want to relax, and people are on vacation with their kids. I have two kids. I don't always want to sit next to them sometimes on vacation."

Dixon responded, "I suppose that if we do decide that it will be shared, it is a big pool. It's a large pool."

Dixon said the proposal would generate less traffic than the Holiday Inn; Hart expressed skepticism of that traffic estimate.

Before the vote in which he abstained, Cox seemed to speak in favor of the redevelopment. He said the county's master plan has two values: "preserving the rural landscape, creating vibrant town centers are the two values of this document."

Cox added, "These two values work together and mutually sustain each other, supporting, encouraging, and directing the growth away from the rural areas helps preserve the rural landscape and focuses development into the townships. Similarly, supporting, encouraging directing growth towards the town center limits development within the rural areas and creates more activity and environment within town centers."

With the denial by the commissioners, the developers have 30 days to appeal the decision to circuit court.

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Rezoning Approved for Weis Gas Station

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A zoning text amendment approved by the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) after a Nov. 15 joint public hearing with the planning commission paves the way for a gas station at the Weis Market in Lusby. The proposal, however, was not without controversy, with Planning Commission Chair Maria Buehler breaking a tie for a 4-3 vote in support and Commissioner Catherine Grasso voting against it.

Gas stations are allowed in several commercial zones in Lusby but not in the Village Commercial subdistrict in which the shopping center that includes the Weis Market is located.

During the public hearing James McQueen noted the proposed gas station would be the sixth within a short distance, which prompted

planning commissioner Chris Gadway to ask the Weis representatives, "Why (do we) need another gas station?"

Weis representative Kevin Elden said, "As a supermarket company we sell groceries, we sell in this particular location with a pharmacy, we have a deli. Fuel is another department in our supermarket. We are looking to bolster our performance there, to be very honest. So, we want to sell gas and sell more groceries and we find that with the offering, we do sell more groceries and we have a much better chance of staying in the community. Grocery stores at gas stations are very common. We own and operate 197 stores. Of those, 60 have gas stations. We have another five to eight that are on the books right now and we'll continue to add them as we can."

He added, "If you look around, most grocery stores in this area have a gasoline offering. You got a Safeway right here (in Prince

Frederick), the Giant across the street from us in Lusby. So, it's really not an uncommon offering at a market. So that's what we're looking to do is we'll get the best offer we can."

It was the number of gasoline filling stations that drew Gadway's attention. He noted there were more in Lusby than in Prince Frederick, "a county seat in an area that's much farther spread out than the area that you're at down there."

Gadway asked, "Do you see any additional problems for too much supply or not enough demand?"

"Our evaluation of this location, we don't believe that's a problem," Elden responded.

The Weis representative noted, "It is a convenience for our patrons. We have a fuel rewards program where the more groceries to buy, the more discount you get on gas."

Elden said the company is also looking at electric vehicle charging stations so customers can charge while in the store shopping.

Gadway, in moving recommending denial of the rezoning request, said, "This in my opinion would make the Village Commercial too similar to the neighborhood commercial areas." He said he believed that proposal was inconsistent with the county's master plan.

With Gadway's motion failing, the motion to recommend approval passed 4-3, with Buehler breaking the tie.

The county commissioners then went ahead and followed the planners' recommendation and approved the rezoning by majority vote. Commissioner Grasso voted against it but did not explain her vote. Commissioner Vice President Mike Hart recused himself because his store rents space in a shopping center across the street from the Weis shopping center.

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<p>MON, NOV 27</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 52° Lo: 32°</p>	<p>TUE, NOV 28</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 46° Lo: 32°</p>	<p>WED, NOV 29</p> <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 49° Lo: 29°</p>	<p>THU, NOV 30</p> <p>Sunny Hi: 46° Lo: 29°</p>

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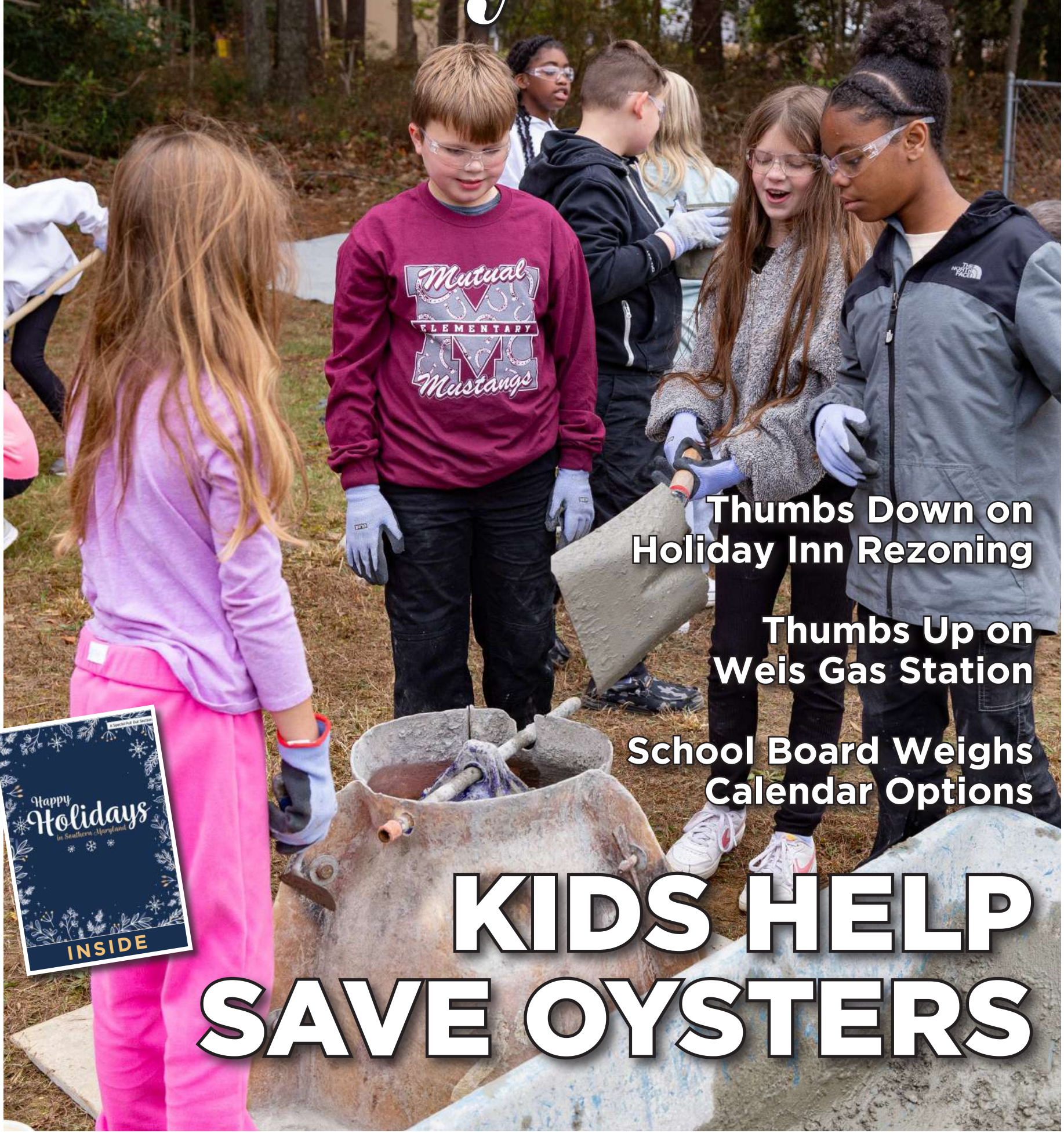
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Holiday Inn Rezoning**

**Thumbs Up on
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**School Board Weighs
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**KIDS HELP
SAVE OYSTERS**

