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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2022

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“THERE’S NEVER BEEN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD IN THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS.”
 COMMISSIONER-ELECT TODD IRELAND ON THE NEED FOR A DIALOGUE



LOCAL 4
 Grasso wants to improve government transparency



LOCAL 6
 Todd Ireland looking to learn as new commissioner



New Commissioners (l to r) Commissioners elect Todd Ireland, Catherine Grasso and Mark Cox. Photo courtesy Calvert County Department of Communications.

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU 12/8	56° /40°	Considerable cloudiness	2%	MON 12/12	51° /37°	Sun and clouds	7%
FRI 12/9	46° /40°	Cooler; a little p.m. rain	55%	TUE 12/13	47° /36°	Times of sun and clouds	5%
SAT 12/10	50° /41°	Rain and drizzle possible	30%	WED 12/14	58° /42°	Showers around; not as cool	64%
SUN 12/11	51° /41°	Cloudy, a shower in the p.m.	45%	THU 12/15	55° /38°	Periods of rain	70%

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Grasso: 'A Very Positive Direction' for Calvert



Commissioner-Elect Catherine Grasso

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

When Catherine Grasso is sworn in as county commissioner on Dec. 20, she will be the first woman on the board since Susan Shaw left office in 2014.

What's on her agenda for the first 100 days? "One of my goals was I really want a dialogue and a transparency be-

tween myself and my constituents," she said, adding, "(Delegate) Matt Morgan over in St. Mary's County has a great newsletter to report back to constituency what is going on in Annapolis. I'd like to be able to have a vehicle like that to let the people of Calvert County know what's going on, why certain decisions were made, what's good, what's a plus, what's a negative."

"I'm really striving for more transparency and anyone I talked to, that was really eye opening for me," she added.

She and the other two new commissioners met on Dec. 6 with County Administrator Mark Willis and department heads. But she has already done that during her campaign. "I met with Mr. Willis, over a month's time, I must have spent seven hours with him because I know that I'm not for high density growth. I know that I feel our infrastructure cannot sustain the direction we were going in. And I also know that the people of Calvert County did not like the direction we were going in. And that was discounted by previous boards of county commissioners."

So, she said, "I'm really excited that the five of us are heading in the direction that we are going to listen to the people. We're going to be more strategic with any decisions we make for the future of Calvert County, and to take into consideration what the people want."

So, she said she had those meetings because, "I knew what I was running on. But by the same token, I felt it would behoove me to find out what our different divisions are doing, what our organizational structure is, which is of course the citizens, then the commissioners."

She said, "What I found is we just have a great group of people working in county government."

Did she detect the need for any changes? She said, "I think that would be a little premature on my part. I think once I really get into it and put all the pieces together, if that's needed, then I will know."

She was pleased with the current board's recent decisions on adequate public facilities and town center boundaries. "I was very satisfied with that. One of the first things I need to do, and I probably will start on this even before I'm sworn in, is Dunkirk Town Center appears to be status quo as we speak, but I know there are a few things like behind where Medart Gallery is, there are poles there, and I know something's going in there, and I want an accounting of what's left for Dunkirk."

"I just really, really am thrilled with this board and I think it's a very positive direction for the people of Calvert County," Grasso concluded.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Calvert Students Selected for General Assembly Page Program

For a consecutive year in a row, Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) high school students were selected to serve as pages for the 2023 Maryland General Assembly (MGA) in Annapolis. Hayden Kelly, Huntingtown High School senior, and Aidan Herche, Calvert High School senior, will represent Calvert County during the legislative session from January 11, 2023 – April 10, 2023.

Calvert High School senior Taylor Byrd was selected as an alternate.

"This is a highly competitive program," shared Superintendent Dr. Andraé Townsel. "We are extremely proud of our students. This program requires an extensive knowledge of government

as well as excellent communication and leadership skills," continued Dr. Townsel.

This year's program will be in-person and offers students the opportunity to keep bill books up to date, distribute materials and messages to legislators, and assist visitors.

Begun in 1970 by House Speaker Thomas Hunter Lowe and approved by the Maryland State Board of Education, the MGA Page Program is designed to interest youth in government, foster leadership, and provide students with worthwhile experience in the Maryland General Assembly.

Calvert County Bus Service Unavailable on Thursday, Dec. 8

Calvert County bus service will be unavailable on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2022, while the Department of Community Resources, Public Transportation Division holds in-house bus service training for all drivers. Regular routes and schedules will resume Friday, Dec. 9. Residents may direct their questions to Public Transportation at 410-535-1600, ext. 2360, or transportation@calvert-countymd.gov.

The Public Transportation Division serves the transportation needs of the general public, older adults and individuals with disabilities. The county provides eight fixed routes and four demand-response/para-transit routes to link residents with major shopping, medical and employment areas, as well as with public services available in Prince Frederick. Learn more at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/Transportation.

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Mark Cox: 'Real Excited' About Becoming Commissioner

Hopes to Tackle Permit Issues Early in Term

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer



Commissioner-Elect Mark Cox

"Everybody is real excited. They're real excited for the new board," said Commissioner-Elect Mark Cox after meeting with county staff. "The continuity with the new board coming in, they're very excited. We have had nothing but positive feedback, myself and the other two."

Although Cox will be a newcomer to elective office, he said he's been around politics all his life. He observed, "I've been in politics, and I've been in county government and getting permits and so by experiencing some issues just like our citizens have on the length of time it's taking for some of these permits. So, I'm excited to get in there and talk some of these issues out."

Easing the permit burden will thus be on his agenda for the first 100 days. He said, "We are going to talk about the permits. We are going to talk about some of the software programs. I know 'Workday' is going to be implemented shortly. So, there's a lot of talk about that software program. There's a lot of buzz

on the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) projects that are coming down the pike."

He added, "The current blueprint (for education) is coming down. I'm anxious to get with the new school board. I have not met with (Superintendent) Dr. Townsel yet, but I am excited to meet with him."

The current board made some 11th-hour major decisions regarding reducing the size for some town centers and creating an expanded adequate public facilities program. He was pleased with the actions. "Yes. I am excited about that. I was at both of the hearings. We are taking in consideration now with the public facility plans -- the 911, public safety and also the roads and sewers and the schools. So, everything has to be looked at when we talk about growth."

Cox and the other two new commissioners along with new sheriff Ricky Cox will be sworn in on Dec. 20 at 10 a.m. at the College of Southern Maryland. They will not attend their first meeting until after the first of the year.

One of their first jobs will be working on the budget for the next fiscal year. Cox considers himself to be a fiscal conservative. "Absolutely. The pie is only so big, and we have a lot of departments who have some good ideas for expansion. We are going to have to prioritize our list. And, the other thing, with fuel and everything going up and vehicles going up, it's going to be some tough decisions in front of us."

Cox, a farmer, was asked if he would be taking to the table any issues from the farming community. He said, "Absolutely. We have the program with the TDRs (transfer of development rights) and that was funded well in the last budget in FY 22."

The three new commissioners attended an orientation from County Administrator Mark Willis and department heads on Tuesday, Dec. 6.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Celebrating 41 years of Christmas Walk

Solomons Christmas Walk

Saturday, December 10th, 2022

Solomons Riverwalk Christmas Lights: Installed and decorated by the US Navy Sailors from Pax River Naval Air Station.

Solomons Gazebo Christmas Tree: The tree decorated by the US Navy Sailors from Pax River Naval Air Station.

Parade led by SVRS Fire Dept: At 5pm with Gospel Business Men Fellowship in America Southern Maryland Chapter. PHS Cheer squad, Solomons Steelers, MCMS Pom Pom squad, and A Time to Dance.

Solomons Lighted Boat Parade: Organized by SIYC, the Lighted Boat Parade starts at SYC at 6:15pm and arrives at riverwalk approx. 7:15pm.

Solomons Best Decorated Houses and Businesses: Photos up on SBA FB and voted on by public. Opens 12/1 closes 12/19. Theme red poinsettias

Santa Gazebo Mailbox: Letters published by BHHS PenFed Realty on SBA Face Book from 12/1 to 12/20. Note on letter if you do not want letter FB.

More Entertainment:

4:00 pm - Carolers begin spreading cheer at the Solomons Victorian Inn. All welcome

4:00 pm - 7:30 pm: Solomons Mission Center Free professionally edited photo taken of you children with Santa

4:30 pm - 4:45 pm: Gazebo, dancers from A Time to Dance

4:30 pm - 7:00 pm: Ggazebo PHS Jazz Band

Vendors: Spin it Again Sam, swamp Witch Metals, Achterbery Acres, Scentsy and more!

SPONSORS

Calvert Marine Museum: Free 6 - 9pm. Live music, hot chocolate & cookies, crafts for kids, photos with Santa and the otter, Museum store open.

Solomons Victorian Inn: Open House and snacks

Blue Heron Inn: Decorated open house. Great for watching boat parade!

No Thyme To Cook: See what they are up to. it's always delicious!

BHHS PenFed Realty: Posting Santa's letters, see above

Tiki Bar: Free Public Parking at Tiki Bar Public Parking, 112 Maltby St, Solomons

SMECO: Thank you SMECO for putting up lights in the Plaza again this year

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Art Center: Garden in Lights Show see Website, www.annmariegarden.org/annmarie2/ for tickets.

Blue Shell Gifts & Decor: Beautiful Gifts, decorations & good cheer

Southern Maryland Sailing Association: Open house at 5:30, hot cider & cookies, kids boat building and sailing in kids pool

Carmen's Gallery: Art gallery, abstract art by artist/owner Carmen Lee Nance Gambrill

Key to Map

1. Solomons Victorian Inn
 2. Tiki Bar - Free Parking
 3. No Thyme To Cook
 4. Blue Heron Inn
 5. SIYC
 6. Carmen's Gallery
 7. Blue Shell Gifts & Decor
 8. SMSA Sailing Assoc
 9. BHHS PenFed Realty
 10. Solomons Mission Center
 11. Calvert Marine Museum
 12. SVRS Fire Department
 13. Annmarie Sculpture Gardens & Art Center
- Blue Lines: Carolers Route
Green Lines: Parade Route
Red Lines: Lighted Boat Parade Route
Gazebo: Decorated Christmas Tree, Santa's Mail Box & Entertainment



Further updates here:

<https://solomonsmaryland.com/events/signature-events/solomons-christmas-walk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/solomonsbusinessassoc>



Ireland: 'I'm Really Going to Enjoy It'

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer



Commissioner-Elect Todd Ireland

Calvert County Commissioner-Elect Todd Ireland, along with the two other newcomers to the board, attended an orientation on Dec. 6 conducted by County

Administrator Mark Willis and department heads. After the session, Ireland told The County Times, "It was extremely informative."

Ireland explained, "The department heads actually all made videos and after they showed a video that basically outlined what their specific department does and who did liaison with (us), they all spoke on their budget. It was very informative. I learned a lot today."

He said, "I did talk to some of them during the campaign. In fact, it really helped me with talking points for forums."

Ireland is as positive about being commissioner now as he was the day he filed. "The campaign was something new. It was definitely a challenge getting to this point. Now, we're kind of switching gears. It's going to continue to be a challenge, but I'm excited about it. I really am. Today, sitting there talking to department heads and listening to them, it really gets the gears turning. I had several questions for them, so many that I'm actually going to have to meet with them individually to get some answers. But I really am looking forward to it. There's going to be good days and bad days, just like everything else. But I think all in all,

I'm really going to enjoy it. I really do."

Ireland is expecting his fellow at-large commissioner Buddy Hance to be re-elected president of the board for a third year when they convene for their first meeting early next year. "He's got the most experience, and I think that it's only right that he stay in there as president," he said.

Ireland added, "We're all going in green, so to speak, and we have a lot to learn. All three of us do. Under Buddy's leadership, I think that we can learn a lot. I think he does a great job running meetings. I attended the majority of the meetings since I started my campaign, and I watched how things have been run, so that when I do get there, I wasn't going to be shell shocked."

The budget, Ireland says, will be their prime objective for their first 100 days. He noted, "The budget is going to be a huge learning process for us all. We're going to probably spend from January until June adopting that budget and making the necessary changes and make sure that we can have a balanced budget."

He added, "Outside of the budget, like I said during my campaign, there's a lot of things really, but I want to have that relationship with the school board.

I think that's extremely important. I got to meet the superintendent. I met him on a couple different occasions now, and when we spoke, we both said we're looking forward to working with one another. And I think that will hopefully increase. We need to have that relationship with the school board. There's never been a relationship with the school board in the county commissioners."

As to what form that dialogue will take, he said, "I don't know. As soon as I get sworn in, I want to actually sit down and talk to the superintendent and say, 'This is what I've seen in the past and what can we do to change this?'"

Of the current board's recent decisions on reducing the size of some town centers and expanding the adequate public facilities regulations, Ireland said, "I am on board with what they're trying to do, but that's just the beginning of it. Now they actually have to implement all the changes that they made the other night."

Ireland and the rest of the commissioner board will be sworn in on Dec. 20 at 10 a.m. at the College of Southern Maryland.

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Safe Nights Program to Open Dec. 11 Registration Now Available

Calvert County's annual Safe Nights program providing winter shelter for people without housing will run Dec. 11, 2022, through Feb. 26, 2023.

Safe Nights provides winter protection for Calvert County's homeless population by offering shelter in a clean and safe environment. Host shelters will provide a warm bed, breakfast, a bagged lunch and dinner. Shelter hours are 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., seven days a week.

To qualify, individuals must:

- Be without a fixed residence
- Show identification
- Show proof of Calvert County residency
- Be ambulatory and capable of self-care
- Be older than 18, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian
- Pass a background check
- Sign the guest shelter agreement

and agree to abide by its provisions

A one-time in-person registration is required each season. Walk-ins will not be accepted. For questions regarding specific criteria or for more guidance, contact Safe Nights of Calvert County at 443-486-8670.

Safe Nights is working with the Calvert County Health Department to safely operate with precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Program volunteers will provide instructions throughout program registration and participation.

Those in need of shelter before Safe Nights opens can receive assistance by contacting the Department of Social Services at 443-550-6900; the Department of Public Safety at 410-535-1600, option 6, during regular business hours; or the Calvert County Emergency Communications non-emergency line at 410-535-3491 after hours.

Nominate Exceptional Women in Calvert for the 2023 Outstanding Achievement Awards

Do you know a woman or girl who makes significant contributions to the local community? The Calvert County Commission for Women is now accepting nominations for its 2023 Outstanding Achievement Awards. Each year, the commission recognizes Calvert County women and girls who are models of outstanding achievement and have made significant contributions to our community.

The nomination form is available online at www.Calvert-Women.org. Completed nominations must be submitted no later than Dec. 15, 2022, by email to CalvertWomen@gmail.com.

There are four award categories:

- **Advocacy:** To honor a woman for outstanding leadership, courage, tenacity and effectiveness in supporting policies and practices that improve the lives of Calvert County women or girls.
- **Business Leadership:** To honor a woman for leadership and effectively implementing business practices that improve the economic status of Calvert County women or girls.
- **Service:** To honor a woman whose

service to community has improved the quality of life for Calvert County women or girls.

- **Woman of Tomorrow:** To honor a girl or young woman (age 20 or younger) for effective leadership in the field of advocacy, business or service to community. Note that the main criterion is impact on the local community, not academics.

To qualify for selection, a nominee must:

- Have been a resident of Calvert County for at least five years; and
- Be age 21 or older for the Advocacy, Business Leadership and Service awards and age 20 or younger for the Woman of Tomorrow.

The Commission for Women will honor awardees at the 20th annual Calvert County Women of the World (WOW) Awards Celebration on Saturday, March 12, 2023. The event will be held virtually from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in partnership with Calvert Library.

Honorees will receive individual proclamations highlighting their accomplishments and impact from the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners.



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Sixteenth Shop with a Cop Held



Calvert County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) deputies, along with troopers from the Maryland State Police (MSP), Prince George's County Police Department (PGPD), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and Maryland State Fire Marshalls, on Saturday, Dec. 3 participated in the 16th Annual Calvert Shop with a Cop event.

The Shop with a Cop program, sponsored by the Calvert Fraternal Order of Police and the Optimist Club of Calvert, joins underprivileged children with local police officers to purchase gifts for themselves and family members leading up to Christmas.

Saturday's events began with the children being chauffeured from their homes in patrol vehicles to Prince Frederick where they were treated to a delicious breakfast provided by Outback Steak-

house. Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus, and The Grinch were in attendance helping to spread Christmas cheer. After bellies were full, the children were escorted with lights and sirens to Walmart for a shopping spree to purchase gifts.

A huge thank you to Prince Frederick Volunteer Fire Department for hosting the officers, children, and volunteers at the firehouse to wrap presents. To finish the day, lunch was provided by Chick-Fil-A!

It was the perfect event to kick off the holiday season. A sincere thank you to Outback Steakhouse, Optimist Club of Calvert County, Calvert FOP, Walmart, Chick-fil-A Prince Frederick, Pros Fore Clothes Foundation, Children's Aid Inc., CCSO civilian staff, and numerous other community partners who helped make this day magical for everyone.

Hospice of the Chesapeake Announces New Board Members

Several prominent members of the community recently were appointed to the boards of directors of Hospice of the Chesapeake and its foundation.

John Belcher, Shelly Gross-Wade, Greg Kernan and Richard Wilder were elected to the Hospice of the Chesapeake Inc., Board. Belcher is founder and CEO of JMCB Enterprise Solutions, Gross-Wade is president and CEO of the Prince George's Financial Services Corporation, Kernan is vice chair of the Calvert County Planning Commission and past-president of Calvert Hospice, and Wilder is managing director of A. Neumann & Associates.

Amy Castleberry, Liz Freedlander, Maria Colucciello, Pat Taylor, Gene Deems and Peggy McKelly were elected to the Hospice of the Chesapeake Foundation Board. Castleberry is managing

director of Ziegler Investment Banking, Freedlander is the former executive director of Talbot Hospice, Colucciello is a dentist with West Annapolis Family Dentistry, Taylor is president of All Green Management, Deems is retired after serving as eGov and digital services manager for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and McKelly is retired after holding a number of executive positions with Computer Sciences Corporation.

Headquartered in Pasadena, Maryland, with local office in each county it serves, the nonprofit provides hospice and supportive care as well as grief services to residents of Anne Arundel, Calvert, Charles, and Prince George's counties. Hospice of the Chesapeake is honored to welcome these new board members in support of our mission.

Calvert County to Host Free Paper Shredding Events

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, will host free paper shredding events for county residents and businesses to help prevent identity theft by destroying confidential or sensitive documents.

The following shred event will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., rain or shine:

Saturday, Dec. 17 at Appeal Landfill located at 401 Sweetwater Road in Lusby

Proof of residency or business location is required. All paper must be removed from plastic bags and cardboard boxes prior to shredding. Paper clips and sta-

ples are acceptable. Binders and binder clips are not acceptable.

Businesses are allowed up to five banker boxes of paper per business (or the equivalent volume of five banker boxes in alternate containers). There is no limit for residents. Certificates of destruction will be provided if requested.

Shredding events are held monthly. For information about other recycling events, call the Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, at 410-326-0210 or visit www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/Recycle.



Claude Ronald Weems, 79



Claude Ronald Weems passed away peacefully at his home on December 4, 2022 in Port Republic, Maryland, at the age of 79.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Shirley Thompson Weems of Port Republic; his children Sandy Jones (Billy) of Saint Leonard; Steven (Jamie) of Saint Leonard and James of Port Republic. He is survived by his grandchildren Amy Barrett (Rob), Megan Michelle, and Tommy Buckmaster and Taylor, Kade, Jameson, Quinn and Emersyn Weems; and three great grandchildren Max, Cannon, and Charlotte.

Ronnie was predeceased by his parents Edward and Marie Weems of Saint Leonard, his brother Bobby of Huntingtown, and his mother and father-in-law Mary and Tommy Thompson of Saint Leonard.

Ronnie was born in Saint Leonard at his family home. He grew up helping

his father at the family liquor store and gas station. Ronnie graduated from Calvert High School in 1961 and was voted Most Talkative his senior year, which he lived up to throughout his life.

Ronnie became a cable splicer with C & P Telephone Company. He was an avid farmer, hunter, fisherman and businessman all his life. He fondly recalled traveling to the Caribbean, Outer Banks, Scotland and Canada. Ronnie lived and worked hard his entire life to support his wife and family. Ronnie will be remembered for his fun, wild and crazy personality and love of all holidays.

Services will be held at Rausch Funeral Home in Lusby, MD. The family will welcome visitors from 4-7 p.m. on Wednesday, December 7, followed by a brief service at 7:00 p.m. Interment will be private.

The family would like to send their sincere appreciation to Hospice of the Chesapeake for their compassionate care of Ronnie. In lieu of sending flowers please consider donating to Hospice of the Chesapeake.

Hospice of the Chesapeake
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CALVERT SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

During the week of November 28 – December 4, 2022, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,463 calls for service throughout the community.

Damaged Property: 22-69544

On November 29, 2022, Deputy R. Jones responded to the 5000 block of Long Beach Drive in St. Leonard, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised sometime on Nov. 28, unknown suspect (s) shot the front of the residence with a BB or pellet gun causing damage to the window pane. The estimated value of the damaged property is unknown at this time.

Damaged Property: 22-69476

On November 29, 2022, Deputy R. Jones received a report of property destruction. Investigation revealed sometime between 12:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Nov. 26, an unknown suspect (s) caused damage to the victim's vehicle parked in the 1600 block of Mint Court in Prince Frederick. Deputy Jones observed the windshield to be cracked and the vehicle's paint to be chipped. The estimated value of the damaged property is \$1,000.00.

Damaged Property: 22-70354

On December 3, 2022, Deputy Hendrickson responded to the 11700 block of Cornfield Drive in Lusby, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised her garage door glass window panes had been shattered. The estimated value of the damaged property is \$100.00.

Theft: 22-69203

On November 28, 2022, DFC Grieron responded to the Beach Elementary construction site located at 7900 Bay-side Road in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed sometime between 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 23 and 6:30 a.m. on Nov. 28, an unknown suspect (s) entered a locked shipping container on site and stole \$8,000.00 worth of copper fittings.

Theft: 22-69320

On November 28, 2022, Deputy Hendrickson responded to the 800 block of Golden West Way in Lusby, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised his front Maryland registration plate was stolen. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$25.

Theft: 22-69776

On November 30, 2022, Deputy Claggett responded to the Safeway parking lot located at 10276 Southern Maryland Blvd. in Dunkirk, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised upon returning to her vehicle, she discovered the driver's side window had been smashed out and personal belongings had been stolen from inside the vehicle. Among the stolen property were: 2 Microsoft Surface Pro laptops, a wallet, a DOD CAC card, and other personal items. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$1930.00.

Theft: 22-70513

On December 4, 2022, DFC Gough responded to the 400 block of Deer Lane in Lusby, for the report of a theft from a vehicle. The complainant advised sometime between 7 p.m. on Dec. 3 and 9:15 a.m. on Dec. 4, an unknown suspect (s) entered two of the victim's vehicles parked in the driveway of the residence. The victim discovered doors to both vehicles open and personal items from the glovebox and center console in disarray throughout the vehicle. A \$20.00 bill was discovered to have been stolen. No other property was reported stolen or missing.

ARRESTS

On December 4, 2022, Deputy Contic initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle with lights and sirens activated for an equipment violation at 3150 N. Solomons Island Road (Tractor Supply) in Huntingtown. The vehicle came to a complete stop on the shoulder of the roadway and then continued northbound on Solomons Island Road at a high rate resulting in a vehicle pursuit. Investigation revealed the vehicle was stolen out of Anne Arun-

del County. The stolen vehicle continued northbound on Solomons Island Road at speeds over 100 mph through a construction zone and a business district, where it continued to drive erratically. During the pursuit, the stolen vehicle veered off the roadway and struck a tree. The vehicle became inoperable in the 5800 block of Southern Maryland Blvd. in Lothian. All occupants bailed out from the vehicle in an attempt to flee. A foot pursuit began across both north and southbound lanes of Rt. 4. **Trevor Albert Richardson**, 20 of Halethorpe, MD, was apprehended by M/DFC Aurich. Maryland State Police helicopter was conducting a scan of the vicinity utilizing heat sensor equipment and observed a heat signature in a barn in the 5800 block of Greenock Road in Lothian. Deputy Contic located and apprehended **Michael Maurice Tilghman**, 23 of Glen Burnie, under a tarp inside

the barn. Tilghman was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with First-Degree Assault, Unlawful Taking and Theft of a Motor Vehicle, Theft: \$1,500 to under \$25,000, Resisting Arrest, Reckless Endangerment from Motor Vehicle and Fleeing and Eluding.

Richardson was also transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Unlawful Taking and Theft of a Motor Vehicle, Theft: \$1,500 to under \$25,000, Resisting Arrest, and Fleeing and Eluding. Charges are pending against a third occupant of the stolen vehicle. This case remains under investigation.



Deputies Seek Identity of Theft Suspects

The Calvert County Sheriff's Office continues to investigate the theft of two dirt bikes that occurred in the 2100 block of Timeless Drive in St. Leonard, on Saturday, Nov. 26, 2022, at approximately 2:38 a.m.

Investigation revealed unknown suspects stole two dirt bikes: a 2023 Honda CRF-450R (valued at \$9,599.00) and a 2022 Honda CRF-250 (valued at \$5,500.00) from the truck bed of a vehicle parked in the driveway of the residence.

Photos of the theft suspects have been posted on the sheriff's office Facebook page. Anyone with information in regards to the theft or the identity of the theft suspects, is asked to please contact Detective W. McDowell at wyatt.mcdowell@calvertcountymd.gov or (443)684-4625.



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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.

Thursday, Dec. 8

Tween/Teen Anime Night

Calvert Library Fairview Branch, Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings, 6-7:30 p.m.

A fun night of anime and manga. Tweens/Teens in grades 6-12 invited. Come hang out with friends and other fans of anime. We will watch anime, talk about our favorite manga and sample some books, use art supplies for anime creations, and try some Japanese snacks! 6th through 12th graders welcome, 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Drop-in Craft Night: Tween/Teen Crafts

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

Make and take a craft. We supply all the craft supplies you need to make something nifty. Great for gifting (or, keep for yourself). Bring a friend and make some art! No registration required. Ages 10-17 are invited. There will be snacks, 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

Zoom & in person at Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 6:30-8 p.m.

Get tips and support from other caregivers. Facilitated by Jeannette Findley & JC Hooker. Please register to receive the Zoom link., 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Friday, December 9

On Pins & Needles

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 1-4 p.m.

Bring your quilting, needlework, knitting, crocheting or other project for an afternoon of conversation and shared creativity. For library resources on this topic, click here, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Saturday, Dec. 10

17th Annual Christmas Market

All Saints Episcopal Church Parish Hall, corner of Rts 2 & 4, Sunderland, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Expert craftsmen with sensational gifts for your holiday giving, homemade gourmet cocoa and Glühwein, music, home-baked goods and lunch make this Christmas Market the place to be. Bring your red or green boot mug from previous years to buy beverage refills. Rain, snow or shine! Free admission & parking. Proceeds benefit parish & community projects.

Solomons Christmas Walk

Solomons, 6 - 9 p.m.

Calvert Martine Museum is open and FREE to the public. Enjoy musical entertainment, Santa, the Otter mascot, holiday crafts, and shopping in the Museum Store. Santa's Coffee House will be open with complimentary hot cocoa, coffee, hot tea, and holiday cookies. Museum Members save 20 percent in the Museum Store during the walk and all weekend.

Texas Hold'Em

St. Leonard Vol Rescue Squad, 200 Calvert Beach Rd, St. Leonard, 6 p.m.

\$85.00 buy-in for \$20k in chips. Rounds are 20 minutes each. Doors open at 5 p.m., BYOB, food and sodas will be available for purchase. See www.slvfd.org for more info. Chance for 50/50 included in your buy-in. Tables deal their own cards, dealers are not provided. Late Entries permitted until end 1st break, approx. 7:10 pm cut off. No rebuys. ATM on site.

Poetry Share

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 10:30 a.m.-12:3 p.m.

Join fellow poets and poetry-lovers to share poetry in a casual open mic-type setting. If you'd like to stay to workshop your poetry afterwards, you are welcome, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Learn Mahjongg

Calvert Library Southern Branch, 13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons, 1-3 p.m.

Games are a great way to keep your brain sharp while having fun! Join us! No registration. Want to learn Mahjongg? Games are a great way to keep your brain sharp while having fun! Join us! No registration. Interested in reading about Mahjongg? Take a look at what the library has., 410-326-528. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

MakePlayLearn

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch, 3819 Harbor Road, Chesapeake Beach, 2-3 p.m.

Take building and creativity to a whole new level at the library. We provide the space, art supplies, and building toys. You bring the imagination, 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Monday, Dec. 12

JobSource Mobile Career Center

Calvert Library Fairview Branch, Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings, 1-4:00 p.m.

Stop by to visit the JobSource Mobile Career Center for your job search needs! Get job counseling and resume help, search for jobs and connect with Southern Maryland JobSource. This 38' mobile center features 11 computer

workstations, smart board instructional technology, satellite internet access, exterior audio visual and broadcasting capabilities; state-of-the-art workforce applications and connectivity for wireless mobile device access, 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tuesday, Dec. 13

Explorers

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

Explore the world without ever leaving the library. Join us each month to "visit" a new country and learn all about its culture, traditions and language. Grades 3-5. Registration Required. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

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

Children that need some extra help with reading build confidence by reading with teens! With snacks, games, and reading incentives! Does your K-5th grader struggle with reading confidence? This program offers a safe and welcoming space for them to practice reading to older kids service learning hour for school!, 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Astronomy Night

Calvert Library Fairview Branch, Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings, 7-8 p.m.

Come see what the night sky has to offer in the field behind Fairview. Learn about the equipment used to view the sky from the Astronomy Club of Southern Maryland. All ages welcome. Outdoor only event, weather permitting, 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wednesday, Dec. 14

Brain Games: Mahjongg, Scrabble & More

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Hope to make your Scrabble skills killer? Games are a great way to keep your brain sharp while having fun! Join us! Please register, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

Calvert Library Southern Branch, 13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons, 3-4 p.m.

Facilitated by Charles Harrell and Dennis Poremski of the Alzheimer's Association. Alzheimer's Association caregiver support groups, conducted by trained facilitators, are a safe place for caregivers, family and friends of per-

sons with dementia to develop a support system, exchange practical information on caregiving challenges and possible solutions, talk through issues and ways of coping, share feelings, needs and concerns and learn about community resources. For library resources on this topic, click here, 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

ONGOING

Annmarie Garden in Lights

Annmarie Garden, 13470 Dowell Road, Solomons, MD 20688, Nov. 25-Jan. 1 (closed some evenings); 5-9 p.m./nightly

Dazzling light show - festive exhibits - holiday shopping - food trucks. Admission: ADVANCE TIMED-ENTRY TICKETS REQUIRED! Members FREE (must reserve tickets); Non-members \$15; Ages 2 & under FREE; SNAP card holders, call 410-326-4640 to reserve your reduced price tickets

Santa Sundays @ Annmarie Garden In Lights

Annmarie Garden, 13470 Dowell Road, Solomons, MD 20688; Nov. 27 and Dec. 4, 11 and 18; 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Join us for an evening with Santa at Annmarie Garden In Lights. Santa will be greeting guests from the Front Patio of the Arts Building; in the event of inclement weather, Santa will greet guests in the Arts Building.

Guests will be able to take a family photo with Santa and other holiday characters.

Please note that Santa may take warm-up breaks at 6:00-6:15 and 7:00-7:15. Thank you for your understanding. This is a first-come, first-served activity.

Included with cost of admission.

Holiday Magic
ArtWorks@7th, 8905 Chesapeake Avenue (near 2nd street), North Beach; December 1, 2022 - January 1, 2023
Open House December 3, 1-4 p.m.

Holiday Train Display @ Annmarie Garden In Lights

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center, 5-9 p.m., through Dec.14 in the Arts Building.

Guests of all ages will delight in this beautiful train display by George Leah, Jr., and his holiday helpers! It's a charming exhibit that will spark memories of Christmases past and delight those new to model trains.

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.

Thu, Dec 8, 2022

Queen of Hearts—LVRSA

Action Lounge and Billiards
25470 Point Lookout Road
Leonardtown
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Queen of Hearts Every Thursday Night at Action Lounge and Billiards. Queen of Heart ticket sales from 6pm to 745pm. Drawing at 8 pm. You must be present to win. Take your chance at Pull Tabs while you wait for the drawing. Instant win up to \$250.

Bring your family, bring your friends, enjoy some dinner, some drinks, enjoy some good company.

All of this is to Benefit the Leonardtown Volunteer Rescue Squad Auxiliary. Please share to get the word out.

will run from 7am—7pm on December 9th on the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary Facebook page. Great opportunity for unique items for gift giving! fb.me/e/2eM0DTkzl

Sat, Dec 10, 2022

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Annual Christmas Bazaar

37707 New Market Turner Rd.
Mechanicsville
8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Come join us for our Annual Christmas Bazaar! There will be Vendors, Make & Take Crafts for Children, White Elephant Table, Bake Sale, Food Available for Purchase, Christmas Music, Raffles & more!

So. Md. Farm & Country Christmas Auction

Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn
26689 Laurel Grove Road
Mechanicsville
9a.m. to 4 p.m.

A Southern Maryland Community Auction event that will feature locally crafted live, evergreen wreaths and centerpieces, locally raised Poinsettias; hand painted signs from local sign painter Donnie Poe; framed prints from local

artist Mary Lou Troutman; Handcrafted Quilts; locally made furniture and crafts (some to be sold to benefit Leonardtown Volunteer Rescue Squad Aux.; new tack, tools, toys and more. A community auction event that showcases many local growers, producers and craftsmen. Thanks to all who help support our local community. Auction Preview and Early Bidder Registration will be on Friday, December 9th from 3 pm to 7 pm. Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn, 26689 Laurel Grove Road, Mechanicsville, MD 08:00

Holiday Bazaar

Newtowne Theater
21744 South Coral Drive
Lexington Park
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Join the Newtowne Players as we host our first annual Holiday Bazaar!

Sun, Dec 11, 2022

Gingerbread Bash

Lexington Park United Methodist Church
21760 Great Mills Road
Lexington Park
Noon to 2 p.m.

A FREE fun and interactive experience designed for the whole family! We're going to build a gingerbread nativity while celebrating the birth of Jesus. More than that, you'll hear the Christmas story from the Bible, sing songs, play games, and discover the good news of Jesus through candy canes. It's a truly sweet way for your family to celebrate the birth of Jesus!

Registration required.

Please register at:

www.eventbrite.com/e/gingerbread-bash-tickets-476139033667?aff=ebdshpsearchautocomplete

Mon, Dec 12, 2022

Red-Cross Blood Drive @ Hall-2nd Dist., Drayden Rd.

2nd District VFD & RS, Company 6
45245 Drayden Rd.
Valley Lee
1:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

For more information, or to schedule your life saving donation, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit www.red-crossblood.org/ to download the blood donor app.

Social Distancing / Mask may be required.

Fri, Dec 9, 2022

ALVFD Online Holiday Auction

Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary Facebook Page
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The Auxiliary of the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department is hosting an online auction featuring holiday gifts and seasonal items! The online auction

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Farm & Country Christmas Auction

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Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn
26689 Laurel Grove Road - Mechanicsville, MD

Saturday, December 10, 2022 - 9 am

Auction Preview on Friday from approximately 3 pm to 7 pm.
Handcrafted Live, Evergreen Wreaths & Centerpieces; Poinsettias (various sizes); Handcrafted Quilts; Crafts & Furniture; Locally-Made Outdoor Poly Furniture; Custom-Made Maryland-Themed Benches & Other Items by local craftsmen (some being sold to benefit Leonardtown Vol. Rescue Squad Aux.); New Tools; Valley 3' Wind Mill; Toys & Misc. Items; Tri-Cycle w/ Wagon; Milwaukee M18Fuel Leaf Blower; Baked Goods; Apples; Custom Painted Signs by Donnie Poe; Framed Prints by M. L Troutman; New Tack (Buckets, Lead Ropes, Grooming Items); & More.

Terms: Cash, Good Check, Credit Cards Accepted. Ten percent buyer's premium, MD Sales Tax.

Consignments of new, quality items now being accepted.

A local community auction that showcases & supports our local craftsmen & producers. Thank you for supporting our community!

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

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ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER



Assault- On November 20, 2022, Dep. Walker responded to the 46000 block of Adams Court in Lexington Park, for the reported assault. Investigation determined Shaine Allon McCarter, age 29 of Lexington Park, pushed the victim to the floor and struck the victim in the face. McCarter was arrested and charged with Assault 2nd Degree.

Burglary- On November 20, 2022, DFC Fenwick responded to the 25000 block of Loveville Road in Mechanicsville, for the reported burglary. Investigation determined Darlene Marie Buckler, age 24 of Mechanicsville, entered the

victim's residence without permission. The victim told Buckler to leave several times and Buckler refused. Buckler was arrested and charged with Burglary 4th Degree and Trespass: Private Property.



Possession of Weapon While Confined- On November 21, 2022, Dep. Palmer responded to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, for the reported

hidden weapon. A witness advised correctional staff of a hidden weapon inside one of the dayrooms. Nicholas Dangelo Williams, age 25 of no fixed address, was found to have a sharpened piece of metal with a makeshift handle on his person. The weapon was recovered and Williams was charged with Possession of Weapon While Confined and Possession of Contraband at Place of Confinement.



age 24 of Mechanicsville, entered the

Identity Needed for Vandalism Suspects



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the two men pictured in a vandalism investigation. On Saturday, Nov. 26, 2022, at 7:43 pm, the two suspects arrived at Cheseldine Car Wash in California in a Honda van. The two men then damaged several latches on the business' vacuum cleaners. The blue van has a silver-colored hood.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspects or this incident is

asked to call Deputy Ryan Campbell at 301-475-4200, ext. 78157 or email ryan.campbell@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 60691-22

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

Identity Needed in Theft Investigation



Ford F-250 truck, last seen heading southbound on Three Notch Road.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect or this incident is asked to call Deputy Paul Rodriguez at 301-475-4200, ext. 78139 or email paul.rodriguez@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 57870-22

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the man pictured in a theft investigation. On Thursday, Nov. 10, 2022, at 9:21 pm, the suspect entered the Birdie's convenience store in Mechanicsville and asked for a carton of menthol cigarettes. The suspect then pretended to pay for the carton with a gift card from another store, grabbed the carton and fled the store in a white

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


Philip H. Dorsey III
Attorney at Law

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EMAIL: phild@dorseylaw.net



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Editor's Note

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

The County Times runs complimentary obituaries as submitted by funeral homes and readers. We run them in the order we receive them. Any submissions that come to guyleonard@countytimes.net after noon on Mondays may run in the following week's edition.

In Remembrance

Frances Ruth Spalding Drury, 98



Frances Ruth Spalding Drury, "Ruth", 98, of Ridge, MD, passed away on November 29, 2022 in Ridge, MD. Born on August 5, 1924 in Hollywood, MD, she was the daughter of the late Louise Raley Spalding and the late George Felix Spalding. Ruth was the loving wife of the late Donald Franklin Drury, Sr., whom she married in St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ridge, MD, on June 23, 1943, and who preceded her in death on November 1, 1989. She is survived by her children, Donald F. Drury, Sr., of Hollywood, MD, Carolyn D. Russell of Ridge, MD, Joseph L. Drury of Dameron, MD, and Thomas R. Drury of Ridge, MD, her brother Jimmy Spalding, 13 grandchildren, 26 great grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild. Ruth was preceded in death by her siblings Roy Spalding, Aloysius Spalding, Brownie Spalding, Freddy Spalding, Maryanna Clark, and Bobby Spalding.

Ruth was a lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident and graduated from Eastern

High School. She was a Payroll Specialist for the U.S. Government for 30 years, retiring in December 1979. Ruth was also the owner of Drury's Marina for 30 years, and sold ceramics at the Old Mill Country Store.

The family will receive friends on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 from 5:00 PM to 6:00 PM with prayers recited at 6:00 PM at St. Michael's Catholic Church, Ridge, MD, where a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 11:00 AM with Father Peter Giovanoni officiating. Interment will follow at the church cemetery. Serving as pallbearers will be Christopher Drury, Russell Camaioni, Jeffrey Drury, Timothy Russell, Daryl Russell, and Michael Drury. Honorary pallbearers will be Nik Yamaner, Isaiah Turner, Aiden Drury, Connor Drury, Raub Camaioni, Daniel Russell, Liam Reilly, Isaac Smith, Will Smith, Gavin Brizek, Frankie Russell, Michael Gioia, Christian Love, Jacob Russell, and Matthew Price.

Contributions may be made to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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

Arrangements provided by the Matting-

ley-Gardiner Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.A., Leonardtown, MD.

Barbara Lee McCall, 76



Barbara Lee McCall (Schlosser), 76, of Hollywood, MD ended her battle on November 20, 2022 at Hospice House of St. Mary's surrounded by her loving family.

She was born July 2, 1946 in Washington D.C. She grew up and lived most her life in Clinton, MD. On August 7, 1965 she married her beloved long time childhood best friend Michael McCall. With the foundation of that friendship, they celebrated over 57 years of marriage. It was noticeably recognized that Barbara was a loving and dedicated wife, mother, and Grammy. She is survived by her two daughters, Michelle Stathers (Cliff) of Hollywood, MD and Melanie Hughes (Chris) of Hampstead, NC. She was incredibly proud and always involved with her six grandchildren, Katelyn and Jamie Stathers and Christopher, Nicholas, Kiley, and Megan Hughes. Barbara is also survived by her brother Chris Schlosser of Clinton, MD. Her door was always open for anyone with a smile that welcomed everyone. She always adored all of her family, numerous nieces and nephews, as well as an abundance of friends.

A celebration for life will be planned at a later date after the Holiday Season.

In lieu of flowers Memorial Contributions may be made in her name to the Hospice House of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

Condolences may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com

Ralph Edward Sullivan, 66



Ralph Edward Sullivan, 66 of Great Mills, MD passed away on November 29, 2022 at home.

He was born on March 8, 1956 in Washington, D.C. to John Sullivan and Frances (Brooks) Sullivan.

Ralph graduated from Suitland High School Class of 1974. After moving from Waldorf, Maryland he lived in St. Mary's County, Maryland for the last 30 years. He worked as a Computer Technician for 30 years. He enjoyed all sports and was an avid Baltimore Orioles and Washington Redskins fan and watching old westerns.

He is survived by his former wife, Sharon Sullivan, his children, Steven Sullivan (Jessany) of Great Mills, MD and Erica Powell (Jessie) of Hollywood, MD and two grandchildren.

At this time will be no services.

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

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A View From The BLEACHERS



THE OTHER FOOTBALL

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

CNN published an opinion piece by John Avlon last week titled “The tide is turning against autocracy.” In it, Avlon argued that democracy - beaten down, battered and bruised in recent years - was regaining ground against the global spread of autocracy. His evidence of a weakening autocratic grip included on-going protests in Iran, recent uprisings in China against President Xi Jinping’s zero-COVID policy and Vladimir Putin’s miscalculations in Ukraine - underestimating Ukrainian resistance, the West’s support of Ukraine’s cause and the reaction within Russia itself.

There are indications of renewed democratic strength here at home too. After the unprecedented, violent and baseless internal attack on the 2020 election results, our democracy wavered. But leadership rose from both sides of the aisle, some on the right knowingly sacrificing seats in Congress, to ensure the will of the people was carried out. There are signs of further progress: the 2022 mid-term election results suggest that wannabe autocrat Donald Trump’s dangerous spell and destructive want of power is losing support.

Avlon’s piece concluded with a prediction: 2022 will prove to be a pivot point where democracy, buoyed by bravery of people around the world, regained the advantage on autocracies. Let’s hope he’s right.

As I considered Avlon’s optimistic prose, international athletic competition, and the stage it provides for competing political, economic and social ideologies, came to mind. In 1936, the Olympic Games were held in Berlin, clouded by the rise and provocation of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi party. In 1968, African American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised fists on the medal stand in defiance of racial inequality. The 1972 Munich Games were marred by the deadly kidnapping of Israeli athletes by Palestinian militants. During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union traded Olympic boycotts - first the U.S. of the 1980 Moscow Games and then the Soviet Union of the 1984 Los Angeles Games.

With the 2022 Beijing Winter Games months in the rear-view, the FIFA World Cup offers the most convenient connection between international sports and Avlon’s democracy v. autocracy article. Before

launching into the first World Cup “View”, a few confessions. It will always be soccer to me, Americanized heathen that I am. And while I appreciate the players’ elite fitness, the attraction escapes me. Ninety-plus minutes of mostly undramatic scorelessness - a.k.a. nap time. But the issue is mine; the passion displayed by soccer fans around the globe leaves no doubt.

So, armed with Avlon’s opinions, I looked closer at this wildly popular game. The basic tenets of team sports are present on the pitch: trust, reliability and individual sacrifice for a common cause - hints they are at democratic principles. Selfishness and freelancing for individual good - sports code for autocracy - are strict no-noes.

But soccer brings much more to the consciousness.

Even to the untrained eye, and during the long pulse-reducing waits between scoring chances, the enormity of each game remains palatable. The World Cup’s competitive plot - this being the sport’s pinnacle and the unimaginable journey each player traveled to arrive at this moment - is omnipresent. But it is only half the story. The other, more significant component of this grand, worldwide quest is the burden carried by each player and team: to satisfy a national fan base whose passion (dangerously) approaches a religious fervor and to navigate a massive stage cohabited by competing ideologies.

In this World Cup, several teams protested host country Qatar’s oppression of the LGBTQ community and women’s rights, and the deplorable treatment of migrant workers (The Guardian reported over 6,500 deaths since 2010). And what team was more burdened than Iran? The Iranian players first refused to sing their national anthem in support of in-country protests of Iran’s autocratic regime, an act that put players and their families in peril; in the ultimate no-win situation, Iran’s loss to the United States was widely celebrated by fellow Iranians because of the national team’s synonymy with Iran’s leaders.

In America, we laud our football players for their toughness and perseverance, and rightfully so; but perhaps the bravest athletes, and those most responsible for supporting democratic values worldwide, play “the other football.”

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

The Tackle Box Fishing Report



Capt. Greg Buckner's party landed one of the first sea run stripers this season Saturday near Cedar Point. There are still plenty in the 24 to 30 inch range.

By Ken Lamb
Contributing Writer

The striper bite continues to be excellent. However, the colder temperatures are making the fish harder to find on any given day. The mouth of the Patuxent from Cedar Point to Little Cove Point has schools of stripers daily that may come up and break, attracting birds. The main body of fish have eased a little south in mid-bay near the Targets. They are going fast now, heading towards Point No Point, and will end up in the Triangle area between Point Lookout and Smith Point.

There are still rockfish in the Patuxent, breaking here and there from under the Solomon’s bridge to Fishing Point. These are 18-to-22-inch fish. Jiggers,

trollers, and casters do well when the fish decide to bite. There are some 30 inch plus fish for blind trollers with patience on the forty- and thirty-foot edges all up and down the Patuxent and Potomac.

The season ends on December 10th

for Maryland waters. The Potomac remains open until December 31. Two fish per day is the Potomac regulation with a 20 inch minimum. Schools of stripers are all up and down the Potomac in excellent size. There has been one sea-run fish reported up the bay near Cedar Point of about 40 inches. More arrivals of pre-spawn stripers will be here soon. There were breaking fish in the 30-inch range near Cornfield Point in the Potomac on Sunday evening. The domestic rock fish are now moving south to the mouth of the Potomac and will be active on their own schedule. You just have to hope you get there when they want to bite. Trollers and jiggers can load up in minutes on a good bite.

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PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION *News*

Santa Claus Visits Southern Maryland, Courtesy of the U.S. Navy



Families across Southern Maryland should be on the lookout as Adm. Santa Claus conducts pre-deployment mission planning over St. Mary's County on Dec. 15 from 2:30-4:30 p.m.

Regional residents who keep an eye on the skies have a chance to see Saint Nicholas, also known by call sign "Claus," flying with elves and other holiday helpers from Air Test and Evaluation Squadron (HX) 21 aboard a UH-1Y Huey helicopter. Children are advised to be on their best behavior as Claus spreads holiday cheer and conducts reconnaissance for his upcoming operations on Christmas Eve.

While exact flight plans are classified, Claus and the HX-21 crew will fly over local neighborhoods including the Patuxent River Beach Houses, Chesapeake Ranch Airport, Solomons Island, Town Creek, Esperanza Farms, St. Mary's County

Airport, Leonardtown, Wildewood, Chancellor's Run, Lexington Park, and Cedar Cove.

HX-21 is a component of Naval Test Wing Atlantic and Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division. Nicknamed the "Blackjacks," the squadron provides developmental flight test and evaluation for U.S. Navy and Marine Corps rotary-wing and tilt-rotor aircraft. NAS Patuxent River has been home to HX-21 since 1949.



The Parade of Imaginary Horribles

I have always followed the principle of figuring out the "parade of imaginary horribles" and planning for every possible contingency to ensure protection. The approach is as valid for financial planning as for estate planning.

In financial planning, you should always assume the horrible of losing your job and being without an income for at least a year. This means that, after you pay off your high cost consumer debt, the next step is to save enough money to allow you peace of mind even if you lose your job and don't find another for a year.

In estate planning, the horribles hit close to home and become much more personal. For example, no one with children wants to face the possibility that they will outlive their children and children do not want to think they will not outlive their parents. All too often, I am reminded that such horribles aren't so imaginary.

A married couple recently came to discuss their daughter's sudden recent illness and impending death at a young age. They are named as co-executors of their daughter's will. What I learned was that the daughter, who is unmarried and has no children, had named her siblings as beneficiaries on life insurance, pension funds, etc. She had not named her parents, assuming incorrectly that she would outlive them. The effect of this was that the parents, who co-signed on the daughter's student loan, were left without resources to pay off the student loan when the daughter died. Given the daughter's medical state, we could not remedy the situation by changing the beneficiary designations on her insurance or retirement accounts. Fortunately, however, the family is a loving one and the siblings will help the parents to pay off the student loan.

The lesson is that you can never assume you will outlive your parents. And, if you owe your parents money for student loans, mortgage assistance or whatever, make sure you have provided for the repayment of those loans when you die. A simple way to do this is to allocate a percentage of your life insurance, retirement funds, etc. to your parents to pay them back for the loans you have made when you die. If you are paying off those loans during your lifetime, you can always change your beneficiary designations when the loans are repaid.

Another not so imaginary horrible occurs when an inheritance is left to a person on disability. Thought must be given to the status of your beneficiary. If that person is disabled, an inheritance from you may cause the person to lose his or her disability payments. This is a far more common problem than we think. In this case, there is something that can be done to help. A "special needs trust" can be created for the disabled person. This is a trust created for the specific purpose of allowing a person receiving disability to continue to receive those benefits and also receive an inheritance. This type of trust must follow specific guidelines, one of which will return any assets left after the death of the disabled person to the State of Maryland to reimburse the state for making the disability payments. A special needs trust must be approved by the Maryland Attorney General's office.

What about the potential horrible of unforeseen consequences of a second marriage? I was thrilled for another client when he recently married after being a widower for several years. The issue was that the new wife had her own children from a prior marriage and didn't have a good relationship with the man's children. That meant that upon the man's death, he needed to take care of his children as well as his new wife and not leave everything to her. She also faced the same issue. Both husband and wife eventually decided to split each of their estates so that both sets of children would inherit a percentage upon the deaths of their parent, with the remainder going to each other.

Have you thought about the fact that your children may not get along after you die? If you have named all of them as executors, personal representatives or trustees, they are going to have to agree. If they don't get along, don't put them in such a position. Instead, name one of them to serve and appoint the others in sequence.

Of course, there are many other horribles that can arise. So long as you consider them and plan to take actions to protect yourself and your family in the event they actually happen, horribles can be used to help you figure things out and not to hurt you or your loved ones.

To learn more about estate planning, join me at a free seminar on the third Wednesday of every month at 11am in our offices at 8906 Bay Avenue, North Beach. Call 301-855-2246 to reserve your space. See you then.

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Mechanicsville CPA Filing Her Last Returns

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Julia Forbes, 78, who has long hung out her accounting business shingle on Three Notch Road helping customers with their taxes and financial concerns, says she will soon be retiring.

Forbes said she will be handling her clients' tax returns for the coming tax year but after that she will not be accepting any new ones.

She will continue to give clients records that they request as needed, Forbes said, but after the first few months of the new year she will be closing her doors.

"The Lord's been good to me," Forbes told The County Times. "I built this business from nothing and my people have been extremely good to me.

"I can't thank them enough for all the confidence they've put in me."

Forbes graduated from St. Mary's Academy—now part of St. Mary's Ryken High School in Leonardtown—in 1962 and took a job with the wealthy Dodge family, she said, who owned Cremona Farm, doing financial work for them. "I trusted them and they trusted me," Forbes said.

She went on to work for an insurance agent in Hughesville, she said, and also for the accounting firm of Edward Bur-



Julia Forbes

roughs before starting her own business in 1992.

"It just grew and grew and grew," Forbes said of her Mechanicsville based business where she also employs several other accountants and office staff.

Her skills in numbers and finance "helped my family get started in life while I was trying to get myself an education," Forbes said.

She also credits her education in parochial schools in St. Mary's as "giving me the interest and motivation to try and succeed in life."

She comes from a family where she is one of nine children.

Forbes said the county and her customers have been good to her for decades.

"I'm humbled and certainly grateful," Forbes said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Pet

OF THE WEEK

MEET LEO



"RESCUE—There's a reason God put a 'U' in the word!"

Hi, everybody, my name is Leo. Are you looking for a WHOLE LOTTA LOVE to keep you warm and toasty as winter settles in? Well, then you've hit the JACKPOT because I'm definitely ready to bestow ALL MY LOVE on you! I'm a 3 YEAR OLD, Doodle type who really enjoys going for walks and snacking on treats. I'm working to find my FOREVER FRIEND and I can't wait to meet YOU so email animalshelter@charlescountymd.gov to schedule an appointment to meet me ASAP! BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! When you choose to adopt from TCAS, you are literally saving a life.

To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Tri-County Animal Shelter Southern MD or view us on our website at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/tri-county-animal-shelter>

TRI-COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

Brian Ganz to Play First Full Piano Recital at New Dodge Performing Arts Center



Brian Ganz (Photo Credit: Jay Mallin)

St. Mary's College of Maryland Musician-in-Residence Brian Ganz will perform his first complete piano recital in the main auditorium of the new Nancy R. and Norton T. Dodge Performing Arts Center on the college campus. On Sunday, December 11 at 7pm he will perform a program to include works

of Bach, Beethoven, Debussy, Ravel and Chopin. The Dodge Performing Arts Center is at 47855 College Drive, St. Mary's City. The recital is free and open to the public. For more information, call (240) 895-4498 or visit <https://inside.smcm.edu/events/2022-12-06/brian-ganz-concert-december-11>.

"It's been a long time since I played a full length recital at the college with works of any composer but Chopin," Ganz said recently with a laugh. "As much as I adore the works of Chopin, it'll be good to branch out a bit. And Chopin lovers needn't worry... There will be plenty of Chopin on the program too!"

Ganz will begin the program with a transcription of the beloved Bach cantata movement known by the title "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." "Lovely as that title is," Ganz observed, "it isn't the title Bach gave it. I didn't know until recently that the true title is equally lovely: 'Jesus Remains My Joy.' Then I'll move on to one of my favorite Beethoven sonatas, the so-called 'Hunt Sonata,' Op. 31, No. 3, so named because the last movement is chock full of 'catch me if you can' high jinks. After intermission I'll explore two works the great French masters Debussy and Ravel composed on the theme of water, and then round out the program with some of

my favorite works of Chopin."

Ganz has appeared as soloist with such orchestras as the St. Petersburg Philharmonic, the National Philharmonic, the Baltimore and the National Symphonies, the City of London Sinfonia, and L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo. He has performed in many of the world's major concert halls and has played under the baton of such conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Mstislav Rostropovich, Pinchas Zukerman, Jerzy Semkow and Yoel Levi. A critic for La Libre Belgique wrote of Ganz's work: "We don't have the words to speak of this fabulous musician who lives music with a generous urgency and brings his public into a state of intense joy."

St. Mary's College of Maryland is accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. St. Mary's College, the National Public Honors College, is ranked as the top public liberal arts college in the U.S. by Money magazine. Approximately 1,600 students attend the college, nestled on the St. Mary's River in Southern Maryland.

Fatal Collision Under Investigation

On December 2, 2022, at 5:13 p.m. deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the 21600 block of Great Mills Road in Lexington Park, for the reported motor vehicle collision involving a pedestrian. The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Collision Reconstruction Unit responded to the scene and continued the investigation.

Preliminary investigation determined a 1994 Ford Ranger operated by Walter Tyrone Waul, age 55 of Callaway, was traveling east on Great Mills Road, and struck a pedestrian in a motorized wheelchair. The pedestrian, Eugene Elis Wood, age 39 of Lexington Park, was attempting to cross Great Mills Road in the area of Sheriff Miedzinski Way, when he was struck by the Ford Ranger. Wood was transported to an area hospital with in-

capacitating injuries, where he was later pronounced deceased.

At this time, speed and alcohol do not appear to be factors in the collision. Anyone who witnessed the collision that has not provided a statement, is asked to contact Corporal Rachael Roszell at (301) 475-4200 extension 78108, or by email at Rachael.Roszell@stmaryscountymd.gov.

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

Health Department Awarded Grants

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) was awarded grant funding in the amount of \$357,000 to support youth mentoring and violence prevention programs in St. Mary's County. This funding was provided through competitive grants from the Governor's Office of Crime Prevention, Youth, and Victim Services.

The funding will expand the capacity of youth mentoring locally through non-profit and faith-based groups. The grant also supports the implementation of a local Strengthening Families Program (SFP). SFP is an evidence-based family skills training program that has achieved international acclaim for its outcomes. The local SFP is offered in partnership with Pyramid Healthcare.

SMCHD will also expand the current Adverse Childhood Experiences Data Dashboard to include local violence

data, establish a digital platform that advances access to local youth mentoring programs, and work with community partners to create a county-wide violence intervention and prevention plan.

"This funding comes at a critical time of supporting youth mental health, preventing violence, and building resilience in our community," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "Our residents and many community partners are committed to a bright, hopeful future for our youth. I am grateful for the exceptional work of our SMCHD Health Promotions and Community Services Division Director, Angela Cochran, and others on our team who achieved these funds for our county."

To learn more about SMCHD's youth mentoring programs, please visit: <https://smchd.org/mentoring/>.

Stewart's Grant Hearing Postponed

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A planning commission hearing for a massive housing and commercial development on the Great Mills Road corridor set for Dec. 12 has been moved to January, The County Times has learned.

The change in dates is due to a problem with the mailing of notifications of the public hearing to nearby residents according to a source in the county's Department of Land Use and Growth Management.

The project is what would be known as Stewart's Grant, which was approved as a planned unit development more than 30 years ago.

The project would bring 1,154 housing units to a 394-acre piece of land in the area of Quatman Road and Great Mills Road, according to county planning documents.

But only about 20 percent of the entire project, or about 80 acres, would be dedicated to the residential piece, planning documents reveal, with about 256 acres set aside for open space.

About 20 acres would be used for commercial development.

The concept site plan calls for 639 town homes, 291 single family homes and an apartment building with 224 units, planning documents show.

Bill Hunt, county land use department director, confirmed that the owner of the property did not meet the requirements of the zoning ordinance when attempting to inform nearby property owners.

"The Zoning Ordinance ...states that owners must send certified mail notices of the public hearing to nearby property owners," Hunt said in a statement. "The property owners are the owners listed in [the State Department of Assessments and Taxation]."

"When there is more than one owner listed for a property, such as wife and husband, a certified mail notice must be mailed to each individual property owner. The representative for the Stewart's Grant case did not send an individual notice when there was more than one owner. A certified mail notice was sent to the address, but individual letters were not sent as is required by Section 21.3.2."

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AG Sues MetCom Over Sewage Overflows



Attorney General Brian Frosh



MetCom Director George Erichsen

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Since 2017 the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission (MetCom) has allowed 58 sewage overflows to sully the local environment in violation of the state's environmental laws, alleges Attorney General Brian Frosh in a civil suit filed Dec. 1 in county circuit court.

The suit demands MetCom pay civil penalties for the overflows and seeks an injunction against the water and sewer utility to compel it to cease the overflows and take "corrective action."

"We have charged MetCom with multiple violations of the most fundamental laws that protect public health and the environment," said Frosh. "Releasing raw sewage could not be more dangerous."

"We will hold them accountable."

George Erichsen, executive director of MetCom said the agency has always dealt closely with the state in situations such as sewage spills.

"All sanitary sewer overflows that occur are reported to the state within 24 hours as required by the Code of Maryland Regulations as well as the local Health Department," Erichsen replied in a prepared statement. "Measures taken to minimize the impact of the discharge are also reported and any corrective / remedial actions that may be required above what was already accomplished are completed under the supervision and in cooperation with the Maryland Department of the Environment."

Specifically, the lawsuit alleges that

the 58 separate overflows have released nearly 2.2 million gallons of untreated sewage into the ground and waters of the state.

"In addition, oysters that were harvested and served to the public following an [sanitary sewer overflow] on October 28, 2021 purportedly caused an outbreak of foodborne illness in Virginia," Frosh claimed.

That claim is not included in the civil suit, only in Frosh's release to the press on the court action.

The overflow events noted in the lawsuit usually took place over days and discharged amounts ranging from a few hundred gallons to roughly 1.5 million gallons over a 21-day period in 2020.

Several of the discharges was caused by a leaking force main, the lawsuit states.

A force main is a sewer pipe that is pressurized.

The lawsuit asks the court to order MetCom to pay \$10,000 per violation as alleged in the court filing; according to the suit each day of the unpermitted overflow is considered a separate violation.

The lawsuit stated that MetCom has already paid for assessed violations of overflow regulations that occurred from 2017 through 2020 as well as those that occurred in 2021.

The lawsuit seeks penalties from MetCom for sewage overflows for the time period of January through October of this year.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

SMCHD Closing Early on Dec. 8

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) will be closed on Thursday, December 8, 2022 from 11:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. for employee activities. This includes the main office in Leonardtown and all satellite offices. Services will reopen for community members at

2:30 p.m. for the remaining business hours on this date. COVID-19 testing and vaccine operations will close for the day at 10:00 a.m.

Visit smchd.org for more information on SMCHD locations and services.

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County Mulls New Park Land Plan

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Working with the U.S. Navy at Patuxent River Naval Air Station and the state Department of Natural Resources, the county appears ready to move on a piece of land that would expand not only passive park space but public access to local waterways.

Shannon Farms, a property which could be accessed off of south-bound Route 235 at the county-operated Home Grown Farm Market entrance road, has a design that is approximately 65 percent complete, according to county planning documents, and would include picnic and pavilion tables as well as hiking and biking trails and toilets for visitors.

The total cost of the project is estimated at \$8.5 million.

The commissioners of St. Mary's County acquired the park land in 2014 in partnership with the Navy and natural resources department; the total area of the property is 385 acres directly south from three distinct communities of Swash Bay, Cedar Cove and River Bay Townhomes.

The proposed plan for the park is to keep it as natural and undeveloped as possible but still allow for some environmentally low-impact recreational activities.

This is due mostly to the fact that about half of the site is in the critical area

— within 1,000 of the water — and is deemed too sensitive for intense development to state environmental preservation laws.

Unofficially, though the site is often used for illegal all-terrain traffic and hunting, according to county park master plan documents.

Project consultants A. Morton Thomas and Associates (AMT) promulgated the design for the park land with civic input.

Recreation and Parks Director Arthur Shepherd described the dedicated park land parcel of the project as “212 acres with 3,000 feet of shoreline.”

The parcel will not allow vehicle access, Shepherd said.

Kyle Mundy, project manager for AMT, said the land has a conservation easement placed upon it that only allows for agricultural or light recreational uses.

“So, sports fields or anything high impact is not really allowed,” Mundy told the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. “There are approximately 66 acres of wetlands on this property... filling of wetlands is prohibited even for recreational purposes.”

The site is within the resource conservation area (RCA) of the critical area, Mundy added, which has the most stringent rules regarding uses there.



The Shannon Farm property outlined in white

“Because of this the development of Shannon Farm will try to impact the forest there as minimally as possible,” said Mundy.

Forest dominates the interior of the park site.

“It's a beautiful piece of property,” said Commissioner Eric Colvin. “It will be a wonderful park for our residents to be able to access the beach.”

“I like that the plan minimizes impacts to the neighbors.”

Colvin said he liked the idea of a playground at the park but wanted it at

the farmers' market; Shepherd said two playgrounds would be better with one on the long trail down to the beach.

Commissioners also asked for the amount of parking set aside on the parcel as the parking already at the Home Grown Farm Market would likely at capacity in the summer when the Shannon Farm property was expected to be most used.

The commissioners are expected to vote on a decision on whether to move forward with the park project next month.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

County Fund Balances Continue to Swell

Fund Balance/Reserves Debt Policy									
General Fund - Fund Balance									
Fiscal Year	page 24 Revenues	Non-Spendable	Reserve/Restricted	Committed (1)	Assigned (2)	Unassigned	Total Fund Balance	Total County Reserves (3)	Total Reserves as a % of Revenues
2011	195,824,420	823,119	262,879	12,614,976	2,651,885	30,156,455	46,509,314	43,681,455	22.31%
2012	202,664,936	786,922	77,454	30,466,705	3,819,813	24,897,353	60,048,247	38,422,353	18.96%
2013	200,982,338	2,009,203	108,340	26,148,468	2,424,822	23,487,185	54,178,018	37,212,185	18.52%
2014	204,031,070	2,050,354	212,629	18,993,769	2,311,819	22,872,005	46,440,576	37,281,978	18.27%
2015	209,430,692	2,233,637	1,795,465	26,425,661	1,498,441	16,680,164	48,633,368	31,233,817	14.91%
2016	214,163,314	2,182,860	1,744,731	14,955,021	1,207,947	21,526,626	41,617,185	36,481,647	17.03%
2017	220,643,119	2,163,987	292,383	14,955,021	2,025,064	30,394,751	49,831,206	45,349,772	20.55%
2018	222,302,813	2,232,100	229,487	17,334,227	3,879,316	36,501,672	60,176,802	51,750,899	23.28%
2019	231,654,345	2,091,715	289,194	30,800,334	2,118,088	30,346,299	65,643,630	46,265,223	19.97%
2020	247,898,339	2,002,056	301,231	24,301,718	5,593,102	33,485,176	65,683,283	49,825,176	20.10%
2021	289,511,159	1,720,180	382,700	30,961,768	3,875,220	51,178,910	88,118,778	69,473,910	24.00%
2022	281,824,173	1,751,002	482,106	44,615,000	7,235,572	36,831,852	90,915,532	56,446,852	20.03%

County Reserves:	2021	2022
6% Bond Rating Reserve	16,670,000	17,990,000
Rainy Day Fund	1,625,000	1,625,000
Unassigned	51,178,910	36,831,852
Total Reserves	69,473,910	56,446,852

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The annual fiscal audit of county government operations shows no issues with accounting, according to independent financial analysts who did the work, but the audit continues to show that the county routinely spends less than it takes in in revenues each year, which makes for ever-growing surpluses of collected taxpayer monies.

The latest report shows that the county has a \$90.9 million total fund balance for fiscal 2022, the highest fund balance ever.

The total fund balance held by county government in fiscal 2011 was \$46.5 million and has grown steadily since that time, the audit data shows.

Not all of the \$90.9 million is available to spend at the county's discretion, the report shows, with much of it being committed to other projects or programs.

The total county unassigned fund balance is \$36.8 million, which is also the highest level it has been in the last 11 years except for last year's unassigned fund balance of \$51.1 million.

The amount of tax revenue the county has collected in the past two years has skyrocketed as well; in fiscal 2021 the county collected \$289 million in mostly property and income taxes and \$281 million in tax money in fiscal 2022.

Commissioner Eric Colvin said the county had to do a better job with using taxpayer funds.

“The goal of our budgets is not to cre-

ate larger fund balances,” Colvin said. “That's taxpayer dollars not being used efficiently.”

“We can do better; we're going to do better.”

Discussions of the audit report at the Dec. 6 public hearing before the Commissioners of St. Mary's County showed that federal grant money these past two years had bolstered local coffers to help recover from the pandemic as well as unfilled job posts that have reduced the amount the county has had to spend on personnel.

“I've been following this for the past

20 years,” said Commissioner Mike Hewitt. “And we've never exceeded revenues with expenditures.”

“Revenues always exceed expenditures, which is a positive thing if you're running a business but we're running taxpayer money here.”

Hewitt said it should be county government's goal to “get as close to even as possible.”

Hewitt noted that income tax revenues had increased in the past four years from about \$90 million to \$135 last year alone.

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Bailey, Crosby Look to Annapolis Session



Sen. Jack Bailey and Del. Brian Crosby

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Sen. Jack Bailey (R- Dist. 29) said this week he has numerous bills he plans to offer in the Maryland General Assembly next year, with some of them focusing on making hunting and fishing more accessible to young people.

But he also wants to make prior offenses for negligent, drunken or drugged driving matter for present charges to defendants.

Under current state law, he said, addressing residents and students at St. Mary's College of Maryland Dec. 6, those prior offenses for negligent, drunk or drugged driving cannot be considered in a defendant's present case.

"If you're still driving and you're still endangering people, those prior convictions should apply," Bailey said.

One of his bills would also exempt residents up to the age of 16 from needing a crabbing license, Bailey said, in the same way the state exempts 16-year-olds

from needing a fishing license. "We do that because we want young people to be engaged" in outdoor activities, Bailey said.

Bailey also wants to see a bill of his pass that would provide an income tax subtraction option for public safety volunteers, including firefighters and rescue squad personnel.

"It's important to support that," Bailey said of the volunteerism that has long defined public safety in St. Mary's County.

District 29B Del. Brian Crosby, the only Democrat in the St. Mary's delegation to Annapolis, said this session will be critical for the county as Governor-Elect Wes Moore will be bringing in an all-new administration.

This means relationship building with those new officials will be one of his top priorities for the first few weeks of the 2023 session.

Bailey, who has developed a close working relationship with Crosby, agreed.

It will be difficult to tell, Bailey said, just what the main issues will be in this upcoming session because of the new administration.

"Annapolis is going to completely change, not just a little," Bailey said.

The one issue that is widely known to be debated this coming year will be the administration of legalized marijuana for recreational use.

"That's what I'll be dealing with mostly is how weed dispensary licensing will be in Maryland," Crosby said. "I'll spend more time on than any of the ones that I've brought up."

But Crosby does have bills to introduce, including a measure that would allow for transference of public health licenses from other states to Maryland to aid spouses of service members in stepping into their careers during a military-mandated move.

Crosby also wants to reintroduce a bill that would increase penalties for the crime of indecent exposure; in particular because of a case recently that involved a suspect who was charged with the crime who held a security clearance and was able to move to another jurisdiction and maintain that clearance.

The enhanced penalties, Crosby said, would be enough to remove such a security clearance. "We got pretty close last year," Crosby said of his confidence in the bill's chances.

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Cameron Says Farewell to Sheriff's Office, St. Mary's



Sheriff Tim Cameron receives the Final Salute from Retired Deputy Greg Laxton and Sheriff-Elect Steve Hall

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Retiring Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron celebrated a career in law enforcement of more than 40 years during a final salute ceremony at the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office headquarters in Leonardtown Dec. 2.

Cameron praised the troops he has led for the past 16 years as their sheriff as he is set to take over the leadership of the Wyoming Highway Patrol in January.

"This is something I've done for several employees but this something I'd never thought I'd have myself," Cameron said. "Your efforts [deputies and staff] have gained national and international recognition."

Cameron noted his replacement, incoming Sheriff Steve Hall, and he worked closely together for many years in the agency on multiple operations and assignments.

"Despite the challenges we found joy in the work we did and the people around us," Cameron said, noting Hall needed the same backing that he received during his long tenure at the agency.

"Steve needs your support," Cameron said.

Jack Payne, a retired deputy with years of working with Cameron, said Cameron was his mentor and trainer on more than one occasion.

"We've been on countless calls together," Payne said of Cameron. "And I still have a useless shoulder from a Red Man training drill with him."

"From Day No. 1 he was a leader."

Dr. Meena Brewster, the county's health officer, has worked closely with Cameron on dealing with the opioid crisis, mental health and law enforcement and countering violence and youth trauma in the community.

She said Cameron's leadership on those critical issues was far above the normal demands of leadership.

"He is truly a leader like no other," Brewster said. "His toughness and grit have gotten this county through some of its toughest and most tragic times," Brewster said. "What you have done for our community... is beyond normal leadership."

"It is extraordinary and rare."

Cameron said he had reflected on what legacy he might leave behind at the agency and he said it was the deputies he had trained and led.

"If that's the case, then I'm beaming with pride because I'm so proud of you and all that you've done... and what we have become," Cameron said.

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Sheriff Cameron makes the Final Walk through headquarters

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Sheriff's Deputies Reaffirm Their Oaths



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

This week newly-elected Sheriff Steven A. Hall took the oath of office along with all sworn deputies of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

The last time it happened was 16 years ago when Hall's predecessor — Timothy Cameron — took the oath of office on his way to becoming the longest-serving sheriff in county history.

Hall took the oath of office as sheriff before joining in the oath with his troops Dec. 5.

All sheriff's deputies in the agency were in attendance at the swearing-in ceremony, making it necessary for the local Maryland State Police to stand in for patrol duties while the deputies

were taking the oath, according to Jason Babcock, sheriff's public information officer.

Hall called on his deputies to continue the tradition of excellence the agency has established.

He pledged he would provide them with the best training, equipment and leadership he could muster to ensure they could provide the "blanket of protection" over the citizens of St. Mary's.

He called his troops an "order of paladins."

In speaking to the assembled deputies, Hall said he was asked in two different ways during his election campaign about why he wanted to be sheriff, one questioned his reasons, the other questioned why he would want such a stressful job.

He told his troops that their training,

professionalism and performance on the job allayed any trepidation he might have.

"I'm not worried, I'm confident," Hall said. "Do good, be great and God bless."

Nearly all other local officials who were newly-elected or re-elected this year also took their oath of office including two new county commissioners — Scott Ostrow for District 4 and Mike Alderson, Jr. for District 3 — and a new member of the school board — Dorothy Andrews.

During his first county commissioner meeting on Dec. 6, Alderson thanked emergency response volunteers for their work in finding a critical missing person who had become lost in Chancellors Run Road area the night of his swearing in.

"It was an 81-year-old man who had wandered into the woods and it took several hours to find him," Alderson said. "The big thing I talked about during the campaign was how important the county is to me."

"And [also] how important volunteering is."

Alderson encouraged citizens to find the will and the time to volunteer in their communities.

"If you have any inkling that they want to serve their county in a better way in the form of a board or commission or as a volunteer first responder, please do not hesitate to talk to your local fire departments, your local rescue squads and

do it," Alderson said.

"This is how our community is built, through volunteerism," Alderson continued. "You can't have a strong community without that communication between everybody."

"Our form of government is not a spectator sport, please get yourself involved."

Ostrow said his taking of the oath of office was "a wonderful experience."

"I consider it a true honor and a privilege to serve this community," Ostrow said.

Ostrow said the community should turn their attention to a long-time volunteer — Mike Schwartz of Mike's Bikes — who would be distributing holiday meal kits to the needy starting Dec. 19 through Dec. 21.

"We definitely need to support that," Ostrow said of Schwartz's annual charity drive. "If you are in a position to give, please consider doing so."

"Mike has been doing this for years in our community; we don't want to see any family go without a Christmas dinner."

Andrews said she was looking forward to her first meeting on the board of education set for Dec. 14.

"I heard a lot of concerns and issues from parents on the campaign trail," Andrews said. "I think they'll [fellow board members] give me the opportunity to share what I've learned."


guyleonard@countytimes.net



Clerk of the Circuit Court Debra Burch administers the oath to Sheriff Steve Hall



Commissioner Mike Alderson takes the oath of office

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 RETIRING SHERIFF TIMOTHY K. CAMERON IN HIS FAREWELL ADDRESS TO THE AGENCY.



LOCAL 7
Cameron says farewell to sheriff’s office



LOCAL 11
Commissioners mull new park plan



ON THE COVER
5
ARN TO SERV
ST. MARY’S
Sheriff’s deputies, elected officials take the oath of office

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FRI 12/9	46° /40°	Cooler; a little p.m. rain	55%	TUE 12/13	48° /36°	Turning cloudy	5%
SAT 12/10	49° /41°	Rain and drizzle possible	30%	WED 12/14	55° /40°	Cloudy with showers around	64%
SUN 12/11	51° /40°	Cloudy, a shower in the p.m.	46%	THU 12/15	53° /37°	Periods of rain	70%

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