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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 2023



**Farmers Worry
Over Drought**

**Oyster Harvesting
Restrictions Possible**

**County Gives Out
Free Chromebooks**

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“**LOWERING THE PROPERTY TAX RATE WILL PUT MORE MONEY IN EVERYBODY’S POCKET.**”

LEONARDTOWN COUNCILMEMBER NICK COLVIN



LOCAL 8
Oyster Restrictions Considered



LOCAL 9
Farmers say they need more rain



7 ON THE COVER
Winters Celebrates 75 Years

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<p>THU, JUN 22</p> <p>Rain Hi: 75° Lo: 69°</p>	<p>FRI, JUN 23</p> <p>Thunderstorms Hi: 80° Lo: 68°</p>	<p>SAT, JUN 24</p> <p>Scattered Storms Hi: 80° Lo: 65°</p>	<p>SUN, JUN 25</p> <p>Isolated Storms Hi: 83° Lo: 68°</p>
<p>MON, JUN 26</p> <p>PM Thunderstorms Hi: 87° Lo: 65°</p>	<p>TUE, JUN 27</p> <p>Scattered Storms Hi: 80° Lo: 64°</p>	<p>WED, JUN 28</p> <p>PM Thunderstorms Hi: 81° Lo: 61°</p>	<p>THU, JUN 29</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 82° Lo: 65°</p>

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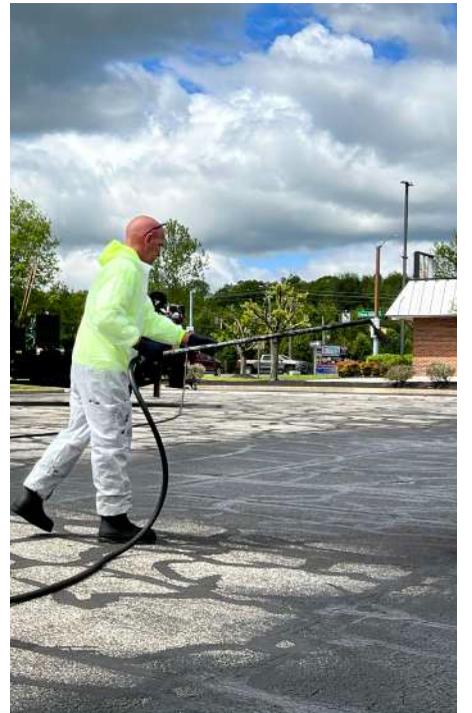
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Town Lowers Taxes With Budget Approval

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Last week the Town of Leonardtown passed its fiscal 2024 budget while managing to simultaneously lower property tax rates, something the county government has not done in years.

The town council voted to lower the property tax rate to .1203 per \$100 of assessed value; the current rate is .1266 per \$100 of assessed value.

The new rate will be one of constant yield, meaning the town will continue to get the same amount of property tax revenue as it did in the last fiscal year.

This is possible because of the rise in overall property assessments, which are calculated by the state Department of Assessments and Taxation, on a rolling three-year basis.

“Lowering the property tax rate will put more money in everybody’s pocket,” said Councilmember Nick Colvin.

Property taxes represent 31.8 percent of revenue taken in by the town; the largest revenue source is income taxes, which account for 40.2 percent according to town budget documents.

The total general fund operating budget for fiscal 2024 is a little over \$3 million, which includes \$655,464 for capital projects on a one-time basis.

The remaining \$2.4 million are for operating expenses, budget documents stated, which is higher than the current operating expense budget of \$2.6 million.

According to budget documents, the town maintains an unassigned fund balance of 60.69 percent of its operating budget or about \$1.4 million.

The town is set to spend approximately \$356,000 on salaries in fiscal 2024 with the next largest expenditure being debt service in the amount of \$125,410 on various capital projects.

The largest line item expenditure of town tax payer funds is just over \$409,000 for road maintenance.

Mayor Dan Burris reiterated though, that the construction of a new wastewater treatment plant expansion to increase current capacity from 680,000 gallons of wastewater per day to one million gallons per day would be paid for by impact fees from new residential development in town.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

New Townhomes Planned for Lexington Park

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county planning commission is set to review a concept site plan next week for a 40-unit town house project in the Lexwood community off of Great Mills Road.

The proposed development would be on a little less than four acres in the residential high-density zone, according to county planning documents.

The developer of the project, AYDCO Holdings, LLC, must seek a variance from the county board of appeals, planning documents stated, to reduce the amount of green, open space required by the zoning ordinance.

The zoning ordinance requires that 50 percent of the acreage be kept as open space, something the developer will not be able to do, county documents stated.

They must also obtain a variance to reduce the required width of each of the townhouses from 20 feet to 16 feet.

The proposal to approve the concept site plan for the project must also come with an amendment to the county’s Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan (CWSP) that would push ahead the time schedule for that piece of property to receive water and sewer service.

The planning commission will also be considering that application for an amend-



ment to the CWSP but the amendment must ultimately be approved or denied by the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County.

The current status of the property is to receive water and sewer service in six to 10 years at the cost of the development; the amendment seeks to speed that process to three to five years.

The local wastewater treatment facility, the Marlay-Taylor water reclamation plant, are currently adequate to provide service to the proposed development, county planning documents state.

The concept site plan hearing for the Villas at Lexwood project is set for June 26 at the county commissioner chambers in Leonardtown.

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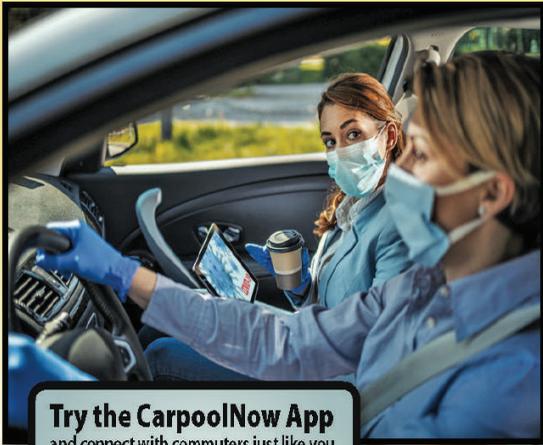
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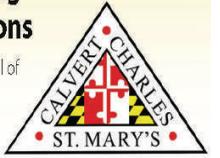
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Winters Celebrates 75 Years in Business

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Staying in business for 75 years is challenging, especially when the business you're in means a lot of physical labor, technical proficiency and often working in extreme heat or cold.

That's the name of the game at Winter's Heating and Cooling in Leonardtown where installing air conditioning and heating units is their stock and trade.

"Father started it in 1948," said James Winters Sr. of the patriarch of the family who started the business. "He started in Washington, D.C. and went through the sheet metal union.

"He came down here and started his first business in a tobacco barn."

That first business focused just on sheet metal shaping and fabrication as forced air furnaces were not put to market until the 1950s and air conditioning would not become a reality until the 1960s.

The family business branched out into those new growth areas — something no new home would be without today — and have become the service provider they are today, honored by both the Maryland House of Delegates and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County for three-quarters of a century's service to the community.

Jim started in his father's business in 1971 and has watched it grow.

"We've had ups and downs," he said. "But we've been blessed."

Jillian Winters-Hicks, Jim's daughter and chief financial officer of the company, said the Great Recession of 2008 hit the company hard but they were able to come back from that trial. "We downsized tremendously," Jillian told The County Times. "In the last 10 years we've grown substantially from the recession in 2008."

While the COVID-19 pandemic caused governments to push lockdowns on citizens and caused many businesses to shut down—sometimes for good—James said the business continued to flourish because of the increased demand for their services.

"We actually got busier with everyone staying inside," Jim said.

Jillian said the company currently employs 14 people, three customer service representatives, one sales coordinator, three service technicians and seven installers.

Working for the company is an entire process in itself for the most technically involved employees.

Prospective installers have to work for the company for a year to test their aptitude and attitude towards the job.

If they complete that probationary period, she said, they are sent to a 30-day school in Dallas, Texas—at an expense of \$20,000 to the company—to get more advanced technical training.

With that sort of investment, those employees are required to sign on to a five-year employment contract with Winters. "When we invest in them, we make them



Del. Todd Morgan, left, offers a proclamation celebrating Winters Heating and Cooling's 75 years in business. From left is President James Winters, his son and Chief Operating Officer David, and daughter and Chief Financial Officer Jillian Winters-Hicks

invest in us," Jillian said.

"So far we've sent three down to the school and it's worked out good," Jim said.

The business is active in the community as well, contributing to numerous fundraising initiatives to boost the many service organizations in the county.

Jillian said working in the family business wasn't her first, main job.

Rather, she worked at Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) for five years before deciding to come to work for her family.

Did she like working for the county's biggest employer?

"I did, I just didn't like being a number," she said. "We're more tight-knit here."

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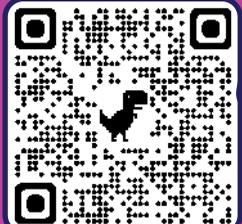
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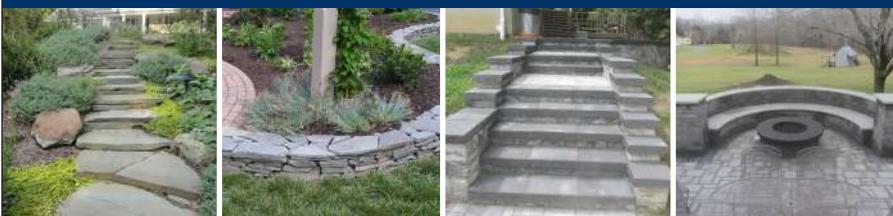
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St. Mary's River Overharvested for Oysters



By Guy Leonard
 Staff Writer

The native oyster appears to be making a strong comeback in state waters, according to the latest data presented to the Maryland Oyster Advisory Commission but that has led to overharvesting in certain areas.

One of them is the St. Mary's River; but the abundance of the bivalve in the waters of the county's eponymous river and overland in the Patuxent River above the reproduction threshold of the species offers hope.

The commission is now looking at the possibility of further restricting oyster harvesting in the coming season through 2024.

The rapid ascent of oysters in the watershed has led to a prosperous harvest in the past few years for watermen; the data shows that some 623,000 bushels of oysters were harvested commercially from Oct. 1 of 2022 to March 31 of this year.

That is the highest amount since the 1999 to 2000 season, the latest figures from the Department of Natural Resources show.

The estimated dockside value of that

commercial harvest statewide was about \$27 million.

But fishery officials are worried that the current abundance of native oysters might not be sustainable, which has led them to consider new harvesting restrictions.

DNR officials have said they plan no new restrictions for the first few months of the new season starting Oct. 1 of this year, but, if signs point to a dwindling abundance of oysters in the fishery, those rules could be tightened in January of 2024, which would be the beginning of the second half of the six-month season.

The issue, fishery scientists said during the commission's June 6 meeting in Chester on Kent Island, was that the abundance of the oysters was not evenly distributed throughout the watershed and the intensity of the harvest followed where the oysters were.

The lower Patuxent River and the St. Mary's River were among nine out of 36 areas where public harvests were permitted that were overharvested, the latest data from the state showed.

Arrest Made in Child Rape Case

A California man was arrested on Thursday, June 15, 2023, by St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office detectives and charged with rape and a sexual offense.

Michael Tran, age 19 of California, has been charged with Second-Degree Rape and a Third-Degree Sex Offense.

On June 15, 2023, Sheriff's Office deputies responded to a sexual assault call at a residence in California. The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division continued the investigation and determined that Tran engaged in sexual activity with a 12-year-old victim during a social function held on June 14, 2023.

Tran was arrested on Thursday and transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown.



Michael Tran

St. Mary's Farmers Contend With Lack of Rain

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The next few days in St. Mary's County are set to be wet ones according to the latest weather reports but farmers say a drought — or conditions near to that — have existed here since January.

The U.S. Drought Monitor, an online service that tracks precipitation conditions across the nation, shows St. Mary's County is currently abnormally dry for the season, though the rest of the state is faring worse in a moderate drought condition.

Jamie Raley, a local farmer with land throughout the county, said farmers are hoping for some rain in the next 10 days, though he estimated that the county is about six-to-eight-inches behind in its needed rainfall totals from the beginning of the year.

"My pasture has gotten so dry there's nothing out there for my cattle to eat," Raley said of land he has in Mechanicsville. "I have to feed them grain."

When Raley drove out to his cattle pasture he said the ground his few cattle were resting on was green and lush about three weeks ago.

His cattle have become accustomed to him coming by to feed and water them regularly; they quickly got up and came to him gaze at him over an electrified fence.

Their faces were festooned with flies — another sign of the dry weather.

"They're trying to get their tears," Raley said of the flies looking for more moisture.

The possibility of coming rains also brought problems, Raley said.

Though the most important local crops of corn and soybeans, which are used mainly for animal feed, need more rain, it could hurt efforts to harvest the wheat crop.

Wheat, ideally, needs to be dry for harvest, Raley said, else if it is too wet it could germinate while still standing in the field.

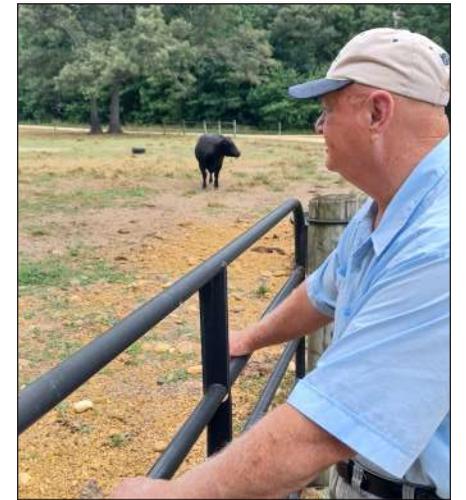
"If that happens it ruins the crop," said Raley.

Barry Roach, who runs the Homegrown Farm Market in Lexington Park, said growers have been able to continually bring strong produce yields into the marketplace but that is mostly because of irrigation.

Irrigation could become less of an option if water sources continue to dwindle, Roach said.

"It's dry," Roach told The County Times. "It's been dry."

Some intermittent thunderstorms in the past few weeks have helped, but not much, said Roach.



"They're spotty," he said. "Some people get them, some people don't."

Raley said a weather front that came through over the weekend did little to improve the situation for him, though a farmer elsewhere in the county received more than an inch of rain.

Steady rain is the most likely to be beneficial as it will soak the soil, but a heavy, driving rain would simply wash off because the soil would be too dry to absorb it.

"It didn't do enough to wet my driveway," Raley said.

Roach was worried that without enough rain and soon, getting a good crop out this season would not be possible.

"We're all concerned," Roach said. "There's no reserve moisture in the soil."

"We'll be relying [solely] on rainfall."

The corn crop in particular has been slow to rise, Roach said, because the dry condi-

tions coupled with relatively cool temperatures stunted their growth.

Will coming rains make up the deficit of precipitation so far this year?

"Certainly not," Roach said. "But anything helps."

"The bottom line is it's going to have to rain."

Ben Beale, resident agent with the University of Maryland Agricultural Extension Office, said the dry conditions, despite the recent rains, would delay many crops.

"We've been managing to skip from rain event to rain event and have barely gotten by with crop development," Beale said. "Conditions are very dry, and, unfortunately, they're even drier up north."

Beale said the stunting of crops began in May, which was one of the coolest May's in recent memory.

"That really hindered crop development,"

Beale said.

The old adage that corn should be knee high by July 4 is usually surpassed by it being above knee high by that time in St. Mary's, Beale said.

But this season, the corn yield is going to be late by a week or two.

"We're going to have a good crop," Beale said. "But we're not going to make a phenomenal crop."

Produce is of excellent quality so far, Beale said, but delays with the fruit of gardens and trees are likely.

Likewise, the wheat harvest will have to be delayed, Beale said, as farmers wait for it to dry out.

"When you're a farmer you're at the mercy of the land and the sky," Beale said.

"It's always a balancing act."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Publisher Thomas McKay
Associate Publisher Eric McKay
General Manager Al Dailey aldailey@countytimes.net
Advertising Jen Stotler jen@countytimes.net
Staff Writers Dick Myers dickmyers@countytimes.net
 Guy Leonard guyleonard@countytimes.net
Contributing Writers Ron Guy, Shelby Opperman, Dave Spigler

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County Begins Giving Away Free Computers

By Guy Leonard
 Staff Writer

Over the weekend the county government, along with community service organizations, began distributing thousands of state-funded laptop computers to county residents who otherwise would not have been able to afford them.

The distribution took place at the Lexington Park Library where nearly 400 computers were ready for pickup for preregistered residents.

Residents had to meet certain requirements, such as a lower income level, to be eligible to receive a free Chromebook.

The purchase of the Chromebooks was funded by a grant from the state's Office of Rural Broadband, part of the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County approved the grant award unanimously in April 4.

The total cost of the computers has been valued at just under \$900,000.

The county also received an additional \$27,000 to promulgate a distribution program for the laptops.

The county has six months to give away all of the 4,500 computers it was able to purchase with the grant money, county infor-



mation systems chief Bob Kelly has said.

The distribution of the computers is designed to further connect county residents to the internet, a luxury that is increasingly becoming a necessity.

The county was caught off guard somewhat during the COVID-19 pandemic when students had to retreat in mass to their homes and learn remotely.

The county acted quickly and spent millions of dollars to improve connectivity by laying down infrastructure on underserved streets and roads.

So far the county has been able to achieve connectivity for approximately 96 percent of the population.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Emergency Services: 'Know Your Zone' in Case of Hurricane



Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30, 2023. St. Mary's County Government's Department of Emergency Services encourages all community members to Know Your Zone.

What Is It?

Know Your Zone is a new color-coded interactive map you can use to determine which storm evacuation zone you live in based upon your street address.

How Will It Help You?

Knowing your zone will help you avoid unnecessary evacuation travel, thereby reducing highway congestion, easing overcrowding at local storm shelters, and boost-

ing public safety.

How Do You Use It?

Visit: mdem.maryland.gov/Pages/know-your-zone-md.aspx

Click the Find Your Zone button.

Enter your address on the map.

View your color-coded evacuation zone.

Evacuate your zone if told to do so by local officials—sign up for local emergency notifications at: stmaryscountymd.gov/codered.

Disasters will not wait; neither should you. Visit stmaryscountymd.gov/prepare to learn more about how you can be prepared.

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Health Department to Host Free HIV/STI Testing Event

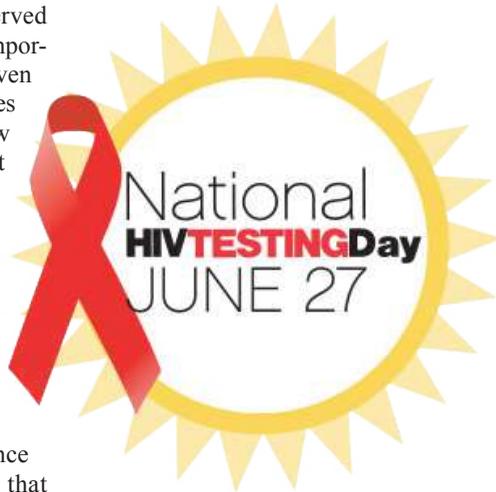
National HIV Testing Day is observed each year on June 27 to highlight the importance of HIV testing. About one in seven individuals with HIV in the United States are undiagnosed. The only way to know for sure whether you have HIV is to get tested. Knowing your status can preserve your health and protect your partners from getting HIV, too. Most people who have HIV and are seeking treatment get control of the virus within six months.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care, and that people with certain risk factors get tested more often. Testing for HIV can give you important information and help keep you and others safe. HIV testing is fast, free, and confidential.

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) has scheduled an HIV and Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) testing event for community members for the following dates and locations - no appointment necessary. Some results will be available in as little as 20 minutes.

SMCHD Leonardtown Main Office

- Monday, June 26, 2023
10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, June 29, 2023
10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.



St. Mary's County Health Hub

- Monday–Thursday, June 26–29, 2023
9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

“Getting tested for HIV and sexually transmitted infections is a simple action to help you protect your own health and that of others,” said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. “People who test positive can rapidly start treatment, and everyone can learn about preventing future infection.”

For more information, please call the SMCHD Health Clinic at 301-475-4330 or the Harm Reduction Program office at 301-862-1680 or visit smchd.org.

Sewer Overflow in Valley Lee

As the result of a sewer force main break, a sanitary sewer overflow has occurred at 19056 Piney Point Road, Valley Lee.

Public contact with flooding & standing waters around the above address focusing on the ditch in front of the address should be avoided for ten (10) days. There is no

threat or contamination of the local drinking water supply.

For additional information, please contact the St. Mary's County Health Department at 301.475.4321 or the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission at 301.373.5305.

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1 Check on older adults regularly to prevent them from feeling isolated



2 Report any suspicions of abuse, neglect, self-neglect, exploitation or abandonment



3 Look around and take note of what may be happening with your older neighbors and acquaintances



4 Know the signs of elder abuse. Abuse, neglect and exploitation can happen to anyone



5 Report suspected abuse to local Adult Protective Services or Law Enforcement



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County Government Launches Community Survey

St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) has launched a new public survey to better understand local priorities and concerns on a wide range of county services and the local quality of life.

The survey will enable SMCG to understand local neighborhood issues and enhance their responsiveness to community priorities more holistically. The survey asks residents to rate their experience with different aspects of life in St. Mary's County, Maryland including affordable housing, education, transportation, and public safety.

The survey will be circulated and promoted through online digital advertisements. Community members may also access the survey directly at: stmaryscountymd.gov/survey.

"We always strive to get feedback and input from our citizens," said Commissioner President, James Randy Guy. "This partnership with Zencity is a great step toward better understanding the needs and concerns of our community, so that we can make the best decisions for our future."

"Forward-thinking leaders like the Commissioners of St. Mary's County understand that effective local government must leverage data on the needs and priorities of residents," said Eyal Feder-Levy, CEO of Zencity. "We are proud to provide a platform for counties like St. Mary's County to reach more voices in the community and turn that input into action."

The launch of the new community survey is in partnership with Zencity, the community input platform used by local governments to hear from more residents and get meaningful and actionable insights. In addition to helping SMCG get proactive feedback from residents through surveys,

Zencity will help the County understand the feedback residents are already voicing about the issues that matter to them the most—whether on publicly available social media channels, comments on traditional news sources, or through official channels—helping the SMCG to hear from all corners of the community. This information will help SMCG stay on top of emerging local issues; better understand the challenges and priorities of those less likely to participate in traditional civic forums, and meaningfully contribute to the local conversation with timely and informative communications.

Zencity works with hundreds of municipalities across the U.S. including Chicago, Phoenix, Seattle, and San Diego on issues ranging from public safety to American Rescue Plan Act implementation.

Survey Methodology

Zencity's community survey tool incorporates voices from every corner of the community. To do so, Zencity sets response targets based on U.S. Census data about the municipality. Zencity ensures the security and privacy of its data and survey respondents. Survey responses are anonymous unless a respondent chooses to share their email address for follow-up purposes. Regardless, survey responses are kept confidential. Zencity does not collect a respondent's name, address, or any other personally identifying information. Zencity's weighting accounts for the responses of every single person who answered a question. The responses give a proportional voice to all demographics (e.g., by age, sex, race, education level, and income level) based on the makeup of the municipality.

County Government Operations for the Fourth of July

All St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Tuesday, July 4, 2023, in observance of the Fourth of July holiday. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Wednesday, July 5, 2023.

The July 4 closure also includes:

All three St. Mary's County Libraries (Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park)

- All three Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), and there will be no home-delivered meals
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS)
- Department of Recreation & Parks programs and facilities
- The six Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill

The following SMCG operations will be open on July 4:

- Great Mills Pool (11 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- Wellness & Aquatics Center (6 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- The St. Clements Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum (10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- The Wicomico Shores Golf Course is hosting a tournament at 8 a.m. Anyone wishing to join can call (301) 884-4601. Open play for the public available from 1 – 4 p.m.
- The Riverview Restaurant (7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.)

For more information on SMCG programs and operations, please visit: stmaryscountymd.gov.

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Department of Aging &
Human Services
Senior Medicare Patrol
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ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

Identity Needed for Burglary Suspects

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identities of the persons pictured in a burglary investigation. On Sunday, June 4, 2023, at 12:37 am, two suspects broke a window to the Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Lexington Park to gain entry to the building. One suspect entered the building as the other stood by outside. Upon entry, one suspect looked throughout the building, but was unable to access any specific items. The suspects then fled on foot toward Valley Drive in Lexington Park.



Anyone with information about the identities of the suspects or this incident is asked to call Deputy Ryan McLean at 301-475-4200, ext. 8181 or email ryan.mclean@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 29678-23

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.

Fatal Collision in Budds Creek Under Investigation

A 19-year-old man was killed in a motor vehicle collision on Friday, June 16, 2023, as the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office continues the investigation.

On Friday, June 16, 2023, at 9:43 am, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Patrol deputies were dispatched to a motor vehicle collision involving a motorcycle and a pickup truck in the area of Budds Creek Road and Aviation Yacht Club Road in Budds Creek with CPR in progress.

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Collision Reconstruction Unit was contacted and continued the investigation. Preliminary investigation determined that a 2017 Chevrolet truck and trailer was traveling westbound and making a right-hand turn into a driveway when a 2005 Harley motorcycle, operated by Michael Robert

Benenati, age 19 of Mechanicsville, also traveling westbound, struck the truck on the rear passenger's side. Benenati and his passenger, Ashlyn Nicole Summers, age 18 of Charlotte Hall, were ejected from the motorcycle.

Benenati was transported to MedStar St. Mary's Hospital by ambulance where he was later pronounced deceased. Summers was transported by air to a regional trauma center for incapacitating injuries.

At this time, operator error appears to be a factor in the collision.

Anyone who may have witnessed the collision, or any events leading up to it, and has not already provided a statement, is asked to call Cpl. Rachael Roszell at 301-475-4200, ext. 8108 or email rachael.roszell@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Legal Notices

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has apparently been abandoned for some years on the property of: Dixon Brothers, 26655 S. Sandgates Rd, Mechanicsville, MD 20659, 301 370-5760. The vessel is a blue and white 17 ft Crosby Capri, No. MD 3045 AC, Hull PA3363F. Application for title will be made in accordance with Section 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if this vessel is not claimed and removed from the above property within 30 days of this notice.

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Commissioners of Leonardtown will hold a public hearing on Monday, July 10, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at the Town office at 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD.

The purpose of the hearing will be to receive comments on Ordinance No. 217 amending Chapter 62, titled "Development Impact Fees," of the Code of the Town of Leonardtown (the "Code"), to delete § 62-1.1 regarding a county impact fee for school facilities.

Full text is available on-line at www.leonardtown.somd.com or at the Town Hall.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend or to submit written comments by 4:00 p.m. on July 10, 2023 to: leonardtown.commissioners@leonardtownmd.gov or mail to The Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Special accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities upon request.

By authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

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Pet OF THE WEEK



MEET MOMMA PEACHES

We don't always need advice. Sometimes all we need is a paw to hold, a ear to listen, and a heart that understands. Sometimes, all we need is a Dog.

Hi everybody, my name is Momma Peaches. My Shelter Pals say I'm the Beagle with the HEART OF GOLD and SOULFUL EYES! I'm a very SWEET LITTLE LADY who is just 5 years old and I'm seriously on the lookout for a FOREVER HOME where I can share my endless BEAGLE LOVE (and maybe steal a few snacks too!). I'm GREAT with KIDS and CATS, so you can bet I'll fit right into your crazy family circus! Adopt a Momma Peaches and then get ready for a lifetime of HILARIOUS HIJINKS and UNCONDITIONAL SNUGGLES! Make those plans to hop in the car, head for the shelter, and park in the barking lot and come meet me during adoption hours Monday-Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday 10am-3pm or email animalshelter@charlescountymd.gov. BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! And remember, ALWAYS OPT TO ADOPT, please don't shop!

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



Letters to the Editor

Hope for Lexington Park

The second annual Great Mills Rd. Annual Clean-Up was a huge success. I personally didn't think a lot of people cared about Lexington Park but by the number of participants, a lot of people do. Everyone was very friendly and courteous which made for a very pleasant atmosphere. There were many bags of litter and hopefully Lexington Park will remain litter-free. The Director of the SMCDC, Taylor Smith, is very friendly. She's not only warm and cordial but also a joy to work with. She, like myself and many others, cares about Lexington Park. There

were many sponsors too; each one was printed on the free t-shirts that were handed out. The lunch afterwards was very good also. I look forward to the lit-up Hopeful sign that's supposed to come to the Church of the Ascension soon because despite all the litter and eye-sore buildings on a certain portion of Great Mills Rd. there is still hope for Lexington Park.

*Anna Poe
Lexington Park*

A Drug-Related Holocaust

Thanks for your prominent June 15, coverage by Guy Leonard of our St. Mary's County Health Department informational briefing of June 7 where our chief health officer Dr. Meena Brewster and County Sheriff Steven Hall cited detailed valid opposition to the coming federally illegal attempts of "Narco-state Maryland" (Gov. Hogan's characterization) to enable and promote a massive federally illegal "recreational" marijuana industry to explode throughout the entire state.

To quantify the problem, the ounce and a half of pot allowed under this destructive policy would permit every adult stoner throughout Maryland to possess over 100 joints of unlimited potency pot without fear of arrest. With decades of records from periodic Youth Behavioral Health Surveys from our public schools revealing that "drugs are being sold and used in our schools," the local school drug pushers will be ecstatic--while parents, teachers and first responders should be horrified!

Under that drug-trafficker-friendly initiative innocent citizens will pay a brutal price in damage to their families and communities. A virtual bloodbath of violence and terror will certainly surge throughout the State—as it has in pot-friendly Baltimore; and in Colorado and other stoner-caucus-led, drug-trafficker friendly states. This should alarm all potential victims of such an increasing drug-related holocaust of soaring addiction, overdose deaths, suicides, traffic fatalities, shootings and irrational random violence.

The catastrophic damages to children, families and communities from the current massive prevalence of federally-illegal marijuana use and trafficking, are well-documented in numerous valid studies. Such as the St. Mary's Co. Health Dept. "Opioid Education Course for Parents and Guardians;" the SAMHSA study, "Know the Risks of Marijuana;" the CDC study: "Health Effects of Marijuana;" the Brookings Institute Study, "Pot, water theft, and environmental harms in the U.S., and

other federal research such as from DEA, FBI, NIDA, and DOJ.

Such widely-documented health/science-based opposition to marijuana legalization should form the persuasive basis for our Commissioners and Health officials to petition MD Governor Wes Moore to request a postponement of the start date of July 1, to allow time to consider how our Commissioners can prevent the personal destruction so prevalent in other states whose drug-money-corrupted public officials are responsible for fraudulently enabling the drug cartels' violent and lucrative federally-illegal marijuana commerce there.

We Parents have for decades advocated harm-reduction policies that would help reduce the drug-related carnage in the U. S. Following are some of those policies needed immediately to offset the coming damages from a state's unconstitutional legalizing of federally-illegal "recreational" marijuana:

- Mandate a drug test of all violent arrestees to identify what substances may have contributed to their violence.
- Adopt nonpunitive Random Student Drug Testing (RSDT) in public schools to identify and treat student drug users.
- File federal restraining order to stop the federally illegal marijuana manufacturing businesses in SMC.

A 5/27/23 Washington Post article informed about federal law enforcement involvement in Colorado. Since recreational marijuana was legalized in Colorado in 2014, federal prosecutors in that state have obtained eight indictments for marijuana distribution conspiracies... under the federal Controlled Substances Act, marijuana since 1970 has been in the top category for addictive and dangerous substances, Schedule I..."

Let's all pray to God that our good non-corrupted public officials will protect us and our families from federally-illegal marijuana, whatever that takes.

*DeForest Rathbone
Leonardtown*

Sacred Heart Church ANNUAL JUNE Drive-Thru Dinner

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Sunday, June 25, 2023

11:00 a.m. 'til Sold-Out

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A View From The BLEACHERS



BLURRED LINES

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

Days after the last “View from the Bleachers” rolled off the presses and hit local newsstands, a sports bombshell dropped. Normally when a seismic event occurs in the world sports shortly after submitting a column, I cringe and lament the lost opportunity. This time, I appreciated the breather; this was a lot to process.

Sworn enemies united, with no regard for the limits of the human imagination. The script was straight out of Vince McMahon’s pro wrestling magic hat. Hulk Hogan embraced the dark side. Rowdy Roddy Piper stepped into the light. Carolina and Duke, Ohio State and Michigan, and the Boston Red Sox and New Yankees merged to become one. Batman and Joker joined forces; for good or ill it is not known.

The humorous grasp is a coping mechanism. The PGA Tour’s decision to bury the previously assumed unburiable (not an actual word...English can’t even describe this) hatchet and merging with Saudi Arabia-funded LIV Golf is? Shocking. Infuriating. Disturbing. Sad. Unethical. Immoral. Certainly, some of those things. Perhaps all of those things.

Brief history: LIV Golf was founded in 2021; events began in 2022. Financially backed by Saudi Arabia’s Public Investment Fund, LIV Golf was able to entice many of the world’s best players – Dustin Johnson, Brooks Koepka, Bryson DeChambeau, Phil Mickelson and Patrick Reed, among others - to join, or stated more frankly, to defect from the PGA Tour, with irresistible, soul-selling financial packages.

Soul-selling – an intentionally pejorative term. Accepting checks from the current Saudi regime is a test of conscience, or evidence of a lack thereof. The issue? Unfamiliar with Saudi Arabia’s human rights record? The brutal murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi? Women’s rights? Saudi’s ties to 9-11? Get Google-ing.

Along those lines, several prominent golfers remained steadfastly loyal to the PGA Tour. Tiger Woods was one. The most vocal, though, was Rory McIlroy. The war of words was no joke; neither were the checks the PGA Tour loyalists turned down. And now the organization who they defended just wed the presumed enemy.

Why did the PGA Tour yield? The talking heads claim the unification will help grow the game of golf worldwide. How quaint. Also noted were on-going lawsuits and LIV’s near limitless ability to bankroll litigation in perpetuity. Maybe that’s true. Like Thanos, maybe this merger was inevitable. What is certain is that both the PGA Tour and LIV are healthier financially as a combined force. “Follow the money”, as Deep Throat said.

Since this column’s beginning many years ago, the entries connecting sports with a topical political issue have prompted the most comments. In most cases, it was athletes or individuals expressing a political opinion; in others, I took some liberties to connect the sports and political dots. The feedback ranged from spirited agreement, to passionate disagreement or an agnostic “stick to sports.” This time is different: it’s an entire organization – the PGA Tour – viscerating the imaginary line (yes, it doesn’t exist...never has) between sports and politics.

With that welcomed time to process this merger, my thoughts are more reflective. I don’t like it. Never will. I will consume golf differently now. But the PGA Tour’s hypocritical okey-doke is just the latest evidence that most things in life come with irreconcilable conflict. There is no perfect job or relationship. Every product we use is uncomfortable for some reason – for the resources it requires, its contributions to climate change or the atrocious working conditions for the human labor that produced it. No religion or religious purveyor completely walks the walk of the talk they talk. Sports are littered with owners and players who are simply bad humans. Capitalism itself rewards the most effective, not the most ethical or moral.

The challenge, then, is to determine where to flex, where your passions lie, what your non-negotiables are and where your conscience becomes heavy – in other words, where the joy of sport (or whatever the topic) is overcome by the discomfort. I know how I felt about golf before the LIV merger. My opinion in future I do not know. Right now, it makes me uncomfortable; the PGA-LIV Tour is a hard pass.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

The Tackle Box Fishing Report

By Ken Lamb
Contributing Writer

We are five days into the cobia season and there are rumors of a handful of catches and numerous sightings. The sightings range from Smith Point to the mouth of the Potomac. The catches are mainly centered south of Smith Point around Tangier. The bay temperature is only about two degrees above the ten-year low record. The prediction is for the temperature to hit 79 degrees in the next ten days, and that should make the cobia much more comfortable.

Cobia seekers set up chum lines with chum blocks or tubes and drift live eels into the mix. The cobia love eels. They will also take chunks of fresh cut bait or live spot. Others prefer to cruise around looking for the fish which swim just below the surface. When spotted the fishermen present live eels, spot, or lures.

The spot, alewife, and other bait fish are plentiful in our section of the bay. These bait fish will bring the cobia and bluefish up the bay quickly.

The stripers (rockfish) are scattered in the bay and rivers. There are really good catches reported by local guides who fish the shallow waters of the Honga and back waters of Tangier Sound. The Point Lookout Bar has been very good. There were trollers who did well on both Potomac and Patuxent this week.



Bottom fishermen are doing well with spot and perch all over.

There are trout in good numbers south of us and they are heading this way. Trout are in the Honga River, and in the mouth of the Potomac.

There are lots of skate (cow nosed rays) in both deep and shallow areas. The cobia like to hang around skate schools and fishermen often hook up with the rays when targeting cobia. This is considered a nuisance, but a good test to see if your tackle is adequate.

We have excellent reports of bass, bluegill, pickerel, and crappie in freshwater ponds and at St. Mary’s Lake.

Catfish are a mainstay up the rivers where they have fled from the salty water of the bay.

Plenty of crabs are reported from crab pots off waterfront docks and by trot liners and chicken neckers.

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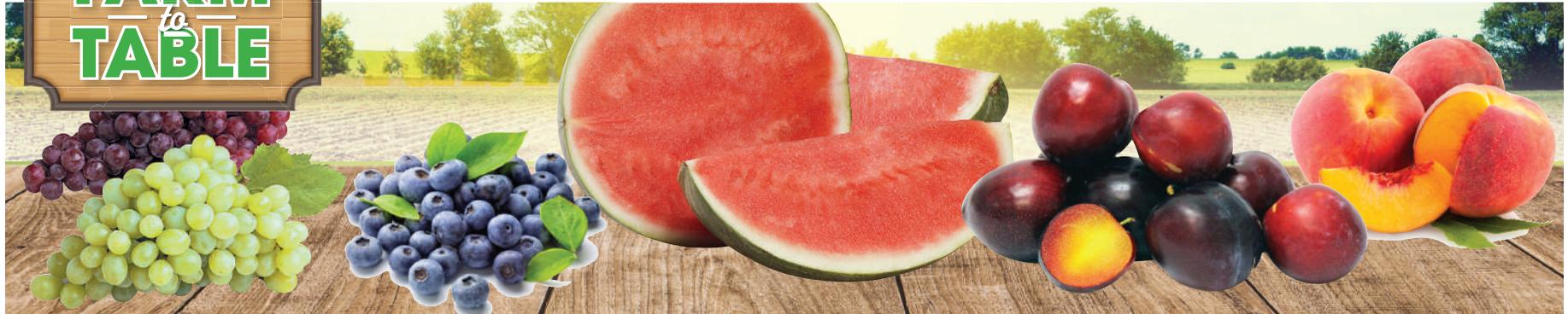


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PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION *News*

H-1 Program Earns Multiple Top NAVAIR Awards

The United States Marine Corps (USMC) Light/Attack Helicopter Program (PMA-276) received two 2022 Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Commander's Awards during a ceremony May 31.

The teams were recognized in the 'Speed of Capability Delivery' and 'Workforce Development' categories for their outstanding performance.

"Each of you, and your teammates, are living NAVAIR's core values: you start with the fleet; you change the game; you win with inclusion and respect. As a result, the NAVAIR team is delivering game-changing capability to the fleet," said Vice Adm. Carl Chebi, commander, NAVAIR, during his remarks at the ceremony.

PMA-276's Communications/Navigation team received the Speed of Capability Delivery award based on the team's rapid delivery of Beyond the Line-of-Sight (BLOS) communication upgrades on the UH-1Y Venom, specifically the Mobile User Objective System (MUOS) capability. MUOS is a communications satellite system that provides global connectivity to military networks.

Within a two-month turnaround, from the initial concept to fleet authorization to employ, the team successfully integrated MUOS onto a UH-1Y, years ahead of sched-

ule, within the bounds of available funding.

Also recognized during the ceremony, PMA-276's Light Attack Academy (LAA) team received the Workforce Development award. The team successfully implemented and executed a new educational training program that offers an internal course to program newcomers. Designed to improve workforce skills, workload management, productivity, and morale among co-workers, the course consists of 12 program management-based modules taught by program subject matter experts (SME) from the PMA. The LAA program offers an accelerated learning opportunity providing focused and intensive training modules on PMA-276-specific acquisition processes, best practices, and tools for project leads to use in conducting their daily duties.

The LAA program also includes specific leadership training and a mentoring panel to further enhance the value of the course to its students. This curriculum aligns with NAVAIR goals and processes. It is designed to significantly improve project leads' knowledge and leadership skills by supporting successful project execution, increasing personnel performance, and providing high-fidelity contributions to the fleet. Focusing on additional leadership training has helped PMA-276 team members pro-

vide significant contributions to PMA-276's mission of delivering and sustaining H-1 warfighting capability.

"As someone who was new to project management, LAA provided a foundation with useful tools and resources to successfully manage my projects," said Heather Wicks, LAA graduate. "The academy structure assisted me in establishing a network and community that I engage with regularly to facilitate my day-to-day responsibilities. The program was instrumental to my career development, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been able to learn from PMA-276's subject matter experts."

Since the start of the course, 35 students have successfully completed LAA within three cohorts. The course has been well received by its graduates and has been adopted by several other program offices across NAVAIR. The LAA was featured in an episode of NAVAIR's podcast and recently conducted its third cohort in April.

"I am extremely proud of the hard work



and dedication the team members of PMA-276 have demonstrated to enhance operations internally and for the fleet," said Col. Vasilios Pappas, PMA-276 program manager. "Both teams are very well deserving of the recognition and honor that the 2022 NAVAIR Commander's Awards reflect. The executive leadership team at PMA-276 and I are truly grateful for this workforce; we are privileged to work with such professionals every day."

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Benjamin Hance Exhibit at Leonardtown Library

St. Mary's County Library, in partnership with St. Mary's County Museum Division, is pleased to announce the soil sample collected in honor of Benjamin Hance is on display with educational materials at the Leonardtown Library until June 20.

A Soil Collection Ceremony was held on November 1, 2019, in commemoration of the only documented lynching victim, Benjamin Hance in 1887, at Port of Leonardtown Winery Park. During the ceremony, soil was collected from the spot where Hance died and put into 2 specially-made jars. One was sent to Montgomery, Alabama, and is now part of the National Memorial for Peace & Justice, and the other has stayed in St. Mary's County at the Old Jail Museum. The St. Mary's County sample is temporarily on display at the Leonardtown Library to commemorate the anniversary of Hance's death.

Benjamin Hance was a 22 year old Black man who was killed by a white mob on June 17, 1887 in Leonardtown before having the chance to stand trial for an alleged crime he was never convicted of. He is the only documented lynching victim in St. Mary's County history. An exhibit about his account can be seen inside the Old Jail Museum in the very cell he was held before being killed, and a memorial marker stands on the

grounds outside of the jail memorializing his story and life. The soil sample usually is a part of the exhibit in the Old Jail Museum. Benjamin Hance is buried in St. Aloysius cemetery in Leonardtown. To learn more, visit <https://eji.org/news/maryland-community-dedicates-historical-marker/>

The ceremony and soil collection was hosted by St. Mary's County Museum Division, in partnership with the Equal Justice Initiative, the National Memorial for Peace & Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, the Maryland Lynching Memorial Project, the Town of Leonardtown, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, Unified Committee on AfroAmerican Contributions (UCAC), St. Mary's County NAACP, Community Mediation Center of St. Mary's County, St. Aloysius Gonzaga Catholic Church in Leonardtown, Together We Will, the Sierra Club, the Archdiocese of Washington, St. Mary's Ryken High School, Maryland Commission on African American History & Culture, Tri-County All-Community Collaborative, Closing the Gap Coalition, All Saints Episcopal Parish, St. Mary's County Library, Concerned Black Women and others.

For more information, please contact Karen Stone at 240-925-0293. For more information about the Equal Justice Initiative, visit <https://eji.org>.

STEAM Programs at Piney Point Lighthouse

Children ages 7 to 13 are invited to enjoy 4 days of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) programming at the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum from July 18-21, 2023. Focused on outdoor science and exploration, the "Little Explorers" session (ages 7 to 10) and will be offered from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and the "Growing Naturalists" session (ages 11 to 13) will offered be from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Kids can explore different topics at Piney Point while having fun! Each day will feature a different nature theme filled with fun crafts and activities. Throughout this 4-day week, participants will discover Piney Point's grounds as part of the dynamic Potomac River ecosystem. During their adventures, kids will focus on fun and activities about native trees and birds, exploring local insects and their habitats, try their luck at fishing and crabbing, learning about the unique boats that sailed our waters, study some prehistoric creatures that lived in the area, as well as get wet with some fun water experiments. The program will focus on the S in STEAM (Science) and strive to show your child how great it is to learn about our local environment.

"Because Piney Point has so many interesting things for kids to explore, we thought it would be great to continue to offer this fun, yet educational, multiday STEAM program for children to take part in while off school for the summer," says Karen Stone, Manager

of the St. Mary's County Museum Division. "With such a broad range of topics, they're sure to find lots of fun things to do while enjoying the outdoors at the lighthouse."

Parents are encouraged to book their child's slot soon, as each program is limited to 15 participants to give each child the best hands-on experience possible. Call (301) 994-1471 or visit OutdoorAdventure.eventbrite.com to book; the cost is \$50 per child per session for the entire 4-day program. If you're booking more than one child, each additional is \$25 per session. For families wishing to keep children/siblings in the same group, older children may participate in the younger group session.

Parents/Caretakers: please bring your children prepared for a fun day of outdoor experiences. A backpack with a snack is encouraged, and a personal water bottle is required. Additionally, we recommend sunscreen application before joining the group, and a hand towel that we can mist throughout the day to drape over shoulders to keep cool as temperatures can be hot in July.

Parents are welcome to stay with their child if they wish. Safety is the top priority, and in cases of inclement weather, activities will move indoors while still covering many of the same subjects.

For more information about the program, other educational activities, or Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, please call (301) 994-1471 or visit Facebook.com/1836Light.

In Remembrance

To schedule an obituary in the County Times, submit text and picture to aldailey@countytimes.net by noon on Tuesdays for publication on Thursdays. Any submissions received after this deadline may run in the following week's edition.

Will Broms, 85



Willard Lloyd Broms (Will) of Leonardtown, MD, passed away on Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at the age of 85. He is survived by his devoted and loving wife of

51 years, Phyllis, and four children, Ron Simons (Myra), Donna Burris (Dan), Fred Broms, and Ed Broms. As an only child, he was preceded in death by his parents Will (Pap) and Elsie (Grandma) Broms, and son Bob Simons (Vickie). He was blessed with 11 grandchildren and 31 great-grandchildren; each of whom held a special place in his heart and were always well-supplied with candy (unless he stole it back!).

Will was born on December 8, 1937, and was raised on his family's farm in Polk, Venango County, Pennsylvania. He moved to Southern Maryland as a young man where he was a schoolteacher at Esperanza Middle School. While teaching, he went to law school at night, earning his Juris Doctor from the University of Baltimore

and became a prominent defense attorney with the law firm of Bailey, Bailey, and Broms. He retired from his legal career following his appointment of Assistant State's Attorney for St. Mary's County under then-State's Attorney and friend, Richard D. Fritz.

An intense interest in theology and mythology, Will was a life-long reader and learner who enjoyed taking classes at St. Mary's College and traveling the world. Will was the noble, yet comedic relief to any situation, always with a hymn in his heart and a story at the ready (albeit often inappropriate!). If you knew him, you have a "Willard Story" to tell. To know him was to love him.

His family will hold a private service to celebrate his life. In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to St. Mary's Nursing Center, whose staff cared for and loved him as their own.

Donations can be made to the St. Mary's Nursing Center, Inc. at 15585 Peabody Street, Leonardtown, Maryland, 20650.

Condolences may be made to the family at www.mgfh.com. Arrangements provided by the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home and Cremation Services, P.A., Leonardtown, MD.

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St. Mary's Department of Aging & Human Services

Programs and Activities

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

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

Enhance Fitness Focus on Fridays

Get your morning started right on Fridays at 9 a.m. at the Northern Senior Activity Center in Charlotte Hall with a 1-hour group class that's fun, motivating and results-driven. Enhance Fitness is a cardiovascular/weight training exercise class developed to improve flexibility, strength and balance. It is led by an engaging and energetic instructor trained and certified for the program. Take the first class for free on trial-basis. Future class participation is done with purchase of a fitness card for 10 classes (card cost is \$35 prior to July 3, 2023: \$40 effective thereafter.) The fitness class accepts drop-ins. If new to the Center and over 50 years of age, membership paperwork will need to be completed in advance.

Lyme Disease Documentary Screening: The Quiet Epidemic

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services is excited to be bringing The Quiet Epidemic (1hr 45min), an important new documentary about Chronic Lyme Disease, to our community! It is hosted by the Lyme Disease Discussion and Support Initiative and will be held at the Northern Senior Activity Center in Charlotte Hall on Monday, June 26, from 1-4 p.m.

Join us for the special screening at 1 p.m. and discussion from 3-4 p.m. to help raise awareness and learn more about Lyme disease in our community. The Quiet Epidemic

community screening is being held free to the public with event + Center registration required in advance. Register for this event by visiting www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs." If assistance is needed, leave a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115. Those who are new to the Center can complete the free-membership registration form in-person or online at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/aim.

July 3D Flower Plaque

Come join Penny B. at the Garvey Senior Activity Center on Tuesday, June 27, at 10 a.m. as she shows you how to create a beautiful 3D plaque for the July holiday! All instructions and supplies are provided. The cost of the class is \$20. You can now use the online registration at www.stmarysmd.com/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs". To learn more, call 301-475-4200, ext. 1080. Advanced registration is required.

Stars & Stripes Celebration at Loffler

Loffler Senior Activity Center will be hosting this Intergenerational Event on Thursday, July 6, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. so invite your (grown) children and grandchildren here to extend the celebration of our nation's origins with you for some patriotic fun! We'll have a hot dog lunch, sing some songs with our chorus group, host a

Hall Parade and finish off with ice cream. Be sure to wear red, white and blue! Cost \$3 per adult; Plus, lunch donation for 60+ and \$6 for under 60. Sign up and prepay \$3 fee at stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or leave a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660 and pay fee in person. Lunch payments shall be paid on the day of event. Preregistration is required, limited seating available.

Art Pottery: Monstrous Planters

The Northern Senior Activity Center will hold a pottery class on Fridays, July 7 and 21, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. An experienced pottery and craftsperson will guide you on crafting a decorative planter for the home or garden featuring cute and unique monster features. The cost is \$10 with clay supplies and firing fees included. Register for this event by visiting www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs." If assistance is needed, leave a message at 301-475-4200, ext. 3115.

Loffler Book Club News

This Book Club will meet at the Loffler Senior Activity Center on July 7 at 2 p.m. to discuss Educated: A Memoir by Tara Westover. If you've read this book and wish to discuss it with others who have read it, stop in and share your thoughts. Contact Sheila.Graziano@stmaryscountymd.gov if you have questions or wish to be put on the

e-mail list for this group.

Make a Rag Quilt in Two Days

Loffler Senior Activity Center is happy to host this two-day workshop on Wednesday, July 12, and Friday, July 14, from 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m. There is no cost for the actual workshop, but you will need to bring your sewing machine plus materials and supplies. Rag quilts are easy to make and are suitable for beginning sewists, but some sewing experience is required. Contact Sheila. Graziano@stmaryscountymd.gov for a full list of supplies and materials. Registration for the workshop can be accomplished at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging. Limited to 8 participants.

MGM Casino Trip

Do you want to get out of town, but don't want to fight the city traffic? Come join us for the MGM Casino Trip! The cost is \$55 per person. Cost includes luxury round-trip motorcoach transportation, snacks on the bus, and gratuities for the bus driver. Lunch and casino play will be at your own cost. There is a large selection of restaurants within the casino. Pick-up will be at the Garvey Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, July 19, at 9 a.m. and drop-off will be at the Garvey Senior Activity Center at 5 p.m., depending on traffic.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library



Fossil Hunting in Southern Maryland

Learn all about fossils and fossil hunting in Southern Maryland from the expert at Leonardtown Library on Thursday, June 29 from 2 - 3 p.m. Dr. Stephen Godfrey, a paleontologist at Calvert Marine Museum, rangers from Calvert Cliffs State Park, and Samantha Warby from Merkle Natural Resource Management Area will educate us on fossils in the Southern Maryland region, and fossil hunting in our area. You don't want to miss the awesome fossil displays they will have on hand! Please register each person in your group who is attending on www.stmalib.org.

Book Upcycling: Paper Folds and Crafts

What do you do with your old books? Join us at Charlotte Hall Library on Thursday, June 29 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. as we teach you how to upcycle yesterday's reads. You can bring your own books or use our previously weeded library books. Crafts will be instructed by the librarian presenting or make your own, with copies of the directions handed out to each attendee. No registration.

All Together Now: An Art Project

Feeling creative? Join us for All Together Now: An Art Project at Charlotte Hall Library on Saturday, July 1 from 2- 3:30 p.m. This year's summer reading theme is All Together Now: Todos Juntos Aho-

ra - Kindness/Friendship/Unity. What better way to celebrate than by making a drawing or painting that represents what the word "together" means to you? You can even submit your artwork for consideration to be included in a new display at the Charlotte Hall Library! This event aims to bring together artists from all skill levels and backgrounds. Art supplies will be provided, no registration.

Library Closed for Independence Day

All three locations of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Tuesday, July 4 in observance of Independence Day. All locations will be open regular business hours on Wednesday, July 5.

Taiko: The Art of Japanese Drumming with Mark Rooney

An interactive performance of traditional & contemporary songs & rhythms that explores the instruments, the voice in taiko, and a bit of history & Japanese vocabulary. Two sessions: Monday, July 10 at 10:30 a.m. at Lexington Park Library and 2 p.m. at Leonardtown Library. Some audience volunteers will get to try their hand at playing these BIG drums! Note for those with sensitive ears: Taiko drums are very, very loud. Most seating will be on the floor- feel free to bring a blanket! Space may be limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Summer Performing Arts events are supported in part by a grant from the St. Mary's County Arts Council.

St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Fri, Jun 23

Food Truck Fri. @ 2nd Dist. VFD&RS—Linda's Cafe

2nd District VFD & RS
19330 Piney Point Rd., Valley Lee
4 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Come get dinner to take home!
A percentage of sales from food truck goes back to the department
For more info contact Stephanie Alvey @ stephanie.alvey@hotmail.com;

SMTMD Acoustic Open Mic

Christ Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd., Chaptico
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Enjoy some fine acoustic music performed by local talented singers and song-writers. Musicians of all skill levels are warmly invited to perform. The admission is \$7; performers are admitted free of charge. Contact Michael Smith smtmdmike@gmail.com in advance if you'd like to sign up to perform. Visit www.smtmd.org for more information.

Sat, Jun 24

Huge Community Yard Sale

Immaculate Conception Church Parish Hall (Behind the church)
28294 Old Village Rd, Mechanicsville
7 a.m. to Noon

Rain or Shine
Benefiting St. Vincent de Paul Society
For information, contact Jim Downey
301-481-4193

Texas Hold'Em @ HVRS

Hollywood Volunteer Rescue Squad
23469 Rescue Ln., Hollywood
6 p.m. to Midnight

\$85.00 buy-in for \$20k in chips. Rounds are 20 minutes each. Doors open at 5 pm, tournament starts at 6pm. BYOB, food and sodas will be available for purchase.

See www.hvrs.org for more info. Chance at Blind Bounty included in your buy-in. Tables deal their own cards, dealers are not provided. Late Entries permitted until 1st break, approx. 7 pm cut off. No rebuys allowed. Pull tabs for sale as well. **We will now have an ATM on site.**

Please note this event is at the Rescue

Squad, not the Fire House

11 a.m. until sold out

Menu: Crab cakes, fried chicken and country ham. Sides: Potato salad, cole slaw, green beans, pickled beets and rolls. Cake table available. Drive thru and carry-outs only, \$30. Cash or checks only, no credit card service available

Sun, Jun 25

76th Church Anniversary

First Missionary Baptist Church
46370 Pegg Ln, Lexington Park
10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

You are cordially invited to join us! First Missionary Baptist Church, under the leadership of Pastor Roderick W. McClanahan, will celebrate its 76th Church Anniversary on June 25, 2023, during the 10:00am Divine Worship. Our Guest Preacher will be Reverend James W. Jones, Pastor, Antioch Baptist Church, Clinton, Maryland.

The occasion will be held in the church Sanctuary; as well as virtually. The virtual phone number is 617-691-8533 or virtual meeting ID: join.freeconferencecall.com/fmbc0.

For additional information please contact First Missionary Baptist Church at 301-863-8388.

Drive Thru Dinner

Sacred Heart Church
23080 Maddox Rd., Bushwood

Upcoming

Oral History Workshop

St. Mary's College of Maryland
Dodge Performing Arts Center
Sat, Jul 8, 9 a.m. to Noon

The Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions invites community members interested in learning how to conduct effective oral history interviews to a free workshop with Dr. Iris Carter Ford, Emerita Professor of Anthropology. This workshop is for the novice or experienced interviewer - for those who want to capture family stories or histories or want to join a community project. There will be a mid-morning break and refreshments will be provided. To attend, please reserve a spot by July 1. Text 301-904-1056 or join on Facebook at <https://fb.me/e/17k9EE1uC>



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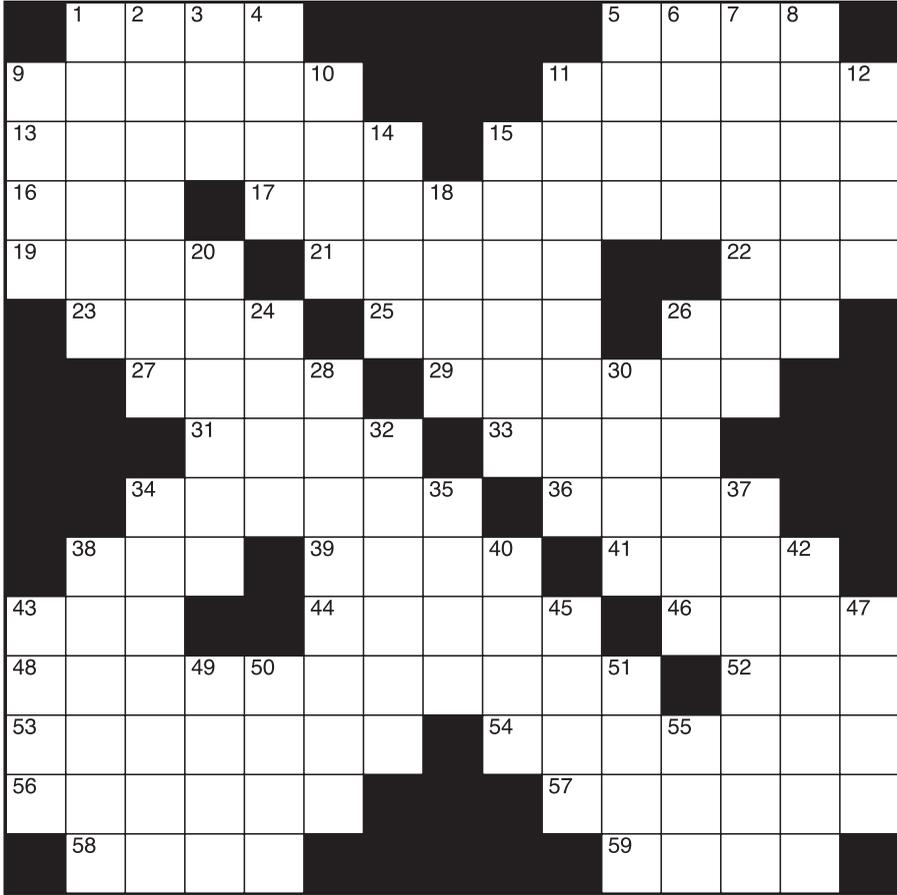
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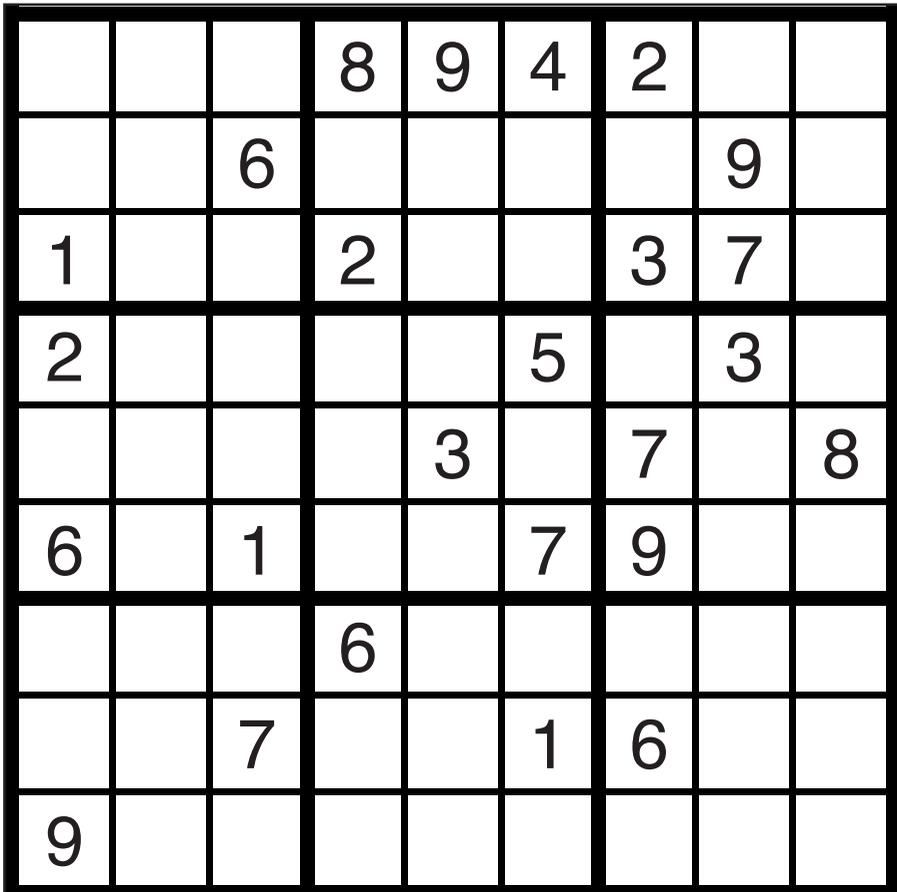


CLUES ACROSS

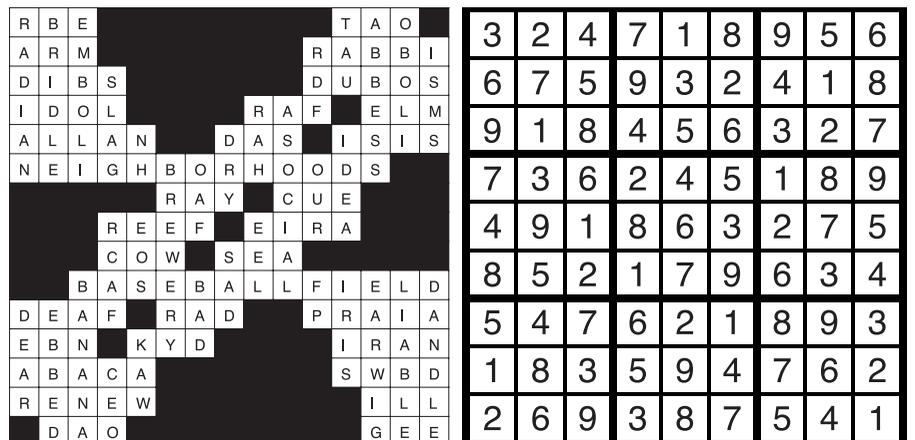
- 1. Understand intuitively
- 5. Two of something
- 9. Not involving computer tech
- 11. Acclaimed
- 13. Undermine
- 15. The condition of being concealed or hidden
- 16. Irritate
- 17. The process of developing a theory
- 19. Ceramic jar
- 21. Not fresh
- 22. Dad's fashion accessory
- 23. Popular review site
- 25. New Mexico county
- 26. '___ death do us part
- 27. Fees
- 29. Takes with force
- 31. One-time Yankees rookie sensation
- 33. Gordon and Snider are two
- 34. Body parts
- 36. Arranges
- 38. Fiddler crabs
- 39. Mimics
- 41. Witnesses
- 43. They ___
- 44. Lasso
- 46. Runs down
- 48. In response to
- 52. Bird-like dinosaur
- 53. Metamorphic stages
- 54. Conditions of incapacity
- 56. Sodas are sold in these units
- 57. Break away from
- 58. Ethereal
- 59. Boggy

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Licensed for Wall Street
- 2. "___ and flow"
- 3. A very large body of water
- 4. Accumulate on the surface of
- 5. Central cores of the stem
- 6. Angry
- 7. Ceramic jar
- 8. Scraped a car
- 9. ___ route
- 10. Soviet labor camp system
- 11. Strong hostilities
- 13. Vitamin of the B complex
- 15. Go quickly
- 17. Toast
- 18. A team's best pitcher
- 21. A Philly culinary specialty
- 23. Small child
- 24. Unhappy
- 27. Trims away
- 29. Characterized by crying eyes
- 32. Soft touch
- 34. American spy organization
- 35. A person's chest
- 36. Came from behind to win
- 39. Fall back
- 40. Nellie ___, journalist
- 43. Great places to kayak
- 44. Suffer patiently
- 46. Majestic bird
- 47. Electroencephalograph
- 49. Organic compound used as an antiseptic
- 51. Objects connected to the web (abbr.)
- 54. Ship as cargo
- 59. The bill in a restaurant
- 60. Upper-class young woman (abbr.)
- 61. Judge in OJ Simpson trial
- 62. One's grandmother
- 64. Siberian river



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS



Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Jun 22

Mobile Health Center

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
11 a.m.-2 p.m.

Come talk about your healthcare questions or needs because a simple change can make a difference in you or your family's life. Calvert Health Mobile van information from CalvertHealth. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

<https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Jun 23

Mornings at the Museum: Summertime Blues

Calvert Marine Museum
10 – 11 a.m.

Join an educator on the historic *William B. Tennison* for a hands-on blue crab educational experience. This youth field program uses live blue crabs to illustrate their life cycle and how to identify male and female crabs. Discover the history of the blue crab fishery on the Patuxent River and learn the ins and outs of our annual blue crab harvest. Cost is \$20 per participant. Participants are required to have an adult accompany them for the trip.

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. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sat, Jun 24

13th Annual Drink Maryland

Bay Avenue, North Beach
12-5 p.m.
Free

Enjoy the beautiful views while exploring a wonderful selection of Maryland-made art, food, and drink. Shop local artisans, browse food vendors and enjoy the live music. 301-855-6681.

Calvert Bluegrass & Acoustic Music Festival

5400 Mackall Rd, St Leonard
Noon-5 p.m.

A free family-friendly event. Bring your

lawn chairs or blankets to enjoy a day of multiple bands & food trucks.

Bands include Riverside South featuring Chris Tenney & Pat Nutter, The Port Tobacco Pickers, Jay Armsworthy and Cousins in Harmony, The Unclouded Day, and Busmill Band.

FOOD TRUCKS featuring: k's Lunchbox (authentic Mexican dishes), Smokin' Fatty's BBQ, Hance Funnel Cakes, and Calvert's Ice Shack.

No Smoking or alcohol allowed. Free-will offering will be collected to support Safe A Harbor Domestic Abuse Shelter in Prince Frederick. For more info call 410-586-1716 Monday—Friday 9 a.m. -1 p.m.

Ziggy Marley Performs Live

Calvert Marine Museum
14200 Solomons Island Rd, Solomons
Gates open at 5 p.m., concert at 7 p.m.
\$39-\$69 plus additional fees

Grammy winner, musician, producer, activist, and humanitarian Ziggy Marley will perform live at the Motto Mortgage Preferred and RE/MAX One Waterside Pavilion at the Calvert Marine Museum. Gates open at 5 p.m. with food and beverage vendors onsite. The Calvert Marine Museum and Museum Store close at 3 p.m. for concert preparations.

Tickets at <https://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com/141/Waterside-Music-Series> or through Etix by calling 1-800-514-3849.

Mon, Jun 26

Affordable Connectivity Program sign up + info session

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

The Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that helps households pay for home internet and connected devices. National School Lunch Program, SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Lifeline, Federal Pell Grants, WIC, and other benefit program recipients are eligible. Please bring your identification and benefit documentation. Learn more: <https://www.fcc.gov/acp> or by stopping by to see us! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Jun 27

Summer STEAM

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
2:30pm-3:30pm.

Combat the heat and join our interactive Summer STEAM hour as we build a strong

community through books, activities and a snack. For kids K-5th grade. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Jun 28

Job Seeker Resources

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Maryland Department of Labor, Veterans Program, Senior Community Service Employment, and Job Service representatives will be in person to meet with those seeking employment or career change. Walk ins welcome on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Skill Builders Workshop

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Overcoming Seven Challenges that Interfere with your Success. This workshop offered by Maryland Department of Labor, American Job Center encourages you to move forward from the most common challenges that interfere with your success. Learn how to say 'YES' to a rewarding work life! Registration ends 24 hours before the event and is strongly recommended, but some walk-in assistance can be provided on a first-come basis after the workshop materials have been covered. For more library resources on this topic, visit Calvert Library's Jobs and Careers page online, or visit us in-person! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Affordable Connectivity Program sign up + info session!

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Rd, Owings,
1-3 p.m.

The Affordable connectivity Program (ACP) is a federal government program that helps households pay for home internet and connected devices. National School Lunch Program, SNAP, Medicaid, Federal Public Housing Assistance, Lifeline, Federal Pell Grants, WIC, and other benefit program recipients are eligible. Come to the library and drop into one of our ACP sign up and info sessions to learn more about the program, how to tell if you qualify, and how to get signed up! Librarians and internet service providers will be in attendance ready to answer questions and assist you with any concerns. Please bring your identification and benefit documentation. Learn more: <https://www.fcc.gov/acp> or by stopping by to see us. 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Reading Buddies

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

At this event, elementary aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Thu, Jun 29

Summer STEAM

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Rd, Solomons,

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Rd, Owings

Twin Beaches Branch
3819 Harbor Rd, Chesapeake Beach
2:30-3:30 p.m.

Combat the heat and join our interactive Summer STEAM hour as we Imagine Our Story through books, activities and a snack. For kids K-5th grade. 410-326-5289, 410-257-2101 or 410-257-2411. <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! A program for K-5 graders to practice reading in a relaxed and welcoming group space! A fun event that inspires a love of reading, offers great social activities for shy or anxious children and teens, and promotes positive interactions between children of all ages. Teens get to participate in a meaningful experience by encouraging children and helping them with their reading skills. They can also earn a service hour for school. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Little Minnows: Plants

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

For preschoolers ages 3 – 5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story time and a craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. The cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive.

What's Coming to Calvert

The following list of pending site plans was presented to the Calvert County Planning Commission at their June 21 meeting. That means that the proposals are on the list for consideration by the planning commission at a future meeting. The meeting was in a hybrid form, both virtually and in person at the Harriet E. Brown Community Center (HEBCC), 901 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick.

1) CSPR-142842, **Sunset Terrace Condominiums**, Mixed Use, located at 14474 & 14478 South Solomons Island Road, Solomons, on two lots totaling .42 acres, zoned Solomons Town Center. Proposed 19,191- square-foot, three-story building for mixed use: 1,000-square-foot commercial retail space and 18,191 square feet for eight condominiums with parking and site improvements. This project is on public water and sewer. The concept submittal was accepted July 27, 2022. Agent: COA Barrett.

2) CSPR-142856, **Solomons Condominiums**, located at 14516 & 14518 South Solomons Island Road, Solomons, on two lots totaling .67 acres, zoned Solomons Town Center. Proposed 34,483-square-foot, four-story building for mixed use: 2,450-square-foot commercial retail space and 32,033 square feet for 13 multi-family condominiums with parking and site improvements. This project is in the Critical Area and on public water and sewer. The concept submittal was accepted July 27, 2022. Agent: COA Barrett.

3) CSPR-142881, **Prince Frederick Town Center South Shopping Plaza**, located on South Solomons Island Road, Prince Frederick, on 115-acre parcel, zoned Town Center/Forest District. This project will have private water but will utilize public sewer. Proposed 75,099 square feet of disturbance for commercial retail space with parking and site improvements. The concept submittal was accepted September 28, 2022. Agent: COA Barrett.

4) CSPR-142871, **Calvert Hills - Phase II**, located on Calvert Hills Road, Prince Frederick on a 2.33-acre parcel, zoned Town Center/Village. This project is proposed for 35 apartment units, served by public water & sewer, to complete the development that started with Calvert Hills - Phase I. The concept submittal was accepted October 26, 2022. Agent: Bay Engineering.

5) CSPR-142807, **STR Gymnastics & Dance**, located at 655 Skinners Turn Road, Owings, on multiple lots totaling 1.9 acres, zoned light industrial (I-1), using private water and sewer. Proposed 10,800-square-foot building for holding classes in gymnastics (7,400sf) and dance (3,400sf). The submitted plan indicates a possible

address change due to dual road frontage. The concept submittal was accepted March 23, 2022 and has been granted a one-year extension. Agent: Wilkerson & Associates.

6) CSPR-142742, **Magnolia Ridge**, located at the corner of Dares Beach Road and Fox Run Boulevard, Prince Frederick on 31.20 acres, Zoned Prince Frederick Town Center, New Town District. Proposed 96 multi-family apartment units and 164 townhouse units with associated site improvements. This project is on public water and sewer. The concept submittal was accepted October 28, 2021 and has been granted a one-year extension. Agent: Barrett & Assoc.

The following Major Subdivision Proposed Project List for Upcoming Review was also submitted at the same meeting.

1) SD-142770, **Lusby Villas**, Lot 1, located on Lusby Parkway in Lusby. One commercial lot proposed on one parcel consisting of 24.87 acres, Zoned Lusby Town Center, Village Residential Office District, Tier I. The Preliminary Plan submittal was accepted January 26, 2022. Agent: COA Barrett

2) SD-142955, **Armory Towns**, located on Armory Road in Prince Frederick. This project is on two residential parcels totaling .85 acres, Zoned Prince Frederick Town Center, Old Town Transition District. A total of nine townhouses are proposed, each lot size averaging 1,764 sf, as well as a 6,597 sf playing field and 400 sf mini-park. The project will utilize public water and sewer. The Preliminary Plan submittal was accepted April 26, 2023. Agent: COA Barrett.

Concept submittals have been removed from this list. There is no assurance that those projects will reach Preliminary Plan status. If/when they do, they will be placed on this list under their Preliminary Plan project number.

Information supplied by Calvert County Office of Planning and Zoning.



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1 in 3 households have children that live with smokers in Calvert County.

(2018 BRFSS data)

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- ▶ Hay fever and allergies (runny nose and irritable)
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- ▶ Behavior Problems like irritability, ADHD
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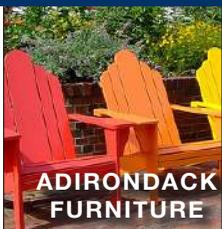


SWEET BAY MAGNOLIA

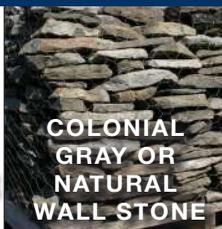
From the Project Desk



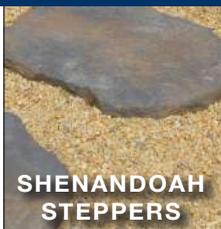
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Letters to the Editor

A solution in search of a problem

The Calvert Board of Education (BoE) faces a two-dimensional problem in processing a proposal by Board Member, Ms. Jana Post. Her Policy Statement #2305 would substantially change how the Public School System (CCPS) selects library materials.

First, it needs to determine whether the CCPS library system exposes students to sexual materials that some parents consider inappropriate. If so, does the CCPS library support those parents who do not want their children to see such materials without preventing other parents, who would prefer not blocking such materials, from allowing their children to see them? Ms. Post's proposal did not say why a such a major change is needed. So, the BoE has no clear description of what problem needs to be fixed.

Second, Ms. Post did not address how her new system would function and what effect her expanded "curation" process would have on library operations. A recent article in the June 10 Washington Post reported that a majority of 1,000 complaints it studied about school libraries were filed by 11 people. Given that Ms. Post's proposal for reviewing complaints could take up to 180 days to complete, individuals obsessed with their appeals could overwhelm the new system with repeated demands for reconsideration. Another complication could be that the proposed system would not limit complaints to Calvert residents or parents of children in Calvert schools, thereby potentially allowing an overwhelming number of complaints.

Ms. Post needs to answer key questions to make the BoE's deliberations more substantive:

- What specific problem is she is trying

to fix?

- Have the librarians in the CCPS system been consulted about the need for a new screening system to address her unspecified problems?
- What would be the roles of current librarians relative to the new committees if her policies were to be adopted?
- How would the new system relate to Maryland state library and other schools' library curation policies?
- Would the removal of materials that a few parents find objectionable prevent other parents from using these materials with their children?
- Would the cumbersome process for addressing parent, A&O's complaints create a screening process that is too vague, cumbersome, and counterproductive to be effective?
- Would guidelines for filing complaints in the new system be structured to prevent one or two individuals from overwhelming the system with serial complaints?

Her proposed new process could take a library system that is functioning well and introduce unnecessary confusion and controversy where none currently exists. Given the absence of specific complaints, her proposal appears to be a solution in search of a problem—and the proposed changes risk creating bigger problems than her new policies would solve.

Ms. Post needs to answer these key questions before the Calvert BoE discusses or votes on her proposal.

*Leonard Zuza
Solomons*

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Tuck Named School Support Person of the Year

Combining Teaching and Nursing Life Experiences

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Keren Tuck's journey to the point where she became this year's Calvert County Educational Support Professional of the Year was a long and winding one. Tuck is a special education instructional assistant at Sunderland Elementary School.

Tuck, 53, came to America from South Africa. She and her husband immigrated to America 25 years ago "with six boxes, four suitcases, and a thousand dollars cash."

She explained, "I was a registered nurse and worked as a midwife and then as a school nurse at a private boarding school in Johannesburg. After arriving in America, my husband and I directed a Salvation Army Worship and Service Center in Columbus, Ohio for nine years. And it's there that we directed community programs, and we led the center's ministries as well as doing social services, including casework and a choice food pantry. I was also responsible for establishing and running educational, spiritual, and recreational programs for teens, children, and women when we were there. And then after nine years there, we moved to New Jersey where I became the director of special services for a Salvation Army Camp and Conference Center. I was responsible for producing life enhancing programs based on established outcomes that met whatever that particular community's needs were. And those programs included health, education, life skills, training, entertainment, recreation, and spiritual formation. And it was while I was living in New Jersey that I volunteered a great deal for the Journey for Change program, which was developed for students ages 11 to 14, who attended the Salvation Army after school learning centers in Brooklyn, New York. And the program was set up to mentor teens with a heavy emphasis on education, completing high school and encouraging them to be college bound. And the program included overseas mission trips, retreats, and college tours and over and above the ongoing mentoring and teaching of life skills."

Tuck said, "It was this experience that really opened my eyes to the inequities some of the underserved communities in America have to endure. And then, after being in New Jersey for about 10 years, we moved to Maryland, and I absolutely love living in Maryland. I was educated in another country, and this is the third state my children have been educated in. But as a mom, I can honestly say that the education my children have received in this county has been exceptional. I'm very grateful to be a part of the Calvert County Public Schools team."

She noted, "It was my husband who took a job here that he really wanted, so we all got in the car and moved down. We did do a lot of research when we were moving down to the DMV as to where we wanted to land. And I'd say the number one factor of where we decided to live had to do with what we understood to be the best school system we could offer our children. And, we have not been disappointed. It really has been a very good experience for us."

They have three children, two of whom have graduated from Northern High School and one who is a rising senior.

Her job at Sunderland involves "reading fluency interventions with students who need them. I work with students with individual educational plans, which is known as AIEP. I work with them one-on-one and also in small groups, or I could work with them in a classroom setting, helping them to navigate certain subjects, certain classes. And I also work with other students who don't have the IEPs, who just have some gaps emerging that need a little bit of support in certain areas. Then they'll be on my schedule, and then I'll either go into their classrooms and help them in real time in the classroom or also pull them out one-on-one or in small groups. But usually those interventions cover math and language arts."

Her dual experience in education and healthcare has served her well at Sunderland. She explained, "It's very important because I believe wholeheartedly that addressing the entire child is very important for their success. And not to just see them as someone who you need to help academically, but to see them as a whole. And I think the nursing background and my life, my activities and mentoring and training children and mentoring college students to mentor teenagers, all these different roles that I've had up to now have really helped. And nursing is definitely one of those. When I was a school nurse in Johannesburg, it was a private boarding school, and was a girls' school and there were so many things that I had to do there. When you've got borders who are living away from their parents, and they come to the nurse, sometimes it's for something medical, but sometimes it's because they needed a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on, and they need support and guidance."

In her job Tuck gets to work one on one with her students. "The amazing thing is that I do get to build these lovely relationships with these amazing students. In fact, a friend of mine that I work with calls my board, the cork board by my desk, 'The Wall of Love,' because I literally have so many letters and cards and artwork from just about all of my students. And as soon as they give me one, they know it goes up on my wall."

Tuck has been chosen Educational Support Professional of the Year in a year in which the spotlight has been shining on the support staff amid calls for them to receive pay increase parity with the teachers through the Blueprint educational reform. Tuck is a member of the Calvert Association of Educational Support Staff (CAESS). She said, "It's a very important thing. It is important that people are paid their worth."

Of being chosen to represent them, she said, "I was so surprised and shocked when I was told about it. At the time I found out I was in the cafeteria with the first graders, and then my principal and the superintendent and some BOE members walked in chanting, and I felt totally dazed. And of course, there were some tears. But it is big. I feel like it is a responsibility to represent so many of the invisible helping hands that are the fabric of CCCPS. There are nurses and

guidance counselors and custodians and secretaries, and there just so many incredible support people."

Tuck said, "And the job itself honestly feels like a reward. I guess when I was living in South Africa, I always wanted to be a teacher, but the mechanisms for college grants and loans didn't exist in South Africa, and I couldn't afford to. So, I enrolled in nursing college because there was a government subsidized work study program I could afford. And after graduating and working in a few different fields of nursing, I became a school nurse and realized that I absolutely loved working in the school environment. And, I guess no matter what jobs I've had, I can see the thread of teaching is always at the core of it."

"I just feel like the job itself is a reward.

I honestly mean that because I finally found where I need to be. You know, George Elliott said, 'It is never too late to become what you might have been.' And I'm living proof of that."

dickmyers@countytimes.net.



Keren Tuck's "Wall of Love" in her classroom

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Grenis, Post Question Dress Code Changes

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The proposal by Calvert County Board of Education President Inez Claggett to modify the school system's dress code policy has drawn comments from new school board members Lisa Grenis and Jana Post and led to a dialogue on the issue between Post and board Vice President Antoine White. After the discussions at the board's June 15 meeting, the changes were put out for a 30-day review by the public and staff.

Grenis said, "I wanted to discuss the hoodies. That's the one I have a significant issue with. It was described as a way of letting students express themselves. Well, if we go back a few years ago, we had kids who wanted to express themselves by wearing their pants down to their ankles. You remember that, walking around with their underwear showing. That is obviously not appropriate for school, and it was not allowed. And to me, wearing hoodies is not appropriate for school, simply because it puts an extra burden on the teacher, and we shouldn't be doing anything that puts an extra burden. We know that there are kids who are wearing earbuds and hiding it by wearing the hoodies. I just don't think it's a necessary way for children to express themselves. It's not needed. I was in a school not long ago, within the past month, and I walked to one classroom and came back and during that time, I counted 11 children wearing hoodies. Not one of them had it behind



School board Vice President Antoine White

the ear. So, to me, it's just going to be something added to the dress code that won't be enforced. And that worries me because these teachers are being held accountable for student achievement. And if that prevents students from achieving, why let it happen?"

Post said, "From a perspective of a parent who has a kid who likes to wear a hoodie, I wish that there was a policy that prevented it. Because every day when he leaves the house, I tell him to take his hood down. For him, I don't think it's anything other than it's a habit. But I also think he sometimes his attention is an issue in school, and I don't want that to be something that he hides."

Post added she was particularly con-



School board member Jana Post

cerned about the section that prohibits the wearing of attire "that causes or is likely to cause material disruption and substantial disorder to school activities, or the orderly operation of school, or an invasion of the rights of others."

Post asked how that would be enforced. She said, "I think it would be beneficial to stay away from statements that are more subjective. So, what is offensive to me may be different than offensive to you and might be different than offensive to others. Where do we draw that line?"

White said, "I think that as board members, we're older, things are different now. I think the mere fact that we had students

working on this policy, that we should listen to what they're saying. I know that for when I go to some of the middle schools and high schools and I see these kids walking or whatever they're doing, the principals are really intact and in tune with what's going on in these schools."

White added, "I don't think that teacher should have to be the policy police or anything like that, but when it comes to different policies and things like that with us, it's hard sometimes for us to make decisions for some of the kids. We should listen to them and actually see what they are saying and make sure that we are honoring what they're saying."

Post responded, "I do agree to an extent, but I also tell you that I, without saying any specific high school, but I too am at some, and it seems as though the thing about not showing your midsection, I could count every given day...the number of females that I saw with their midsections out and open."

White responded, "It's pretty hard when you think about a couple of hundred kids walking down a hallway and I talk to one teacher, if someone's dressed borderline, they'll get all the way to the other side of their friends. So, it's not something that we can really control 100 percent. Granted, I understand that we should try to."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Townsel: 'It Was a Very Successful Year'

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

"I would categorize my first year as very successful. It was a very successful year," said Calvert County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Andrae Townsel about school year 2022-23, his first at the helm of the school system.

On the day after the last day of school and a week after a successful graduation for the county's four high schools, Townsel told The County Times, "I do believe that our student achievement will improve this year based on our standardized assessments. The educators were phenomenal. Students were amazing. The community as a whole is slowly but surely coming together to be a complete team."

Townsel added, "Calvert County, great working relationship with our county administrators, great working relationships with our elected officials, great working relationships with all of our bargaining unit presidents and teachers and principals."

Townsel reflected, "It's just been a great year, man. I'm so excited about what's coming up in the new year, because we're going to start strategic planning for the next three to five years of what that will look like and aligning it to the Blueprint for Maryland's Future."

The Blueprint is the rollout of the state's

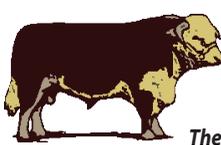


Calvert County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Andrae Townsel

ambitious education reform initiative

"So, today, with this school year very successful," he said, "it was an opportunity for me to learn as much as I could possibly learn about the community. And now it's all about action plans for the future of the community."

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School Library Review Policy Tabled

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The controversial proposal espoused by Calvert County Board of Education member Jana Post to introduce more controls over school library book selection has been tabled by the board with no timetable set for reconsideration. And a proposal for more oversight over sex education curriculum has been modified by Post and will be circulated for comment from staff and the public.

The motion to table the book selection policy was presented by board member Lisa Grenis and approved unanimously by the four members in attendance. But a suggestion by her to create a committee to study the issue was opposed by two members and eventually failed.

The book selection decision at the June 15 school board meeting came after the controversy continued to unravel during the board's public comment period. During that time the proposal by Post was opposed by the Calvert Education Association (CEA), which represents the teachers. Amy Cox, representing CEA, said the opposition had been affirmed by their executive board and by a petition from 650 teachers and community members.

But the public session began with a teacher reading some selections from library books that included graphic sexual descriptions of oral sex.

While many parents continue to be concerned about such content in library books, others say the concerns are being taken out of context, are homophobic, and the school librarians should be allowed to do the job they were professionally trained to do.

So, with the tabling there appears to be no end in sight to the controversy that has deeply divided the community.

Cox, at the public forum, spoke to both policies suggested by Post in reading from their contract with the school board on academic freedom: "The fundamental need to protect teachers from censorship or restraint

which might interfere with their obligation to present all facets, sides, and/or opinions of all, and about any and all topics introduced and shall strive to promote tolerance for the views of others and for the right of individuals to form and hold differing views and opinions."

Cox said the proposals from Post were not policy but procedures that were the purview of the superintendent and his staff and not the school board.

She said the library selection proposal would "dismantle the independent authority of teachers to deliver instruction in a manner they deem effective and appropriate."

But teacher Tiffany Hans said the books with the sexually graphic selections she read had been on the American Library Association's top 13 challenge list for 2022. "Books that are challenged are for drugs, alcohol, being sexually explicit and numerous other topics. If a teacher overheard students talking like this, they would tell them to stop because it's inappropriate. Teachers would never show a movie like this at school because it's inappropriate. So why is it appropriate for a child to read a book from school that's describing sexual activity in such detail? I agree with permission slips for certain books in the library and classrooms. I do not agree with the entire policy as it's written. It's impossible for a group of teachers or a librarian to read hundreds of books we purchase each year."

"I hope all parties involved will work together on a solution that meets everyone's needs," she concluded.

Teacher Natalie Geiger, said, "The policy proposal makers pride themselves in stating that the policy does not say anything about discriminating against marginalized groups. However, when you look at the books that they would like to target and take away from our students, they claim couldn't be farther from the truth. The website Behind School Doors has a list of books that supporters of the policy want to ban. The majority of these books are indeed featuring LGBTQIA+ and

people of color. Interesting!

"As a high school teacher, I know of so many other books that could be labeled sexually explicit but are not being targeted. Popular books that are well known and read by many. The Bible has many beautiful passages that explain to readers how to be Christ-like and live a good life. This text also has stories of rape, incest, and brutality. It is freely available in high school libraries. For various other works like William Shakespeare and works of Chancer and countless others are also freely available in the library, even encouraged to be read but technically should be marked sexually explicit."

Riley Brown, who identified himself as a "queer" student, said if the policies proposed were approved, "the educational environment of this county will collapse."

David Hill said, "It's clear to me that these efforts are nothing more than solutions in search of a problem. From a practical and financial standpoint, I don't believe that the proposed committees are workable. Our public schools have skilled librarians and teachers who have demonstrated time and again why Calvert County is recognized at the top of the list of the quality of its public schools."

But Patty Stepler, a small business owner and mother of two grown graduates of Calvert County Public Schools, said, "I would not want my five-, six-, and seven-year-old granddaughters to read any of that material that was read here today that is found in our public schools. Would you want them to read that? I would like them to retain their innocence. I'd like them to learn to read, learn to spell, have math skills, writing skills, which we are so desperately in need of in this country. Let's get back to the basics."

Post was somewhat contrite in her comments. "I don't want you to be angry with me. I want you to come and have a conversation and tell me why you think the things that are in here should be procedure versus



Calvert Education Association board member Amy Cox

should be policy. That's the whole purpose of this. I'm learning just like you guys are learning. So, if there are things that were suggestions that you have, and there's been some amazing suggestions, even some that I heard here today, that's the purpose."

She added, "The intent again was to make sure that that parents have a right. So, if they know how to get into Destiny (an online program), I loved that suggestion that we send out information at the beginning of the year, because at the end of the day, it is our responsibility as parents. But as the school system, it's also our responsibility to make sure that we give the parents the tools and we are being as transparent as we possibly can be."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Huntingtown Man Killed in Motorcycle Accident

Deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau responded on June 14 at 9:11 p.m., to the 3600 block of Cassell Blvd. in Prince Frederick for the report of a motor vehicle crash involving a motorcycle.

Due to the seriousness of the collision, deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Crash Reconstruction Team responded to the scene to assume the investigation.

Preliminary investigation revealed a black Suzuki GSX-R600 motorcycle operated by Alek Michael Richardson, 20 of Huntingtown, was traveling south on Cassell Blvd. The operator of bike lost control and struck a small SUV parked in a residential

driveway. Richardson was ejected from the bike becoming trapped under the SUV.

Emergency medical services responded to the scene and pronounced Richardson deceased.

At this time, speed and failure to control the vehicle are factors in this crash.

This collision is being investigated by DFC J. Hardesty of the Crash Reconstruction Team. Anyone who may have witnessed this crash is asked to contact DFC Hardesty at 410-535-2800 or by email jeffrey.hardesty@calvertcountymd.gov. Please reference case #23-42657

Police Investigating Fatal Crash In Prince Frederick

Maryland State Police are investigating a fatal single-vehicle crash on June 17 in Prince Frederick.

The deceased, James Everett Patterson Jr., 56, of Upper Marlboro, was pronounced deceased at the scene. He was the driver of a 1967 Chevrolet Chevelle. A passenger, 48, also of Upper Marlboro, was flown by Maryland State Police Aviation Command to the University of Maryland Capital Region Medical Center for her injuries.

Troopers from the Prince Frederick Barrack responded to the crash, which happened at approximately 2 p.m. on southbound Route 4, south of Westlake Boulevard in Prince Frederick. According to a prelimi-

nary investigation, the Chevrolet was traveling south on Route 4 when it overturned. Investigators believe the driver lost control of the vehicle.

Calvert County Sheriff's Office deputies and personnel from the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration responded to the scene to assist troopers.

Maryland State Police are continuing to investigate the cause of the crash. Anyone with information related to the crash is asked to contact a duty officer at Prince Frederick. Call 410-535-1400 and reference case number 23-MSP-021758.

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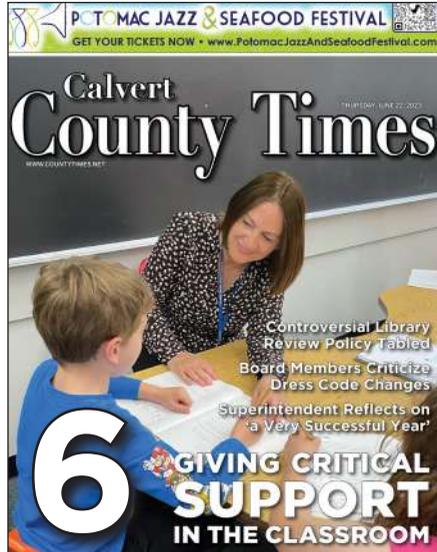
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“I DON’T WANT YOU TO BE ANGRY WITH ME.”

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER JANA POST ON HER POLICY PROPOSALS.



LOCAL 3
School library review policy tabled



6 ON THE COVER 4
Calvert names school support person of the year



LOCAL 4
Looking at superintendent’s first year

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, JUN 22 Rain Hi: 74° Lo: 68°	FRI, JUN 23 Thunderstorms Hi: 80° Lo: 68°	SAT, JUN 24 Thunderstorms Hi: 80° Lo: 66°	SUN, JUN 25 Isolated Storms Hi: 83° Lo: 69°
MON, JUN 26 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 87° Lo: 66°	TUE, JUN 27 Scattered Storms Hi: 80° Lo: 65°	WED, JUN 28 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 80° Lo: 62°	THU, JUN 29 Partly Cloudy Hi: 81° Lo: 65°

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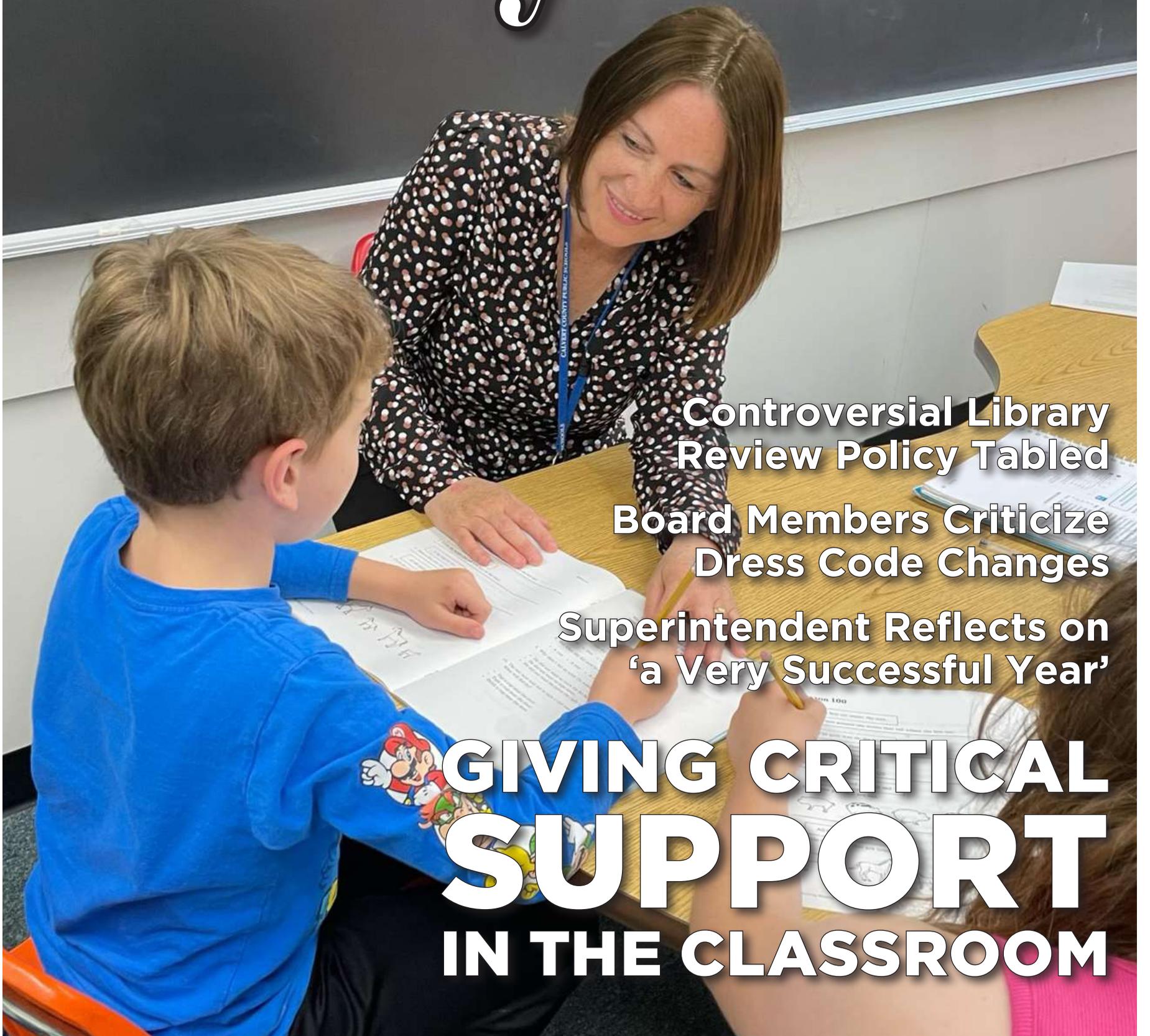


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Review Policy Tabled**

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Dress Code Changes**

**Superintendent Reflects on
'a Very Successful Year'**

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SUPPORT
IN THE CLASSROOM**