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County Times

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2024

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“EXERCISE IS SUCH A POWERFUL THING.”

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LOCAL 3
School board approves millions in building repairs



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ON THE COVER
Health Improvement Plan challenges government, community

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, FEB 8 Partly Cloudy Hi: 52° Lo: 38°	FRI, FEB 9 Partly Cloudy Hi: 59° Lo: 46°	SAT, FEB 10 Showers Hi: 60° Lo: 49°	SUN, FEB 11 AM Showers Hi: 58° Lo: 41°
MON, FEB 12 Showers Hi: 52° Lo: 41°	TUE, FEB 13 AM Showers Hi: 46° Lo: 32°	WED, FEB 14 Mostly Sunny Hi: 48° Lo: 31°	THU, FEB 15 Mostly Sunny Hi: 48° Lo: 31°

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School Board Approves Millions for Building Upgrades, Repairs



Example of new furniture to be delivered to White Marsh and Town Creek elementary schools

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The second phase of a partial roof replacement at Great Mills High School (GMHS) will cost \$7.3 million, according to a unanimous vote approving the expenditure by the St. Mary's County Board of Education at their Feb. 7 meeting.

The board also approved \$635,000 in contingency funds for the project, school board documents show.

It was the costliest school maintenance project approved this week by the school board amongst many smaller ones.

The current roof at GMHS is 26 years old; the work on the project is to be completed during the summers of 2025, 2025 and 2026, school planning documents show.

The older roof material of asphalt and fiberglass —125,652 square-feet worth — will be replaced with white reflective roofing granules; trim, gutters and downspouts are also to be replaced.

The project also calls for two new sky-

lights to be installed in the roof.

Cole Roofing Company was awarded the contract.

The school board also approved a contract award to W.L. Gary Company, Inc. for \$683,000 at three elementary schools — Benjamin Banneker, Lexington Park and White Marsh — with \$150,000 in additional contingency funds to replace chiller units there.

The life expectancy of the air-cooled chillers to be installed at the schools is between 15 and 20 years, school presentation documents stated.

The board also voted to approve buying new furniture for Town Creek and White Marsh elementary schools to the tune of \$409,829 with \$50,000 in contingency funds additionally.

The current furniture is either damaged or excessively worn in both schools, project documents stated, and is often inappropriately sized for small students.

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April 24: Part D Coverage Phases- Learn how your medication costs change throughout the year. From the deductible phase to the donut hole and well as some new changes.

May 29: Medicare for Federal Employees and Retirees- Learn how your FEHB benefits coordinate with Medicare and what to consider when making enrollment decisions.

June 26: Preparing for Future Health Care Needs- Learn about advanced directives, living wills, health care proxies, and powers of attorney to help ensure that decisions made on your behalf meet your needs and preferences.

July 31: New to Medicare- Learn the basics you should know about Medicare from enrollment periods to coverage choices and beyond.

August 28: Cost Saving Programs- Learn about programs that can help you save on your Medicare costs. Expect to hear about programs like the Medicare Savings Program, Extra Help, and more.

September 25: Fall Open Enrollment - This is the time you can make changes to your Medicare coverage. Learn strategies to choose the coverage that best fits your needs for 2025.

October 30: Medicare and Immigration- Learn about Medicare eligibility for people who are not U.S. citizens.

November 27: Medicare Preventive Services- Learn about Medicare's coverage for preventative services and review the screenings, vaccines, and counseling that can help you stay on top of your health.

St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services
Garvey Senior Activity Center
23630 Hayden Farm Lane, Leonardtown, MD

Linda's Café Reopens in New Location



Linda Palchinsky, right, talks to customers

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Linda Palchinsky reopened her eponymous restaurant over the weekend in its new location at the intersection of Millstone Landing Road and Three Notch Road.

"We had a soft opening Saturday night," Palchinsky told The County Times on Feb. 5. "We were busy, very busy."

Palchinsky has taken over the space of the former Day's Off Deli restaurant and bar.

The new Linda's Café location sports table top seating for customers as well as a countertop space for customers, much like her old shop which had the very popular style of seating.

Usually closed on Mondays and Tuesdays, Palchinsky said she would only be closed on Mondays for the foreseeable future.

"I'm in a higher rent district now," she said. "We've got new equipment, new everything."

There are a few issues Palchinsky and her crew still have to work out at the new location, she said.

"We're still learning to cook in a new kitchen," she said. "We had to close up earlier because we kept running out of food."

"And we can only have 52 people seated right now, before I could seat 80."

Palchinsky said the new property has limitations on its water and sewer capacity, for which she is looking for solutions. "It has to get fixed."

But Palchinsky is looking forward to the advantages her new store offers.

"We're going to be getting those customers who never drove into [Lexington Park]," Palchinsky said. "We've had all our old calling us since we've closed the old store."

Palchinsky had to move from her 35-year location on Tulagi Place as the property owners there had agreed to lease the land to build a new Royal Farms convenience store and fueling station in the heart of Lexington Park.

She operated on a month-to-month lease for years.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Colton's Point Blaze Endangered Commissioner's Home



Photo courtesy of 7th District Volunteer Fire Department

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A blaze that destroyed a home in Colton's Point over the weekend came close to doing the same to the home of Commissioner Mike Alderson, he said this week, but the army of volunteer firefighters who responded to knock down the blaze prevented that.

Alderson said he and his wife were away from their home at the time of the incident, which took place Feb. 2 at about 8 p.m., when their son called them to tell them what was going on.

The fire was believed to have been intentionally set.

"I personally want to thank every single fire company that showed up, which was all of them in St. Mary's County," Alderson said nearing the end of the weekly meeting of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County Feb. 6. "It's one thing to sit up here and

thank your first responder; it's a totally different thing when it profoundly affects your life.

"The siding on my house was melting as my neighbor's house was burning down."

Alderson reported that Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department's hook and ladder apparatus was set up in his driveway attacking the fire at his neighbor's house from a high angle.

The District 3 commissioner said both he and his wife had to walk close to a mile to get to their home due to the volume of emergency apparatus in his neighborhood.

Alderson said he prayed that St. Florian — the patron saint of firefighters — watched over all the county fire volunteers.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Commissioner President Warns on Veterans Tax Exemptions

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Commissioner President James "Randy" Guy told Gov. Wes Moore last week that he was concerned over the continued push by the state's chief executive to pass more tax exemptions for veterans.

Guy, himself a U.S. Air Force veteran, said that the exemptions, which already exist for certain veterans, allow for them paying no property tax on their residences if they are 100 percent disabled.

This proved costly to the revenues the county needs to continue its operations, Guy said during commissioner time at their weekly meeting Feb. 6.

He also said he told the governor he was concerned about his cutting of funds by 6 percent — or \$1.3 million — to the Leonardtown campus of the College of

Southern Maryland.

"This impacts us all the way through, all these budgetary cuts he's making," Guy said. "They're probably going to come to us — the schools, the colleges, the departmental directors — and they're going to ask us for money."

"It's money we don't have."

Guy said he appreciated that Moore was a veteran himself, even with time in combat, but "the 100 percent exemption he came through with, I'm sorry, I can't agree with that."

Guy said there are veterans in the community who are economically well off with very valuable properties, yet are exempted by the U.S. Veterans Administration due to disability or other factors.

"Somebody who has a million-dollar home, it just doesn't ride with this commissioner," Guy said. "And I told him that."

Another bill currently in the legislature would exempt veterans from as much as 80 percent of their property tax bill under certain conditions, Guy said.

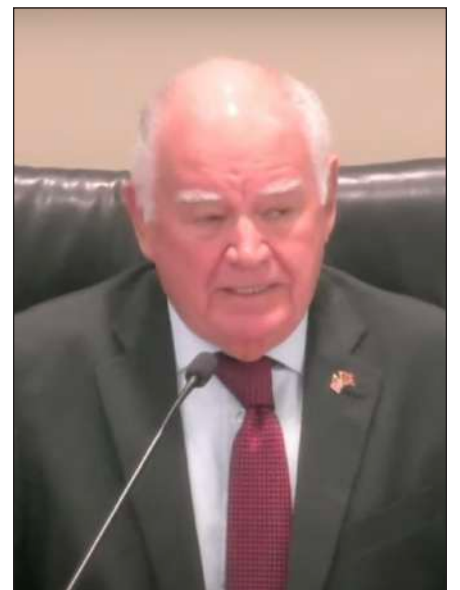
"I told him I objected to that also," the commissioner president said. "It's hurting the county; we're talking about an over \$3 million loss this year alone because of these exemptions."

Guy said the county's coffers had been flush with federal government money in the guise of COVID-19 relief funds, but that was no more, making every dollar in revenue that much more precious.

"That's all gone," Guy said. "Reality is setting in."

"We have to take care of all of our citizens, those who are doing well and those who are not doing well."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



Commissioner President James Randy Guy



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Gov. Moore Brings State Government to St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Gov. Wes Moore, along with Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller and the entire executive cabinet came to St. Mary's County Feb. 2 to hold mostly closed-door meetings, but he also toured several key facilities and businesses here, including Patuxent River Naval Air Station and the University System of Maryland at Southern Maryland (USMSM).

Moore said he was deeply impressed by the high technology and warfighting capabilities he saw at the naval base.

"It's outstanding that we have such a jewel here," Moore said after his cabinet meeting at USMSM. "That shows why we have to continue to support" the work going on at the naval air station.

Moore said this means that the state needs to keep St. Mary's in mind when it's making its plans for changes in the transportation budget.

Key transportation projects such as the replacement for Gov. Thomas Johnson Bridge and improvements to the intersec-

tion at Route 5 and Great Mills Road have long been on the minds of local leaders as needful for infrastructure upkeep to support the work at the base.

"It needs to include St. Mary's and not exclude St. Mary's," Moore said of transportation budgets.

Sen. Jack Bailey has mounted a campaign with state transportation officials to press for federal funds to make the Solomons bridge replacement a reality.

Moore said his administration was working with Bailey to support that effort.

"We already are and we have been, Moore said. "We will be leveraging federal funds."

Miller spent the morning in Leonardtown, celebrating the Main Street designation the town recently received from the state.

"We're ensuring we have strong downtowns [like the one in Leonardtown] in each of our 157 municipalities.

"When Leonardtown thrives, Maryland thrives."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



Gov. Wes Moore looks into a test chamber at the University System of Maryland's SMART Building



Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller talks with Leonardtown Council members

County Still Faces Mental, Physical Health Challenges

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county health department's latest report on how to improve the overall health of St. Mary's residents points out some stark challenges, particularly when it comes to their mental health and their weight.

"Behavioral health continues to be a top public health priority," said County Health Officer Meena Brewster. "We've seen incredible challenges with mental health and substance abuse."

The Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) for 2026 deals with mental health — sometimes combined with issues with substance use or abuse — as behavioral health.

The report, recently released by the health department, shows that the local emergency department at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital continues to be inundated with mental health cases.

The rate of emergency department visits for residents 65 years old and up was 25,611.2 per 100,000 people in population; Brewster said the figure was established upon the hypothetical number of 100,000 seniors in the overall population.

Despite this, the numbers showed that St. Mary's was well above the state average for the emergency department being used to treat mental illness, Brewster said.

The rate of emergency department visits for residents aged 18 through 64 was 10,888.3 per 100,000 of population.

Brewster said the county was making progress in addressing mental health problems but much work was left to be done.

"I'd say we're getting better in terms of certain programs and services available," Brewster said. "It's going to take time to see that reflected in the community."

St. Mary's is currently designated as a mental health professional shortage area by the federal government; it also holds the same designation for primary care physicians, particularly for the southern portion of the county, Brewster said.

"In the last five years we've made incredible strides," she said. "But there are still gaps, we know that."

Brewster said the new Community Health Hub in Lexington Park was helping to turn the tide on mental health by allowing for crisis walk-ins.

"And it's free, there's no charge for that," Brewster said. "There's really nothing like this in the state."

Brewster said the psychiatric nurse prac-



St. Mary's County Health Hub

tioners who staff the health hub not only treat mental health issues but help patients by helping them find a "comprehensive wellness approach to their life."

This includes helping people get treatment for substance use and abuse problems which can be central to mental health problems.

One of the key goals of the 2026 CHIP is to reduce alcohol and drug use.

The report shows that 29 percent of high school students have used marijuana at least once in their life, while 14.8 percent have misused prescription painkillers at least once.

About 13 percent of high school students admit to binge drinking in the past month as well, the report stated.

Still the county has to contend with not having enough doctors in one of its most rural areas, that of South County.

"We're seeing people wait months for a primary care appointment and hours for an urgent care appointment," Brewster said.

The county has partnered with Greater Baden Medical Services (GBMS), a non-profit group, to provide primary and family medical services in that area, Brewster said.

"That's the portion of the county that struggles the most with primary care access," Brewster said of St. Mary's below the intersection of Great Mills Road and Route 235.

She held out hope that there would be enough work there to bring GBMS and establish a full-time clinic as they have in jurisdictions like Prince George's County.

The county's school based health centers have also proved to be a help, Brewster said.

These centers, which are open only to school students and staff during school

hours, but to the rest of the community after school, have helped to close that primary care gap.

"We've seen increasing utilization by the whole community," Brewster said of the services provided at Margaret Brent and Spring Ridge middle schools, which is paid for in part by state grant funds. "It has been such a great resource."

St. Mary's continues to contend with chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, the report stated, but one thing could help curb much of that.

Exercise.

The report stated that only about 25 percent of the county's residents were at a healthy weight, leaving the remaining 75 percent either overweight or obese.

Yet there are still plenty of opportunities locally for exercise, the report states.

It shows that 77 percent of residents have adequate access to those opportunities.

"That's not unique to our county, it's a national problem," Brewster said. "The key is to make sure that physical activity is part of our day."

"The question is how do you make the healthy choice the easy one."

More exercise was key to solving many health problems, Brewster said.

"Movement is beneficial," she told The County Times. "You can get physical activity guidance on-line."

"Exercise is such a powerful thing; it boosts mood and helps us eat better and feel better."

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Online Auction Opens: On or about FEB 12, 2024
Auction Preview: TUES, FEB 20th from 2:30 pm to 5 pm
Auction Closes: THURS, FEB 22nd - beginning at 6 pm
(Purchased Items to be removed on FRI, Feb. 23rd from 9:30 am to 5 pm)

Upcoming Auctions:
Online Auction - Selling for the Family of Bubby Knott, a variety of items and collectibles from the Knott Collection
(More information coming soon on this 1st auction)
Online Auction – Estate of Mary Louise (Ching) Mattei
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Mechanicsville Man Seeks School Board Seat

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Josh Guy, 21, of Mechanicsville has filed to run for the at-large seat of the St. Mary's County Board of Education; he said his experience as a student and as a substitute teacher have given him special insight into some of the most serious problems facing the system today.

Key among those are violence among students, class disruptions and lack of communication with parents, Guy said.

"When I was a substitute teacher I would see a new fight every day," Guy said. "And those students who were suspended were back after just a couple of days.

"Teachers weren't able to teach."

Guy now works in administration in the state judiciary, he said.

Those same problems he saw as a substitute teacher he said he saw as a student.

Guy said parents had grown dissatisfied with their relationships with the school system.

"There's a lack of transparency when there's a fight or an overdose," Guy said. "A lot of parents are frustrated with getting information late.

"I want to bring parents more into the



Josh Guy

school system."

If elected, Guy said, he wanted to meet often with parents and students, to listen to all their concerns.

"I plan on being an active member of the school board," Guy said. "I want to be hands-on."

Guy said he believed his relative youth would be an asset in being a school board member.

"I think it would allow me to connect with students in a way the others [board members] can't," Guy told The County Times.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Chaptico House Fire Under Investigation



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Three county firefighters were injured while putting out a blaze at a Chaptico home the morning of Feb. 5; their injuries, according to the 7th District Volunteer Fire Department, were non-life-threatening.

The fire occurred in the 363000 block of Notley Woods Lane, which was discovered by workers there who notified the occupant of the dwelling, according to state fire marshals.

It took 50 firefighters 40 minutes to knock down the blaze, which caused \$250,000 worth in damages, fire marshals reported.

The fire started in the home's interior, investigators reported, but a cause has yet to be determined.

The three firefighters were treated and released from MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

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Leonardtwn Man Charged with Sex Abuse of a Minor

Detectives from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office charged Crosby Jay Dawson, 40, of Leonardtown, MD, on Friday, January 26, 2024, with Rape Second Degree, Sex Offense Third Degree, Sex Offense Fourth Degree, and Sex Abuse of a Minor.

The charges stem from an ongoing investigation initiated by Child Protective Services and medical professionals following an anonymous complaint involving a minor. Detectives apprehended Dawson without incident at his residence.

The suspect was transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown and is currently held without bond.



Sheriff's Office Investigating Armed Robbery

On Thursday, February 1, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to a robbery at a commercial location in the 21000 block of Great Mills Road.

Witnesses reported an unidentified male entered the business and demanded service. Upon refusal of service, the individual pulled a gun from his waistband. The suspect then stole cash from a bowl on the

counter and fled the scene on foot.

Detectives from the Criminal Investigation Division have taken the case and are actively pursuing several investigative leads. Anyone with information on this case is asked to contact Detective Kortnie Marsch at 301-475-4200, ext. 8179, or by email at Kortnie.Marsch@stmaryscountymd.gov.

State Police Investigating Fatal Two-Vehicle Crash

Maryland State Police are investigating a fatal two-vehicle crash that occurred Feb. 3 in St. Mary's County.

The deceased is identified as Thomas Christiani, 63, of Mechanicsville, Maryland. Christiani was the driver and sole occupant of a Honda motorcycle involved in the crash. He was pronounced deceased on the scene. No other injuries were reported at the scene.

Shortly before 4 p.m. on Saturday, troopers from the Maryland State Police Leonardtown Barrack responded to the area of Mechanicsville Road and Asher Road for a report of a two-vehicle crash. According to a preliminary investigation,

the motorcycle, operated by Christiani, was traveling south on Mechanicsville Road, when for unknown reasons, struck a delivery van, attempting to turn into a residential driveway. Investigators do not believe that impaired driving is a factor in this crash.

Mechanicsville Road was closed for more than 4 hours following the crash. Personnel from Maryland State Police Helicopter Trooper 2 - Washington, based at Joint Base Andrews in Camp Springs, Maryland, responded to the scene to assist.

The Maryland State Police Crash Team continues to investigate the cause of the crash.

Legal Notice

**COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN
CORRECTED NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
Rezoning Request 22675 Cedar Lane Court, Leonardtown, MD 20650**

The Commissioners of Leonardtown will hold a public hearing on Monday, February 12, 2024 at 4:15 p.m. at the Town Office, 22670 Washington Street, regarding Tax Map 040, Parcel 017. The purpose of the hearing will be to present for public review and receive public comment regarding the request to rezone the parcel located at 22675 Cedar Lane Court from Residential Single Family (RSF) to Commercial Office (C-O). Copies of the documents are available for public review at the Leonardtown Town Office. The public is invited to attend and/or send written comments to the Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650 to be received no later than February 12, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. Special accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities upon request.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

Persons of Interest Sought in Burglary

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking assistance identifying and locating two individuals connected with an incident at a business in Mechanicsville.

On Thursday, February 1st approximately 7 p.m., the subjects pictured entered the tow lot of an automotive business in the 27000 block of Three Notch Road in Mechanicsville. The individuals walked through the tow lot and pulled on the business's door to attempt to enter; however, the door was locked. The two individuals continued walking through the tow lot, eventually leaving in an unidentified vehicle.

Prior to the subjects trying to open the door of the business, they got into the lot by forcing themselves through the gate of the fenced and secured property.

Community members with information about this suspect or this incident are asked to contact VFC John Gardiner at John.Gardiner@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 8150. Please reference case number 5895-24.

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

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2.48 Lb. Fresh Family Pack Ground Beef

9.90 Lb. Sold in 5-Lb. Bag, Frozen Clear Bag Party Wings

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4.98 28 To 32-Oz., Selected Bob Evans Side Dishes



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7.98 8-Oz. Large Snow Crab Clusters

FARM to TABLE

- 1-Lb. Red Ripe Strawberries **2/\$4**
- 7-Oz. Great On Berries Classic Whipped Cream **2.98**
- Creamy Ripe Hass Avocados **.68**
- Mellow Sweet Honey Dew Or Cantagold Cantaloupes **3.98**
- Large Select Creamy Baking Potatoes **.78 Lb.**
- 1-Lb. Pkg. Bothouse Farms Sweet Peeled Baby Carrots **2/\$3**

- CHEEZ-IT Original Crackers **3.48**
- BUSH'S Baked Beans **3/\$4**
- Hidden Valley Ranch Dressing **3.48**
- Baby Ray's BBQ Sauce **2/\$5**
- Kraft Macaroni & Cheese **4/\$4**
- Heinz Yellow Mustard **2/\$3**
- Kool-Aid Jammers **2.28**
- Bull's-Eye BBQ Sauce **2/\$4**
- Capri Sun Fruit Drinks **2/\$5**

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WED 7	THURS 8	FRI 9	SAT 10	SUN 11	MON 12	TUES 13
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PRICES GOOD FROM February 7 THRU February 13, 2024

WE ACCEPT:

STORE HOURS:
Monday - Saturday 7am to 8 pm
SUNDAY 8 am to 7 pm

Chill Deals



6.4 To 8-Oz., Selected Kraft Chunk Or Shredded Cheese

SALE PRICE **2/\$6**
DIGITAL COUPON
2.00 OFF TWO
FINAL PRICE **2/\$4**



8-Oz., Reg. Or Neufchatel Kraft Philadelphia Cream Cheese

SALE PRICE **2/\$5**
DIGITAL COUPON
1.00 OFF TWO
FINAL PRICE **2/\$4**



52-Oz., Selected Simply Juice

3.48



10.7 to 12-Oz., Selected Kraft Singles

3.98



32-Oz. Kraft Velveeta Loaf

SALE PRICE **8.98**
DIGITAL COUPON
1.00 OFF ONE
FINAL PRICE **7.98**



6.5-Oz. Reddi Wip

SALE PRICE **2/\$7**
DIGITAL COUPON
1.00 OFF TWO
FINAL PRICE **2/\$6**



16-Oz., Selected Land O'Lakes Butter

4.78



16-Oz., Regular Daisy Sour Cream

2/\$5

2/\$5
16-Oz., 2% Or 4%
Daisy Cottage Cheese



Deli Fresh Kretschmar Roast Beef

11.98lb.



Crunch Time! 8-Piece Fried Chicken

8.98

Bakery & Deli Fresh



Selected Kretschmar Ham or Turkey Off The Bone

5.98lb.



Deli Fresh Kretschmar Swiss Cheese

5.98lb.



Deli Fresh Kretschmar Yellow American Cheese

5.98lb.



24-Oz., 8-Inch Strawberry Rhubarb Baked Pie

5.98



52-Oz. Red Velvet Cake

11.98



Selected 4-Ct. Paczki

4.58

Liquor and Beer



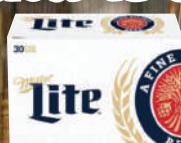
10-Oz. Cans 24-Pack Bud Light

19.89



16-Oz. Aluminum Bottles 15-Pack Coors Light

16.99



12-Oz. Cans 30-Pack Miller Lite Beer

25.99



12 Pack, 12-Oz. Bottles Modelo Especial

16.99

1.75L Crown Royal

42.99



1.75 L Dewar's Scotch Whiskey

35.99



1.75L Tito's Vodka

30.49



1.75L Screwball Peanut Butter Whiskey

25.99



750 ML Rodney Strong Chardonnay

10.98



750-ML Chateau St. Michelle Pinot Grigio Wine

9.98

Wines of the Month

750-ML Freixenet Cava

11.99

750-ML Freixenet Prosecco

11.99



EXPLORE Leonardtown



The Old Jail Museum



Open Daily 10am to 5pm
 41625 Courthouse Dr., Leonardtown, MD
stmarysm.com/recreate/oldjail





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Stupid Cupid
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February 10, 2024
 9 PM - 1 AM

Music with DJ Drumma
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Valentine's Day
Date Night

February 14, 2024
 4 PM - 9 PM
 Cocktail Flight Special for 2!



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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Sustainment Group Master Chief Named NAVAIR Mentor of the Year for HQ and PEO

Mentoring is a symbiotic and dynamic relationship, providing mutually advantageous professional and personal advantages to both parties, according to Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Sustainment Group Senior Enlisted Leader Master Chief Timothy Hucko. Hucko was named as the NAVAIR Mentor of the Year for Headquarters and Program Executive Offices, one of 11 winners celebrated at a virtual NAVAIR National Mentoring Month ceremony on Jan. 30. The award recognizes the accomplishments of military or civilians who have made tangible, positive impacts on their mentees' professional journeys.

"We had 86 nominees from across NAVAIR this year," NAVAIR Command Operations Group Director (acting) Adrienne Somerville said in her opening remarks. "They are nominated by the mentees, which makes the award even more meaningful and special."

Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division Executive Director John Meyers expressed his appreciation for all mentors as well as their contributions to NAVAIR's culture of sharing knowledge and of assuming responsibility for each other's success. "Across all NAVAIR commands, we are here to support the men and women of the United States military. While our mission remains front and center, it is essential to invest in our teammates so that we can better accomplish that very important mission," he said during the event.

For Hucko, achieving success relies on continuously asking himself and others under his tutelage one vital question: "Is there more I/you can do?" The question is meant to challenge one to reflect both internally and externally, he said.

"This question serves as a constant reminder of our potential to make a difference and underscores the continuous nature of our journey of growth and learning," he explained. "This mindset acknowledges that there is always room for growth, new skills to acquire and unexplored possibilities to pursue. It serves as a driving force, sustaining motivation and propelling us forward, calling us to go beyond our current achievements. It also prompts us to reflect on our values, beliefs and behaviors, encourages us to explore our full potential, challenge our perceived limitations, and inspire us to become the best version of ourselves.

"The question also is meant to lead individuals to consider the broader impact they can have, to contemplate how their



Master Chief AZCM (AW/SW) Timothy Hucko.

actions can benefit others, whether through work, relationships, or mindful community engagement," he said.

Each one of us, he advised, should focus on personal attributes that require zero talent. "At the core of one's character is the commitment to strive and perseverance, emphasizing the significance of consistent dedication and resilience in overcoming challenges. They prove to be more valuable than inherent aptitude," he stated. He also listed a robust work ethic, a positive attitude, openness to learning, adaptability, flexibility, integrity, honesty, gratitude, self-awareness and appreciativeness as complementary qualities that shape his holistic approach to navigating the path toward achievement and fulfillment.

"Beyond talent, they stand as guiding pillars in the pursuit of success, offering a comprehensive roadmap for personal and collective advancement," he added.

Hucko, an aviation maintenance administrationman, retires in June, completing a 30-year career in the Navy. In his next phase of life, he plans to continue to answer his call to make a difference in the lives of others. "My passion lies in making a positive societal impact through critical thinking, strategic coaching and fostering personal growth among colleagues, all within the dynamic environment of an organization," he said. "While there's a hint of bitter sweetness as I hang up my uniform for the last time, the excitement for this next chapter outweighs any nostalgia."



STATE HIGHWAY
ADMINISTRATION

REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Section 4(f) of the US Department of
Transportation Act- *de minimis* Finding

**MD 245 (Hollywood Road) Phase 2 from Baldrige
Street to Town Run Drive - New Sidewalk Construction**

Project Description

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) is proposing the installation of a new pedestrian facility along MD 245 in St. Mary's County, Maryland. This project would result in minor impacts to Miedzinski Park, which is owned and managed by the St. Mary's County Department of Parks and Recreation and protected under Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (Section 4(f)).

Questions and Answers About the Project

Why is this work necessary and what improvements are proposed?

The construction of new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant sidewalk along MD 245 will require drainage improvements and a new stormwater management facility south of Baldrige Street. The existing sidewalk within the vicinity of the park will need to be reconstructed and will comply with ADA standards. The proposed work includes:

- Upgrade/replacement of the existing sidewalks and ramps to comply with ADA standards
- Drainage improvements, including the installation of a new Storm Water Management Pipe
- Replacement of existing landscaping

Why are comments being requested?

23 CFR 774.5(b) of Section 4(f) allows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine that certain transportation uses of Section 4(f) land (Miedzinski Park) would have no adverse effect on the protected resource. With respect to publicly owned parks and recreation areas, a finding of *de minimis* impact may occur if a transportation project, including any proposed mitigation, does not "adversely affect the activities, features and attributes" of the Section 4(f) resource. When this is the case, public notice and opportunity for public review and comment on the finding is required. In addition, the finding of FHWA requires written concurrence from the officials with jurisdiction over the resource. Before concurring, the officials with jurisdiction must consider any public comments received.

What are the impacts to protected Section 4(f) resources?

The proposed improvements will require 0.17 acre (7,590 square feet) of temporary construction easement and 0.08 acre (3,468 square feet) perpetual easement from within Miedzinski Park totaling less than 0.25 acre (11,058 square feet). The Miedzinski Park consists of grass, trees, a parking lot, picnic tables, a baseball diamond (60 feet), three multi-sport fields, a batting cage, an accessible playground, and restroom facilities. These minor impacts will occur in the grassy areas along the southwest corner of the park which includes the sidewalk and are not expected to adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes of the Miedzinski Park. The sidewalk will be closed during construction and a detour will be required to maintain pedestrian traffic. The detour will reroute pedestrians to the opposite side of the roadway, while not affecting the pedestrian movement within the park.

SHA, through this notice, is notifying the public that it will request that FHWA make a *de minimis* (or minor) impact finding, in accordance with Section 4(f). The St. Mary's County Department of Parks and Recreation is being informed of SHA's intent to seek a Section 4(f) *de minimis* impact finding. With this notice, the public is afforded the opportunity to provide comments on this finding.

How do I comment?

If you have questions or wish to comment, please contact Mr. John Delaney, SHA Project Manager at 410-545-8053 or jdelaney@mdot.maryland.gov, or Ms. Sushmita Sakar, SHA Environmental Manager at 410-545-0392 or ssakar@mdot.maryland.gov; or visit us at www.roads.maryland.gov.

New Gateway to Downtown



Leonardtown was able to raise up its new gateway sign last week in time for Gov. Wes Moore's and Lt. Gov. Aruna Miller's visit to St. Mary's County. The sign celebrates the recent award of the town's Main Street designation by the state, placing it on the map as one of the select main street communities in Maryland.

41st Annual Easter Egg Festival Announced



On Saturday, March 23, 2024, St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) will host the 41st Annual Easter Egg Festival at the St. Mary's County Fairgrounds. This rain or shine event will be held from 11:30 a.m. – 4 p.m. and is open to the entire community! Don't miss this Southern Maryland spring staple, featuring the Easter Bunny, egg hunts for ages up to 12, live entertainment, free arts and crafts, face painting, delicious local food options, and shopping from area vendors.

For a \$5.00 fee, attendees can participate in the egg hunt, visit with the Easter Bunny and Mrs. Cottontail, enjoy face painting, and participate in a variety of other bunny approved activities.

Vendor applications are available at: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/docs/easter-vendor.pdf.

As vendors apply and are approved, they will be contacted by the event coordinator to secure space. Vendor types include craft vendors, merchandise vendors, and food trucks.

Sponsorship applications are available at: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/docs/eastersponsor.pdf.

A variety of sponsorship levels and donation opportunities are available to support this event. Each level includes promotional benefits for your business, such as recognition in event marketing, the R&P program guide, or on social media, reaching over 12,000 households.

Tickets for this event can be purchased online, in advance, beginning February 19, 2024, at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/easter. Tickets are also available in-person at the Recreation & Parks main office in Leonardtown, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Net proceeds from the Easter Festival, along with the department's annual golf tournament, support the Recreation & Parks Scholarship Program which provides qualified individuals the opportunity to participate in an activity at a 50% prorated amount of the registration fee.

Residents with questions may contact Recreation & Parks at (301) 475-4200 ext. 1800. For more information, please visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/recreate or follow R&P at: Facebook.com/stmarysmdrecreation.

Pet

OF THE WEEK

MEET GEORGE

A Husky is a piece of Heaven wrapped in fur.

Hey there, let me introduce myself, my name is George. I'm a 2-YEAR-OLD Husky type whose CHARM and SUAVENESS rival none other than George Clooney himself! With my STRIKING LOOKS and effortless COOL DEMEANOR, I am always ready to STEAL HEARTS faster than Clooney steals scenes. Adopt me today and get ready for a lifetime of Hollywood-worthy ADVENTURES with your very own leading man, complete with fur and fabulousness. Hurry now and meet me during adoption hours, Monday-Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday 10am-3pm. It's ALWAYS a good day to ADOPT! BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! ALWAYS OPT TO ADOPT, please don't shop!

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



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Explore Local Black History at St. Mary's County Museums



The public is encouraged to head to the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) Interpretive Center in Lexington Park and the Drayden African American Schoolhouse to explore the profound and significant contributions of African Americans in St. Mary's County this February, in honor of Black History Month.

USCT Interpretive Center exhibits will be open and free to the public, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. every Wednesday and Saturday in February: February 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, and 28. The Drayden African American Schoolhouse will be open for free tours to the public from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. every Saturday in February: February 10, 17, and 24.

Inside the USCT Interpretive Center, visitors can learn about two St. Mary's County Congressional Medal of Honor recipients who served in the 38th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Colored Troops and fought for the Union during the Civil War. These two men received the Medal of Honor for their valor and bravery at the Battle of New Market Heights, Virginia, in 1864. On the trail between the Interpretive Center in Lexington Manor Passive Park and John G. Lancaster Park, you can learn about the Civil War era in St. Mary's County and the

African American troops on interpretive panels that lead to the statue of the soldier.

At Drayden, visitors can discover one of the nation's best-preserved one-room African American schoolhouses, whose story represents a significant part of St. Mary's County's African American history. Visitors are invited to learn more about the restored schoolhouse, its rich history and importance to education in St. Mary's County. Hear the real stories about how African American students learned in this school up until the mid-20th century.

Staff will be available at both locations to answer questions and provide information on these amazing stories.

The U.S. Colored Troops Interpretive Center is located in Lexington Manor Passive Park at 21675 S. Coral Drive in Lexington Park, Maryland. For more information, call (301) 769-2222 or visit Facebook.com/USCTCenter and click on "events".

The Drayden African American Schoolhouse is located at 18287 Cherryfield Road in Drayden, Maryland. For more information, call (301) 994-1471 or visit Facebook.com/DraydenSchool and click on "events".

Share Pieces of Local History During Museums "Community Day"

Have you ever wanted to contribute to a museum exhibit? The St. Clement's Island Museum in Colton's Point and the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum in Piney Point will host "Community Day" on Friday, February 9, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This event allows the public to get involved with the planning of new exhibits by sharing historic documents, photos, and other significant objects related to St. Clement's Island and the Colton's Point area from the 20th century and earlier, as well as objects related to Piney Point and maritime history of the Potomac and Chesapeake.

The museum is seeking information and items about local boat builders; information about the Golden Hotel, the Shirley K Hotel, the Hotel on St. Clement's Island, Tolson Hotel and Swann's Hotel in Piney Point, and the Blackistone Island Canning Company or other oyster companies; photos of the island and the Blackistone Lighthouse or Piney Point Lighthouse; information about living on St. Clement's Island and/or living in Colton's

Point or Piney Point; any photos of steamboats at Colton's Point landing; U.S. Coast Guard or U.S. Navy history related to Piney Point; "retro" holiday and Christmas décor and decorations (both indoor and outdoor) from the 1930s through 1970s (specifically glass ornaments and related items); and more.

Museum staff will be available to scan photos and documents, or photograph objects and people, with the permission of the owner, for potential new exhibits or collections. If you do not have any items that could be applicable but still wish to support the museums, the public is welcome to make monetary donations towards exhibits or other museum programs either in person or online at: friendsmuseumstore.square.site.

For more information, visit Facebook.com/SCIMuseum and click on "events". Community members may also contact Christina Barbour, St. Clement's Island Museum Manager at (301) 769-2222 or Ken Burke, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Manager at (301) 994-1471.



LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS
SERVING ST. MARY'S & CALVERT COUNTIES

ON NEWSSTANDS EVERY THURSDAY & ONLINE AT COUNTYTIMES.NET

County Times

CSM Professors Welcome Graduates as Colleagues at Nurse Pinning Ceremony

The College of Southern Maryland's (CSM) 45 nursing candidates for Winter 2024 graduation celebrated their achievements at the La Plata Campus by attending their recognition and pinning ceremony – a time-honored event that has CSM faculty welcoming their students as peers and colleagues in the field of nursing.

The students chose the theme “Embracing the Journey: From Students to Healers” to describe their class. CSM Nursing Professor Annette Ragland served as the mistress of ceremonies and welcomed attendees to the celebration of students’ courage and hard work.

“We are here to celebrate the accomplishments of these resilient students,” she said.

Before the students were called to the stage, Professor Robin Young explained the significance of the pin each nurse would receive. She said that the modern pinning ceremony dates to the 1860s, when Florence Nightingale was awarded the Red Cross of St. George in recognition for her tireless service to the injured during the Crimean War. To share the honor, Nightingale in turn presented a medal of excellence to her brightest graduates and by 1916, the practice of pinning new graduates was standard throughout the United States.

The featured speaker for the event was Dr. Karen Wyche Latham, vice president and chief nursing officer at Medstar Southern Maryland Hospital Center, who has more than 33 years of experience in nursing. She asked the students to reflect on why they wanted to become nurses, and to let this “why” define their career.

Latham shared that she discovered her “why” during nursing school, when her father was diagnosed with lung cancer. She said she was moved by her father’s nurse, who not only took care of her dad, but the family as well.

“I thought that if I could help people still feel cared for during the most vulnerable time of their lives, that’s the kind of nurse I want to be,” she said. “That solidified my ‘why’ and nursing was no longer my career, it became my purpose and my passion.”



“If you don’t know your ‘why’ yet, that’s ok – it will find you, or you will find it,” she reassured students. “But when you do, hold onto that, and let it be what guides you through your nursing career.”

Latham ended her speech by welcoming the students as colleagues in the nursing profession.

“Graduates, as you transition from students to healers, you are not alone,” she said. “You join a community of nurses who have come before you, who stand beside you, and who will come after you. Embrace the comradery and support that comes from this profession, for together we can achieve greatness.”

Student Joanne Perez was selected by her classmates to speak on behalf of the nursing cohort. She encouraged her classmates to reflect on the struggles that they endured while completing their nursing education.

“Today’s occasion calls for celebration; we take the pain, the hurt, the frustration and turn it into empathy, courage and empowerment,” Perez said. “Today’s occasion calls for celebration; we celebrate the dedication, the hard work and perseverance as we conclude our nursing school journey here at the College of Southern Maryland. Today we humbly celebrate becoming nurses. Or celebrate loudly, we’re in a judge-free zone.”

Closing remarks were provided by

Nursing Program Chair Dr. Sara Cano, who provided a meditation on the idea of nurses being “healers.”

“Healing is part of nursing by way of caring,” she said. “It is about including all facets of being human to achieve a state of health. Healing is accomplished by establishing caring relationships with those you become in contact with. This caring relationship supports the integration of body, mind, and spirit to reach a state of healing. The role of the nurse in healing is a constructive one in which the nurse empowers patients to actively participate in their well-being.”

She closed with the advice to for students to continually work to improve their nursing practice.

“To become the best healer, you can be you need to develop four characteristics: competency, compassion, wisdom, and self-cultivation,” she said. “I encourage and challenge you to work on all from day one. Days will be difficult, and you will get tired, but I ask you to remember why you became a nurse.”

CSM Professor Dr. Eden Kan presented the candidates. Students who proudly received their pins Jan. 11, 2024 from faculty pinners Cano, Professors Morag Dahlstrom, Lisa Gonzales, Linda Hamel, Lauren Guy, Deborah Rutledge, and Robin

Madera were:

Holly Acuña
Stephanie Allers
Regina Ampaw
Darian Anderson
Honorine Badolo
Danielle Beaver
Katie Childers
Tea L. Clark
Tabitha Crocker
Paige Curtis
Emmah Dahlberg
Charlie Dahlstedt-Henderson
Asia Reeé Davis
Samantha Delair, “Academic Achievement in Nursing” Award Winner
Ramanda Desrameaux
Abigail Dodato
Gianni Estrada
Oluwafunmilola Gabriel
Morgan Gilliam
Elizabeth Kent
Krystal Lange
Sumiyati Lie
Emily McCrossa
Olivia McKenzie
Gabrielle Nelson
Bernice Ngere, “Achievement in Nursing” Award Winner
Emily Nolen
Joanne Perez
Marjorie Renea Plaudis
Samantha Romba
Jill Shade
Ashley Shawder
Kaitlyn Smith
Brooklen MaKayla Stewart
Brianna Stream
Victoria Tate
Kelsey Thompson
Natalie Joan Thompson
Brianna Threewitts
Susan Ulloa
Brittany Ashton Watson
Amari Weems
Shellayne Whalen
Sarah Williams
Vanessa Pearl Wingfield

Maryland Agriculture Land Preservation Foundation Now Accepting Applications

The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) Program is now accepting applications for the Fiscal Year 2025 Easement Cycle.

Eligibility requirements include a minimum of 50 contiguous acres, land outside of the 10-year water and sewer plan for the county, and a minimum of 50% Class I, II or III soils. For more information on eligibility and the MALPF easement acquisition process, please visit: <https://mda.maryland.gov/malpf/Pages/Fact-Sheets.aspx>.

The mission of MALPF is:

- to preserve productive farmland and

woodland for the continued production of food and fiber for all of Maryland’s citizens,

- to curb the expansion of random urban development,
- to help curb the spread of urban blight and deterioration,
- to help protect agricultural land and woodland as open space,
- to protect wildlife habitat, and
- to enhance the environmental quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

MALPF purchases agricultural preserva-

tion easements that forever restrict development on prime farmland and woodland. The State of Maryland has preserved in perpetuity more agricultural land than any other state in the country. St. Mary’s County has preserved over 14,966 acres to date, using MALPF easements.

To view the application and apply, visit <https://mda.maryland.gov/malpf/Pages/Forms.aspx>.

All applications must be submitted by May 15, 2024, to the St. Mary’s County MALPF Program Administrator, Priscilla Leitch, Agriculture & Seafood

Division Manager with St. Mary’s County Government’s Department of Economic Development. Questions may be directed to Mrs. Leitch at (240) 309-4021 or Priscilla.Leitch@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Submitted applications will be ranked by the St. Mary’s County Agriculture Land Preservation Advisory Board, using the state mandated Land Evaluation and Site Assessment System. The ranked applications will be submitted to the state for consideration.

A View From The BLEACHERS



THE MIGHTY

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

Good gracious fellow occupants of this fantastic southern peninsula on Maryland's western shore. There is lot going on. Good news. Bad news. All of it big news. Major seismic waves are reverberating across the hinterland. Tectonic shifts are shaking the earth under our feet. Whatever the world was, it is no longer – for good or ill. Group therapy and celebration are both in order. Let's review, eh?

Baltimore fans: Are you okay? The range of emotions...intense. One day you're on the Super Bowl train with Lamar Jackson and the white-hot Ravens; the next minute, about three hours after Andy Reid, Patrick Mahomes, Travis Kelce, Taylor Swift and the rest the contingent of the Kansas City football team (that for some reason is still very much allowed to use its native American imagery, nickname and embarrassing chants) took the field at M&T Bank Stadium, all was lost. Completely. Forever. All dreams...dead. All crabs less than five inches in diameter. No rockfish biting. All National Bohemian kegs empty. Absolute disaster. Even Francis Scott Key would have had writer's block and no sense of rhythm.

But then those Birds came out of nowhere with sunshine and bushels of Old Bay dowsed crabs. They sold! The Orioles sold! Peter Angelos's reign of terror is over! And Cal Ripken Jr. is part of the new ownership group. Simply amazing...and so, so deserved. The future is blinding bright for this young team. Ownership was the great threat; no more. And if the off-the-field news wasn't good enough, on the diamond, the O's fleeced the Brewers in acquiring Corbin Burnes, an elite arm to ride during deep October runs. Losing the AFC Championship at home is not ideal, but this isn't a bad psychological tonic. Pitchers and catcher report in a few weeks. Start getting loose.

Regarding the emotional instability of sports fans, a cruise down I-295 from Charm City to D.C. will reveal another bunch who are dutifully losing their minds. The hiring of Dan Quinn as the new Commanders head coach landed like a second helping of lima beans from a well-intended parent. In a word, ugh. Quinn, a middle-age, defensive re-tread head coach who lost a Super Bowl (sound familiar?), is not the young, offensive genius the burgundy and gold mob preferred (see Ben Johnson of Detroit or Bobby Slowik of Houston).

But neither Quinn, nor his hiring, deserved this. How quickly we forget. Not so long ago, had you told Commanders fans that in February 2024 they would have a new ownership group (that included Magic Johnson!), a highly respected General Manager with full roster control, an experienced head coach and the promise of a shiny, new franchise quarterback, awkward euphoria would have been the response. Embarrassing high-pitched squeals, involuntary dancing, maybe even a long awkward hug would have marked the moment. Mind and body would have operated with uncontrolled blissful independence. And now that the names have started to fill in, we...me...all of us...have slipped into the dark vortex of Washington football and reverted to our deeply ingrained defeatist mentality.

What are we thinking? Quinn doesn't deserve this. He's being treated like the second coming of Jim Zorn or Steve Spurrier. Sheesh. We need a professional, here. Someone paid to listen to our madness and capable of reprogramming. Lacking a couch to work through this habitual negativity, a song will have to do. The obvious artist? Bob Dylan. The obvious song, The Mighty Quinn. Sing the chorus 10 times, fellow D.C. fans: "Come all without, come all within, you'll not see nothing like The Mighty Quinn!" Repeat as necessary; add a drink for maximum therapeutic effect.

What, then, to take from this summary screed of recent local sports happenings? Much, me thinks. In 70 words or less, that life will toy with your plans and introduce the unexpected – sometimes good, sometimes bad. The trick: gratefully acknowledge the former and process the latter knowing that life often provides pick-me-ups after kicking you in the teeth. And if emotions run raw after old scabs are picked, that it's best to breathe first and remain steady – perhaps with an assist from a song.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com



7th District Optimist Club

OUR BEER BATTERED COD IS BACK!

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Buttermilk Fried Shrimp
Combination Platter Available
Steak Fries, Homemade Coleslaw,
Tartar Sauce, and a Roll**

FRIDAYS 5–7PM

Feb. 16 & 23: Fish & Shrimp

Mar. 1: Shrimp & Oysters (Fried)

Mar. 8, 15, & 22: Menu Options to Be Announced

\$20 CASH OR CREDIT

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**7th District Optimist Club
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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.

Buzzy Higgs, 77



Carroll "Buzzy" Lenwood Higgs, 77, of Leonardtown, MD, passed away peacefully at St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown, MD on January 31, 2024. Born on June

21, 1946 in Leonardtown, MD, he was the son of the late John Leon Higgs, Sr. and the late Helen Victoria Pilkerton Higgs.

Buzzy was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, MD. On February 7, 1976, he married his beloved wife, Bonnie Stone, at Hollywood Methodist Church in Hollywood, MD. Together they celebrated almost 48 years of marriage.

Buzzy was a proud and hardworking man. He worked as a Plant Mechanic at Steuart Petroleum for 32 years. He was known for being dependable and for taking great pride in a job well done.

Buzzy had a great love for the outdoors, especially on the water. When he was not working, you would find him in the woods hunting, on the water fishing or crabbing, in the garage carving and painting ducks and birds out of wood, or just tinkering around, and metal detecting all over. He loved all things history-related, from collecting artifacts, rocks, and arrowheads to watching

history documentaries on the television. He loved being with his family and enjoying the simple things in life with them like playing cards and eating good food.

Buzzy was a kind and humble man who was full of stories. Everyone loved listening to his many stories as much as he loved telling them. He was the proud Pop Pop of five grandchildren who especially loved listening to those stories and will remember them forever.

Buzzy is survived by his loving wife, Bonnie, his sons, Kenny Perez (Joannah, wife) of Ohio and Jessie Higgs (Toni, wife) of Holly Hill, SC, daughter Carey Higgs (Tony Dubuque, partner) of Great Mills, MD, his siblings, Vicki Deagle, Elva Jean Reeves, Janice Deagle, and Ann Mattingly, as well as five grandchildren Blake, Darren, Jacob, Juliet, and Katie. In addition to his parents, he is also preceded in death by his siblings, Julia Sievertson, John Leon Higgs Jr., James Vincent Higgs, Joseph Lawrence "Larry" Higgs, Walter "Solly" Higgs, and Bernard Ignatius Higgs.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, 41590 Fenwick Street, Leonardtown, MD, 20650, where a Celebration of Life will be held at 4:00 PM in the funeral home chapel with Pastor Dennis Gillikin officiating.

Memorial contributions may be made in

Buzzy's name to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625 Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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

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

Liz Passarelli, 76



Elizabeth ("Liz") Passarelli passed away peacefully on Friday, January 26, 2024, at Hospice House in Callaway, MD, after a long and courageous battle with cancer, with

her cousin, John P. Price, by her side. Liz was born from the union of the late Alfred Thomas Passarelli (her hero) and Anne Frances Nakraseive Passarelli. She was predeceased by her beloved brother, Alfred Thomas "Freddie" Passarelli.

Liz's family moved to St. Mary's County, Maryland from the Bronx, New York when she was a young girl. She grew up in Piney Point, Maryland and graduated from St. Mary's Academy. She had a long career as a dedicated legal secretary. She was considered a legend in her field. Over the years she worked for numerous Judges, State's Attorneys, County Commissioners, and many lawyers. She was known for her veracious work ethic, dedication, loyalty, and potty mouth. Liz never met a stranger and was never afraid to tell them her opinion.

You either loved Liz or you didn't. If you took the time to get to know her, she was kind, loving, generous, and tender hearted. She had a core group of dear friends she met while growing up in the community, worked with at Courthouse, met at various law offices she worked, and at the county government. She loved them fiercely.

She was a devout Washington Redskins fan and would cheer or curse them every game. She was thrilled/relieved when they recently got a new owner. She also volunteered her free time for SMAWL.

Liz was never married nor had any biological children, but was the "second mom" to many of the law clerks she 'trained' while working for the Honorable Marvin S. Kaminetz. She acted as their county tour guide, mentor, wingman, and devoted friend. She also considered herself the ultimate adult daycare provider for the most patient bailiffs and court reporter on the planet. When she loved you, you knew it. When she was angry at you, you knew it. The only filter Liz had was attached to her cigarette.

Liz not only was a second mother to her law clerks, but she adopted their children and was considered the best nonni/Godmother a child could have. She was kind, loving, and considerate with them. During a one night sleep over she taught her special Maddie Rose how to properly pour her vodka and light her cigarette. An incredible feat considering the child had just recently learned to walk.

Liz was beautiful, intelligent, funny,

grumpy, and difficult. She was a complete and complicated woman. Her wonderful group of dedicated friends accepted and loved her for her. They loved her because under the tough exterior was a kind, soft and gentle heart. Liz will be missed by many. A Life Celebration/Roast in honor of Liz will be held at a later date this Spring.

A special thank you to her wonderful neighbor Sandy for helping to care for her and her four-legged children when she could not. When Liz was sick, her cousin John stepped up and reminded Liz on a daily basis that she was loved, even on the rare occasions she made it difficult. She is survived by her sister Giovanna Passarelli Riley and her first cousin Maria Passarelli Crellen.

Visitation will be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at 10:00 am, followed by a Mass at 11:00 am, then interment immediately after. All services are to be at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church located at 22373 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, Maryland 20653.

Donations in Liz's memory can be made to SMAWL, P.O. Box 1232, Leonardtown, MD 20650 in her honor.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Dorothy Reisinger, 94



Dorothy Mary Reisinger, "Dottie", 94, of Chesapeake, VA, formerly of Compton, MD, passed away on January 22, 2024 at her daughters' home. Born on

March 25, 1929 in Washington, D.C., she was the daughter of the late Leone Rose Adams Ryan and the late Francis Joseph Ryan. Dorothy was the loving wife of the late William Curtis Reisinger, whom she married on January 6, 1951 in New Market, MD, and who preceded her in death on January 28, 1968. She is survived by her children, Glenn Paul (Sandy) of Mechanicsville, MD and Nancy Luce (Mike) of Chesapeake, VA, grandchildren, Karen (Mark), Kimberly, Ryan (Gillian) and Amy, and six great grandchildren. She is predeceased by her sons, Billy and Frankie, and grandson, Patrick Reisinger.

Dorothy moved to St. Mary's County, MD from Adelphi, MD in June 1968. She was a School Bus Driver and was devoted to her family. Dorothy was very self-sufficient and could repair, build, and sew anything. She enjoyed the water, crabbing, and seafood; softball was also a fun pastime for her, and she was on teams at Captain Sam's and Pennies. Dorothy was a lifelong Redskins fan and attended two Super Bowls. She also loved music, especially from the 40s—Big Band and Frank Sinatra.

The family will receive friends on Friday, February 9, 2024 from 9:30 AM to 10:30 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of

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In Remembrance

Christian Burial will follow at 11:00 AM in Our Lady of The Wayside Catholic Church, Chaptico, MD with Father Chip Luckett officiating. Interment will follow at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church Cemetery, Leonardtown, MD.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the USO.

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.

Mary Lou Hayden, 91



Mary Elizabeth "Mary Lou" Hayden of Hollywood, MD, passed away peacefully on February 2, 2024, at the age of 91 from advanced dementia. She is survived

by her two sons, Charles G. Hayden, Jr. of Rehoboth Beach, DE and Robert W. Hayden, Sr. (Kathy) of Baldwin, MD, five grandchildren, Nicole L. Mattingly (Justin) of St Inigoes, MD, Erin H. Riester (PJ) of Coranado, CA, Lauren E. Hayden and Robert W. Hayden, Jr. of Cockeysville, MD, and Catherine E. Mumrath (Earl) of Richmond, VA, as well as six great grandchildren, JT Mattingly of Davie, FL, Mary Mattingly of Hendersonville, TN, Adelle Hayden of Great Mills, MD, Lili Walker of St. Inigoes, MD, and Charlotte and Felicity Riester of Coranado, CA. Mary was preceded in death by her loving husband of nearly 58 years, Charles G. (Garner) Hayden, her son Michael A. Hayden, her granddaughter, Britany A. Hayden, and her siblings James Louis Tennison, Sr. and Joseph Edward Tennison.

Mary was born on October 10, 1932 in Leonardtown, MD and was the daughter of Louis Tennison and Shirley (Combs)

Tennison of Great Mills, MD. She attended St. Michael's School and St. Mary's Academy, graduating in 1950. Upon graduation, she went to work at Blair's Jewelry in Leonardtown, MD. She married Garner on November 10, 1951 at Holy Face Catholic Church in Great Mills, MD. They built their home on Hayden property in Hollywood, MD and raised their family amongst many Hayden family members; Mary remained in that home until March 2021.

Once her children were born, she became a stay-at-home mom. Later, she went to work for The First National Bank of St. Mary's, starting in the Proof Department, moved to the Lexington Park branch, and ended her career at the Pax River branch as a Customer Service Representative, retiring after 20 years of service.

She was a member of St. John's Francis Regis Catholic Church and attended Saturday evening Mass regularly. In March of 2021, her dementia became serious enough that she moved to Rehoboth Beach, DE to live next door to her son, Charlie. She moved into assisted living in December of 2021.

Mary Lou and Garner enjoyed many camping trips in their RV, driving across the country twice. If there was a historic house along the way, she had to stop and see it. She was a genealogy buff, tracing the Hayden, Garner, Tennison, and Combs families back to the 1700s.

She enjoyed reading, playing cards, spending time with her grandchildren, and crocheting. Every new family member received a "Nanny Blanket", be it a new baby or a grandson-in-law.

She was a member of the Historical Society of St. Mary's County and The Ladies Auxiliary of the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department. She also delivered Meals on Wheels with her high school friends, Mary Rose Ott and Mary Britton; the three Musketeers.

Mary Lou and Garner had a tight knit ground of friends in Hollywood. Nearly

every Saturday night there was a card game at someone's house. The "gang" consisted of many friends who worked at SMECO with Garner and The First National Bank of St. Mary's with Mary Lou. Saturday evenings meant there would be baked potatoes, corn on the cob, and steak on the grill at the "Shack" hosted by Joe and Cyrilla Beck. She was the last surviving member of that close knit group.

The family will receive friends for a visitation, on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M., with prayers recited at 7:00 P.M in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, 41590 Fenwick Street, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Thursday, February 15, 2024 at 10:00 AM in St. John's Francis Regis Catholic Church, Hollywood, MD.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the St. Johns Revitalization Fund, the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary, or Vitas Hospice Care by calling 1-800-854-3402.

The pallbearers will be her grandson Robert Hayden Jr, her great grandson, JT Mattingly, her nephews, James L. Tennison, Jr. and Joseph E. Tennison, Dale, James, and a faithful neighbor, Chuck Hayden.

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.

Bernie Hutching, 66



Bernard "Bernie" Eugene Hutching, 66 of Leonardtown, MD passed away on January 19, 2024 at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital.

Born October 20, 1957 in Leonardtown, MD he is the son of Rose Vinson and the late Erman Hutching. He is survived by his siblings; Billie Maciunas, of FL, and Linda Orr of MI; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins. He was preceded in death by his siblings, Joyce Hutching of FL (Dec.), David Hutching of MD (Dec.), Katherine Vinson (Dec.).

Bernie graduated from Great Mills High School and was an Engine Mechanic for the Merchant Marines. He enjoyed being outdoors on the water fishing, crabbing, and seawater skiing.

Services will be private.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.



Thank you, David's Flowers, for 35 years of serving Leonardtown and St. Mary's County.

*A Tribute to the Loved One
Whose Memory Lives
On Forever in Your Heart*

Honor the memory of your cherished one by sharing the story of their life with friends, neighbors and associates here in the community.

For details and to place your notice of remembrance, call 301-373-4125 for assistance.



REMEMBRANCES
IN PRINT & ONLINE

County Times
St. Mary's County • Calvert County

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.

Teen Court Program Seeking Volunteers

Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity in the new year? Consider volunteering with the St. Mary's County Teen Court Program! Teen Court is designed to reduce the number of youthful offenders and educate youth in an actual court environment. Teen Court is a juvenile justice diversion program offering the first-time misdemeanor offenders, ages 11-17, and first-time traffic offenders under the age of 18, the opportunity to accept accountability for their minor crimes without having to incur a permanent criminal record or traffic court fines and points. Teen Court is a voluntary program that allows juvenile respondents to be judged by a jury of their peers.

The Teen Court Program also provides our county teens who are interested in our judicial system an opportunity to help their fellow teens and gain first-hand knowledge of the court system. Several of our teen attorneys have proceeded to utilize the experience gained through this program in their future goals and careers. Please contact the Teen Court Coordinator with any questions or to join our dedicated staff of volunteers who make this program work for the benefit of all the citizens of St. Mary's County.

For more information, visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/TeenCourt/ or contact Teen Court Coordinator Greg Jones at 301-475-4200, ext. 1852, or TeenCourt@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Book Talk at Loffler

Local author Carol McCabe Booker will be at the Loffler Senior Activity Center on Friday, Feb. 9, at 1 p.m. to discuss her late husband's amazing book, *Shocking the Conscience: A Reporter's Account of the Civil Rights Movement*. Someone Booker was the first full-time African American reporter for the Washington Post and served as Jet magazine's White House correspondent for 50 years. Booker's eye-witness reporting on the major events of the civil

rights movement is recounted and reflected on in this important work. To sign up for this presentation and discussion, go to www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or leave a message on our reservation line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660.

Valentine's Day Breakfast Café with Bruce Thomas

Who wouldn't LOVE a yummy breakfast (ham, eggs and potato casserole) and time with lovely friends and live entertainment? Join us at the Northern Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, February 14, from 9-10:30 a.m. Musical guest Bruce Thomas is making his first visit to the Center! Mr. Thomas has performed across the mid-Atlantic region. His website describes his music style as "Michael Bublé or Frank Sinatra with the gymnastics and vocal agility of Al Jarreau and the soulfulness of Gregory Porter." Register and pay only \$5 (the entertainment is sponsored at no extra charge) 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.

Bereavement Support Group Meeting

The Loffler Senior Activity Center will host its monthly Bereavement Support Group meeting on Thursday, Feb. 15 at 10 a.m. Join us in a safe space to share your grief experience and learn new ways to cope while meeting friends for the journey. This group will be facilitated by the Bereavement Coordinator from Hospice of St. Marys, Dr. Patricia Watson. No need to register, drop-ins are welcome.

Renovate, Relocate, or Reverse – Options for Older Homeowners in Retirement

The decision to downsize and move to a new neighborhood or renovate to suit your retirement needs can be complex and emotional. Adding in the cost to do either makes

the decision that more vexing. Join local real estate professional Frank McKnew, a certified Senior Real Estate Specialist, and Robbie Loker, a Home Equity Strategist for seniors, at the Northern Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, February 21, from 1-2:30 p.m. for this free presentation! Explore the pros and cons to consider as homeowners shift into retirement. Register 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.

Health Watch Series: Make the Most of Your Doctors Visit

Health Watch volunteers Elaine Green and Kathy Blanchette will discuss *How to Make the Most of Your Doctors Visit* at the Loffler Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, Feb. 21, at 9:30 a.m. Advance registration is required for this presentation. Go to www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or leave a message on our reservation line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1660.

Living a Poetic Life Workshop with Author Lori Joseph

This interactive poetry workshop is based on Lori Joseph's recently published book, *Seventy Five: Connectivity Through the Ages*. Ms. Joseph is joining us in-person at the Northern Senior Activity Center on Thursday, February 22, from 9-11 a.m. to provide select readings that demonstrate ways to live more attentively. Participants will be introduced to sensory exploration to heighten their own writing experience. Reference books and writing materials are supplied at no extra charge. This workshop is being offered for free through the generosity of the Maryland State Arts Council. Register 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.

Keys to Senior Independence

Keys to Senior Independence will be held on Tuesdays, March 19-April 9, from 6-9 p.m., in Building C-Room 204 at the College of Southern Maryland in Leonardtown, MD.

This year's presentation topics are:

- *Tuesday, March 19 - Here and There: From Transportation to Medicare*
Join us to learn about the St. Mary's Transportation System (STS) and programs offered through the Department of Aging & Human Services' Senior Information & Assistance Division, such as Senior Rides!

- *Tuesday, March 26 - Mental Health*
This evening will cover several facets of mental health, including a presentation on Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia, Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention, and Suicide Prevention.

- *Tuesday, April 2 - Supporting Caregivers*

Learn about the programs and services that support caregivers in our community in several aspects, including the Home & Community-Based Services Division of the Department of Aging & Human Services, St. Mary's County Hospice, and A Community that Shares (ACTS).

- *Tuesday, April 9 - Financial Health/Identity Protection*
Speakers this week will teach community members about scams directed toward the aging population and how to detect, avoid, and report scams, along with legal information and financial options for older adults!

Sign up for one presentation or all four! For more information, or to register, contact Sarah Miller, Community Programs & Outreach Division Manager, at 301-475-4200, ext. 1073, or Sarah.Miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

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The County Times is a weekly newspaper providing news and information for the residents of St. Mary's and Calvert County. The County Times will be available on newsstands every Thursday. The paper is published by Southern Maryland Publishing Company, which is responsible for the form, content, and policies of the newspaper. The County Times does not espouse any political belief or endorse any product or service in its news coverage.

To be considered for publication, articles and letters to the editor submitted must include the writer's full name, address and daytime phone number. Submissions must be delivered by 4 p.m. on the Monday prior to our Thursday publication to ensure placement for that week. After that deadline, the County Times will make every attempt possible to publish late content, but cannot guarantee so. Letters may be condensed/edited for clarity, although care is taken to preserve the core of the writer's argument. Copyright in material submitted to the newspaper and accepted for publication remains with the author, but the County Times and its licensees may freely reproduce it in print, electronic or other forms. We are unable to acknowledge receipt of letters. The County Times cannot guarantee that every letter or photo(s) submitted will be published, due to time or space constraints.



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

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, Feb 9

St. Johns School Open House

St. John's Catholic Church
43900 St Johns Rd., Hollywood
10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

We invite prospective SJS families to come and tour our wonderful Blue Ribbon school! If you are looking for the right Catholic school for your family (Grades PreK4 to 8th Grade), mark your calendar for Friday, February 9th, 10:00 am-1:00 pm! Email us at office@sjshollywood.org to set up your private tour that day.

WAG: Working Adults Group!

Patuxent Presbyterian Church
23421 Kingston Creek Rd., California
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Working Adults Group (WAG) Soup Night on Friday, February 9th at 7:00 p.m. at the Joshua House (located directly behind the church). Please bring a soup to share.

Sat, Feb 10

Black History Month Open House

U.S. Colored Troops Interpretive Center
21675 S. Coral Dr., Lexington Park
10 a.m. to 2p.m.

Come see the U.S. Colored Troops (USCT) Medal of Honor recipient exhibits at the USCT Interpretive Center in the Lexington Manor Passive Park during a free open house for all ages in honor of Black History Month.

SweetHeart Valentine's Dance: Mother/Son & Father/Daughter

Ridge Volunteer Fire Department
13820 Point Lookout Rd., Ridge
4p.m. to 6p.m.

\$10 per couple or \$20 per family. Punch and Desserts provided. Come join for a fun afternoon/evening of dancing to celebrate Valentine's Day with your kids and family.

SMTMD Contra Dance

Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd., Chaptico
7p.m. to 9:30p.m.

The evening starts at 7 pm with a half hour beginner's dance workshop followed by live music performed by the SOMD Open Band and dancing from 7:30 to 10 pm. Check the website calendar for the lineup of dances and callers! Admission is \$12 for non-SMTMD members; \$8 for members. Children 17 and under, when accompanied by an adult, and band members are free. Info: smtmd2@gmail.com, smtmd.org/#/dances/

*Rescheduled or cancelled events will be posted online

Sun, Feb 11

'SOUPER' Super Bowl Soup Drive!

Patuxent Presbyterian Church
23421 Kingston Creek Rd., California
9:30 a.m. to 11a.m.

Super Bowl Sunday Soup Drive! On Super Bowl Sunday, February 11th, we will collect cans of soup to be donated to H.O.P.E. and S.M.I.L.E., in support of our neighbors in need. You can vote for the team you think will 'win the ring' by adding your cans of soup to the team's designated table in the Narthex.

Mon, Feb 12

Virtual Roundtable with St. Mary's Delegation

Zoom
8a.m.

This will be an opportunity to hear our St. Mary's County state elected officials review the current status of the 2024 legislative session and the bills they are sponsoring that affect our business community. Sponsored by the St. Mary's County Library.

Please register no later than Thursday, February 8 to receive the link. Registration: cca.smcchamber.com/EvtListing.aspx?d-bid2=MDSTM&evtid=47895&class=E

Red-Cross Blood Drive

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

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

Social Distancing / Mask may be required

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library



UPCOMING EVENTS

Mobile Library Grand Opening Weekend

St. Mary's County Library is thrilled to announce that our Mobile Library has arrived! We're celebrating with a fun Grand Opening Weekend at all three Library locations on February 10 and 11. We'll have kids' activities, free t-shirts (limited numbers to be given out first come, first served), tours of the Mobile Library, and more! No registration.

- **Leonardtown Library:** Saturday, February 10 from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.
- **Charlotte Hall Library:** Saturday, February 10 from 2 - 4 p.m.
- **Lexington Park Library:** Sunday, February 11 from 2 - 4 p.m.

St. Mary's County Library Presidents Day Closing

All three locations of the St. Mary's

County Library will be closed on Monday, February 19 in observance of Presidents Day. All locations will be open regular business hours on Tuesday, February 20.

Community Chess Day

Do you love chess? Play chess, eat snacks, bring your friends and find new chess-loving friends at the Charlotte Hall Library on Saturday, February 17 from 2 - 4 p.m. All ages and all skill levels are welcome to play! No registration.

Building a Better Budget: Lunch & Learn Series

Learn the essentials of building a budget that works for YOU! Pack a lunch and join Dr. Troy Anthony Anderson, financial wellness expert, at Lexington Park Library on Tuesday, February 20 from 12 - 1 p.m. as he explains the fundamentals of

the budgeting process. Learn how to create and follow your own personal budget plan based on your needs. This interactive workshop is packed with practical, family-oriented exercises that will help you be the master of your own financial wellness. The Lunch & Learn series is a hybrid event. If you are planning to attend virtually, be sure to register for the event to receive a link to the online session. In-person walk-ins welcome. All registrants will receive a Zoom link before the session. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Ask Me Anything About Publishing with Christine Trent

St. Mary's County Author Christine Trent (Lady of Ashes, Heart of St. Mary's County) answers your questions about publishing. Enjoy a casual Q&A with the local author as she talks about topics in

publishing at Charlotte Hall Library on Wednesday, February 21 from 6 - 7 p.m. Registration recommended but not required on www.stmalib.org.

Community Garden Orientation & Gardening 101

Come hear all about Lexington Manor Passive Park's new community garden and learn the fundamentals of gardening from a Master Gardener! All are welcome! Come join us for all or just part of the morning's activities at Lexington Park Library on Saturday, February 24 from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. We will first learn about our new community garden, opening at Lexington Manor Passive Park on March 2! After the garden orientation, there will be a Gardening 101 Class taught by a Master Gardener. Register on www.stmalib.org.

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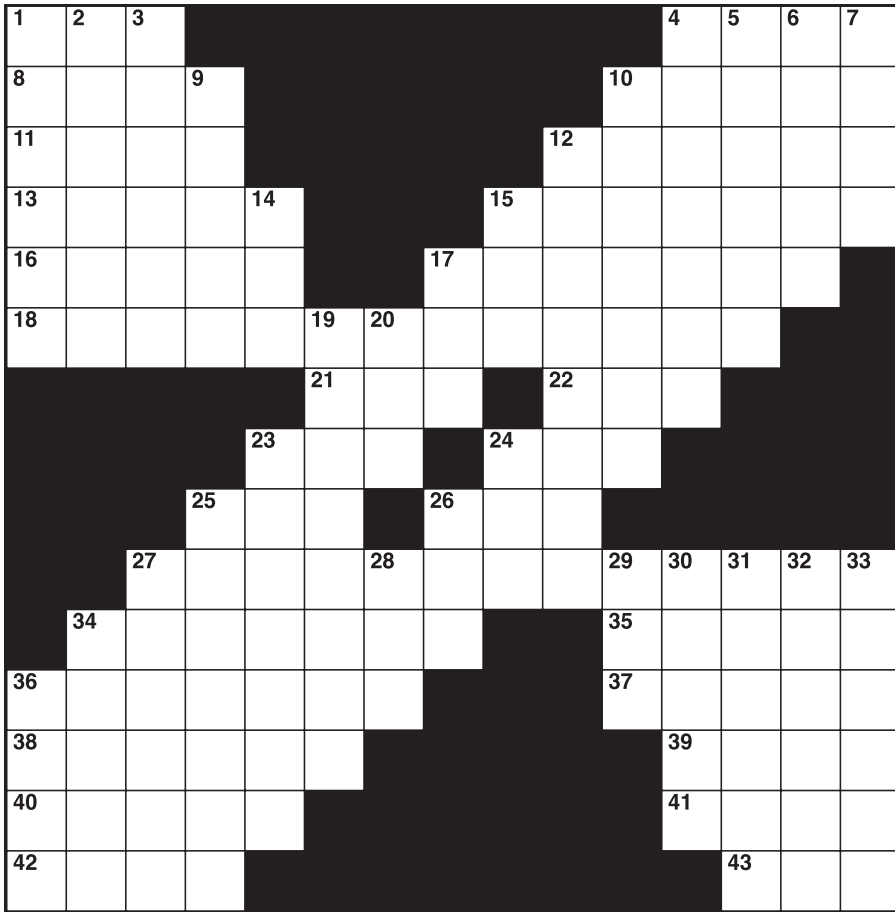
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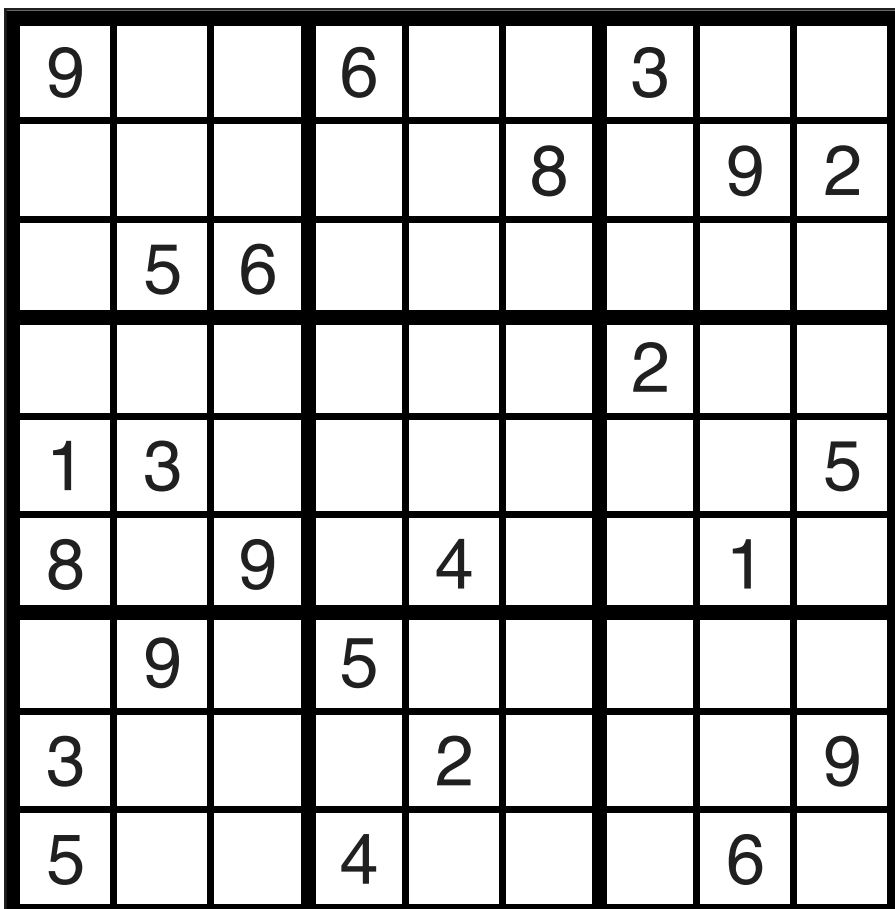


CLUES ACROSS

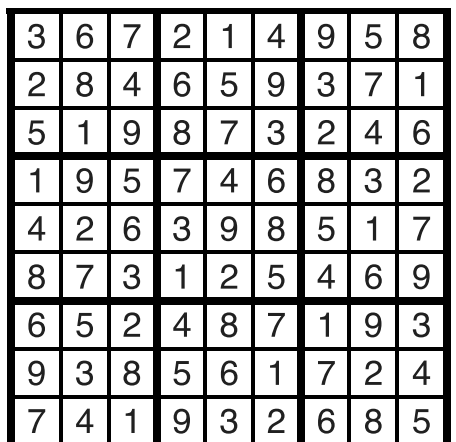
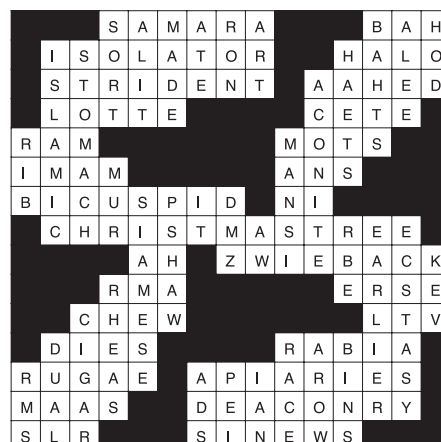
- 1. One point south of due east
- 4. Coagulated blood
- 8. Fortifying ditch
- 10. Devotee of Hinduism
- 11. Trunk of a tree
- 12. Bank note
- 13. Capital of Guam
- 15. Study again
- 16. Covered with hoarfrost
- 17. Opening
- 18. Legendary Rolling Stone
- 21. Stray
- 22. Computer storing system
- 23. Signal
- 24. Pitching statistic
- 25. Human being
- 26. Malaysian isthmus
- 27. The "Blonde Bombshell"
- 34. A gland
- 35. Bluish greens
- 36. Endangered
- 37. Three-dimensional
- 38. In a way, precipitated
- 39. God associated with dissolution
- 40. Blemished
- 41. Flow or leak slowly
- 42. Disco legends The Bee ___
- 43. Midway between south and southeast

CLUES DOWN

- 1. A way to board
- 2. Get down
- 3. Highly seasoned sausage
- 4. First day of month
- 5. Eurasian shrubs
- 6. The organ that bears the ovules of a flower
- 7. Small lake
- 9. Belief
- 10. Sunrooms
- 12. Metric weight unit
- 14. Vasopressin
- 15. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
- 17. One-time family room staple
- 19. Got back together
- 20. Anger
- 23. Sang merrily
- 24. Sea eagle
- 25. Military men
- 26. Kilo yard (abbr.)
- 27. Found in the sea
- 28. Protects from weather
- 29. Type of medicine
- 30. City along the Rhine
- 31. Animal disease
- 32. Martini ingredients
- 33. Get away
- 34. Lack of disunity
- 36. One-time European Commission officer



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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Feb 8

Teen Night: Valentine Crafts and Cupcakes Party

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

All the supplies you'll need to create hand-made gifts and treats for your Valentine. Free! For ages 13-17. Please register as space is limited. Pizza and snacks! Please register. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

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

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

Fri, Feb 9

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Sat, Feb 10

Brain Games: Mahjongg

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Rd, Solomons
12-3 p.m.

Games are a great way to keep your brain sharp while having fun! Please register. Interested in reading about Mahjongg? Take a look at what the library has. For accessibility accommodations, please contact us at least two weeks before the event. 410-535-0291. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, Feb 11

Elephants in Maryland with Ralph Eshelman

North Beach Town Hall
1-2 p.m.

Join us at North Beach Town Hall to talk to this historian. Co-sponsored by Calvert Library, Bayside History Museum and John

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

Southern Maryland Bluegrass

Calvert Elks 2620
1015 Dares Beach Rd., Prince Frederick
2 p.m.

Bluegrass concert featuring The Grascals The doors will open at n. Tickets will be \$23 per person and sold at the door beginning at Noon. Children under 12 are admitted free with a paying adult. Food will be available for sale by the Calvert Elks Lodge beginning at noon. As always there will be a 50/50 raffle and door prizes.

Mon, Feb 12

Master Your Money

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

Join Dr. Troy Anderson from UMD Extension Office to learn the basics of money management. Evaluate and clarify your personal financial values. Learn about free resources available to Maryland residents. Get practical insights and actionable strategies to support your financial health and well-being and ensure a solid foundation for your future. In partnership with C4, Calvert County Commission for Women and Calvert Library. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Feb 13

New Program: Creature Feature

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

Come to the museum for the Monthly Mystery Creature Feature. Every second Tuesday of the month, the CMM Education Team will feature an animal in the museum lobby that is not normally on display. Learn about a new animal and discover the wonderful variety of the creatures found in our local estuaries. Take-home educational coloring pages will be available! Check our social media feed for the big reveal on Monday to find out what Tuesday's Creature Feature will be! Included with museum admission.

Social Security: Ask an Expert (Zoom)

Zoom
12-1p.m.

Presentation by Diana Varela, Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration followed by Q&A. This

event will not be recorded .If you'd like to use the wifi and a library computer to participate in this Zoom event please call 410-535-0291. Partners -- Calvert Library, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Wed, Feb 14

Job Seeker Resources – Skillbuilders

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 Wednesday of every month. More job-seeker help is available on mwejobs.maryland.gov. If you have questions or need more information about resources available, please contact Cheryl Thorne at Maryland Department of Labor (cheryl.thorne@maryland.gov). 410-535-0291/410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Resumes and Cover Letters – Skillbuilders Workshop

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

Offered by Maryland Department of Labor, American Job Center, this is an interactive workshop for resume and cover letter writing help. Looking for a job, or a better job? Don't miss this free class. Registration closes the Monday before the event. If you have questions, please contact Cheryl Thorne at cheryl.thorne@maryland.gov. More job-seeker help is available on mwejobs.maryland.gov. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

JobSource Mobile Career Center

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

Stop by to visit the JobSource Mobile Career Center for your job search needs! Get job counseling and resume help, search for jobs and connect with Southern Maryland JobSource. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Alzheimer's Caregivers Support

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

Get tips and support from other caregivers.

Facilitated by Charles Harrell and Dennis Poremski of the Alzheimer's Association. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Friends of Calvert Library Annual Meeting

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
5-6 p.m.

Do you love Calvert Library? Learn more about Friends of Calvert Library at our Annual Meeting! 410-535-0291. , 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Thu, Feb 15

Little Minnows

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

This month's theme is Chesapeake 1, 2, 3. 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 craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25 – 40 minutes. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. Included with museum admission.

Upcoming

Great Backyard Bird Count

Calvert Marine Museum
Friday & Saturday, Feb. 16 & 17
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Participate in a Citizen Science activity that provides data to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Check out a pair of binoculars and a bird count tally sheet in the museum lobby to assist us with this program on your own or on a guided walk with museum educators. For adults and children in third grade or older who are interested in assisting with research. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Included with museum admission.

Universal Coprolite Day

Calvert Marine Museum
Monday, Feb. 19
10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Join us for the third annual celebration of fossilized poop, otherwise known as coprolites. Stations featuring fossilized feces and the stories they tell will be dispersed through our galleries. The event will also feature coprolites in the making...modern feces, some with a twist and a new Scats and Tracks activity. Included with museum admission.

SMECO Marks 30 Years of Math Competitions

More Than 150 Middle School Students Compete This Year

Southern Maryland's annual MATHCOUNTS competition marked its 30th anniversary on Saturday, February 3, 2024. More than 150 students from 18 schools gathered at Calvert High School in Prince Frederick to test their math skills.

A competitive technological world requires a proficiency in mathematics as a foundation for success in science, technology, and engineering. MATHCOUNTS aims to boost student interest in mathematics by making the subject challenging and entertaining. Each year, more than 500 regional competitions are held in middle schools across the country, with winners advancing to state competitions and then to the national competition.

According to its website, MATHCOUNTS alumni are more likely to continue with science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), with three out of every four alumni studying a STEM field in college—nearly three times the national average. And MATHCOUNTS builds the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for success: 95 percent of teachers believe that MATHCOUNTS problems are effective at improving their students' problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

The local MATHCOUNTS competition features rounds of mathematics problems to challenge students one-on-one and as teams over the course of the three-hour event. First



is the sprint round, a 30-question test that students complete individually. The competitors go next to the target round, where they have four sets of math problems and six minutes to complete each set of two questions.

In the individual competition, which is based on combined scores in the sprint and target rounds, Paul Blachek from Piccowaxen Middle School in Charles County finished first and Kathryn Torgesen

from Chesapeake Public Charter School in St. Mary's County finished second.

The top 12 scorers finish the competition by facing each other in the countdown round, a single-elimination bracket-based tournament in which students must respond verbally to questions in a matter of seconds. Mason Hall from Leonardtown Middle School in St. Mary's County placed first and Zach Greer from Father Andrew White School in St. Mary's County placed second.

In the team round, foursomes of students answer 10 questions in 20 minutes. Northern Middle School in Calvert County won first place; team members were Jacob Byun, Julio Castillo, Zac Gingue, and Reed Noltemeyer, coached by Kathy Dempster. Piccowaxen Middle placed second; team members were Paul Blachek, Kai Scott, Marcellus White, and Drake Scott, coached by Jennifer Rowland and co-coached by Deborah Simmons. Leonardtown Middle School won third place; team members were Mason Hall, Addison Owen, Elliot Orthner, and Kamilla Moore, coached by Christy Orthner and co-coached by Jessica Toth. A team from Margaret Brent Middle School in St. Mary's County took fourth place and Father Andrew White School took fifth place.

Sponsors for the local MATHCOUNTS competition are SMECO and the Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's county public schools. Volunteers from SMECO helped score the tests. Winners of the Southern Maryland chapter competition will go on to compete in the statewide contest at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. The top four individual competitors from each state competition receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the national competition in Washington, D.C., in May.



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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of January 22 – January 28, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,657 calls for service throughout the community to include, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 51
- Disorderly & Domestic: 28
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 38
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 737
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 28
- Traffic Complaints: 58
- 911 Hang Ups: 50
- Arrests: 18

NOTABLE CASES / INCIDENTS

Burglary 24-5671: On January 23, 2024, Senior Deputy Mohler responded to the 10400 block of Southern Maryland Blvd. in Dunkirk, for the report of a burglary that had already occurred. Upon arrival, contact was made with the complainant who advised sometime between Jan. 1 – Jan. 19, 2024, an unknown suspect (s) had tampered with the lock box and stole a key. Nothing inside the building appears to have been stolen and no additional damage was observed. The estimated value of damaged property is \$100.00.

Burglary 24-6732: On January 27, 2024, at approximately 6:07 p.m., Deputy Brown responded to the 9000 block of Marcellas Drive in Owings, for a reported burglary. Investigation revealed three juvenile males were walking down the street and entered a vacant residence. Deputies secured the residence and contacted the homeowner. The homeowner advised she did not wish to press charges and juveniles were advised not to return to the residence.

Damaged Property 24-6842: On January 28, 2024, Deputy Mister responded to the 7000 block of Chesapeake Village Blvd. in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of damaged property. Upon arrival, he made contact with the complainant who stated that some-

time between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m., an unknown suspect and vehicle drove through the victim's yard, striking the mailbox encased in cement. The box and post were located in the driveway. The estimated value of the damaged property is \$1,000.00.

Recovered Property 24-5651: On January 28, 2024, Deputy McCourt responded to the area of Dawkins Court and Parran Road in St. Leonard, for the report of an abandoned vehicle. Contact was made with the complainant who advised he noticed a white unoccupied vehicle parked in the woods next to the complainant's tree stand. Investigation revealed the vehicle had been reported stolen from Anne Arundel County. Anne Arundel County Police responded to retrieve and process the stolen vehicle. No suspects were located on scene.

Tampering 24-5418: On January 22, 2024, Deputy T. Bowen responded to Crossroad Church located at 150 Ball Road in St. Leonard, for the report of motor vehicle tampering. Upon arrival, contact was made with the complainant who advised sometime between 5 a.m. and 2 p.m., an unknown suspect (s) tampered with the victim's vehicle after breaking off two-wheel studs and stealing three lug nuts. The estimated value of stolen property is \$300.00.

Theft 24-5424: On January 22, 2024, Senior Deputy Mohler responded to Walmart located at 10600 Town Center Blvd. in Dunkirk, for the reported theft. Upon arrival, contact was made with the complainant who advised on Sunday, Jan. 21 around noon, an unknown black female stole two televisions from the store. The female was observed pushing a shopping cart containing the stolen items out of a rear exit. The suspect then entered the passenger side of a silver Chrysler sedan with no front registration plate and unknown rear registration. The estimated value of stolen property is \$476.00.

Theft 24-5491: On January 22, 2024, Master Deputy Aurich responded to Sneades Ace Hardware located at 1750 Prosper Lane in Owings, for the reported theft. Upon arrival, contact was made with the complainant who advised a white male wearing a dark jacket, a black knit hat, and glasses entered the store and removed a Milwaukee Quietshell heated camo jacket from the shelf. The male was observed removing the jacket from its packaging concealing it under his dark jacket and exiting the store without making payment. The unknown male got into a maroon Ford pickup truck with a ladder rack and left the scene. The estimated value of stolen property is \$229.00.

Theft 24-572: On January 23, 2024, Deputy Daily responded to the 5600 block of Victoria Lane in Sunderland, MD for the report of a theft. The complainant advised two packages containing emergency kits delivered to the residence had been stolen. The estimated value of stolen property is \$119.29.

Theft 24-6865: On January 28, 2024, Deputy Mister responded to the 8100 block of D St. in Chesapeake Beach, for a reported theft. Upon arrival, contact was made with the complainant who advised a rear Maryland registration plate was stolen from his vehicle sometime between 1 a.m. and 10 a.m. The estimated value of stolen property is \$180.00.

CDS Violation: On January 26, 2024, Deputy Zinn initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle speeding in the area of S. Solomons Island Road and Western Shore Blvd. in St. Leonard. Contact was made with the driver, **Solana Katherine Fulmore**, 33 of Prince Frederick, and passenger **Zachary Matthew Williams**, 34 of Prince Frederick. Investigation revealed a positive alert on the vehicle as a result of a K9 sniff from K9 Atlas. A probable cause search of the vehicle revealed a pill crusher and a cut straw

covered in a white residue along with a bottle containing urine. During a search of Williams' person, 44 ½ pills of Amphetamine and a large amount of US currency (\$824.00) were found. Fulmore and Williams were both transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. During a strip search of Williams at the Detention Center, a tear-off containing 8 Oxycodone pills was located. Williams was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis (x2), CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, Possession of Contraband in a Place of Confinement, Altering a Drug or Alcohol Test, and CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics. Fulmore was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, Altering a Drug or Alcohol Test, CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics, and Conspiracy.

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

Anyone with information about these incidents is asked to call the Sheriff's Office at (410) 535-2800 and reference the case number provided. Citizens may remain anonymous thru the 'Submit a Tip' feature on the Calvert County Sheriff's Office mobile app. To download, visit <https://apps.myocv.com/share/a39520678>. Tipsters may also email ccsotips@calvertcountymd.gov



Solana Katherine Fulmore,



Zachary Matthew Williams

Sheriff's Office Welcomes New K-9 Team

The Calvert County Sheriff's Office is proud to announce the graduation and deployment of one new K-9 team. After an extensive 26-week training program, DFC Sean Hendrickson and his four-legged partner are ready to assist in the mission of protecting and serving the citizens of Calvert County.

Canines are a vital tool for law enforcement and are trained in the areas of patrol, narcotics, locating missing persons, building searches, apprehending criminals, evidence recovery, crowd control, obedience, and protecting their handlers.

Handlers are able to pick the name of their dogs, and DFC Hendrickson chose to name his dog "Atlas", named after an NYPD ESU K-9. Atlas's handler was someone very close to DFC Hendrickson. Atlas was the first police K-9 on the scene of the World Trade Center Attacks in New York City on September 11, 2001 (9/11).



DFC Sean Hendrickson and K9 Atlas

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County Employee of the Year Honored

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Technology Services Infrastructure Manager Robert Denton has been selected as Calvert County government's employee of the year.

The citation issued on the occasion of the award ceremony on Feb. 6 says, "Robert is being recognized for not only his exceptional technical skills and deep understanding of our county's history, process and procedures but also for his charismatic presence that shines through every interaction he has within the Technology Services department and beyond."

According to Employee Recognition Committee (ERC) Acting Chair Ashley Wilkerson, "The 2023 Employee of the Year was chosen from among the 12 Employees of the Month and the four 2023 Pride & Quality winners. When selecting an Employee of the Year, the ERC reviews all the input and gives careful consideration to which of the candidates had the broadest impact within and outside of Calvert County Government."

Winners of the award receives a check for \$500 from the ERC's funds.

In accepting the award, Denton said, "I just want to take a moment to thank my colleagues. I wouldn't be up here today if it wasn't for their support. While it's me who won this award, this is not in an individual award, and I just want to make sure I recognize them."

Director of Technology Services Stephen Pereira was part of the protracted line of county department heads and employees who



Robert Denton receives Employee of the Year Award flanked by family and the county commissioners. Photo courtesy of the Calvert County Department of Communications.

came up to the microphone to praise Denton. He said, "As you're well aware, technology is interwoven into everything that we do within the county. Without technology, I believe the county would struggle to function and Rob is a key part of that. Responding to things 24/7, always with a smile on his face and the impact he has had has been felt widely, not only across the county government but in other agencies as well. So, it's really no surprise to me that Rob has gotten employee of the year."

Director for the Department of Public Works and General Services Staff Jones said, "He and I have been working very closely together over the last couple of years

since he's been promoted. And even before that, he was one of the few individuals that answered the phone all the time, responded, got things done."

Acting Director of Parks and Recreation Bob Branham said, "It does not matter what question I ask. When I try to stump him with my lack of expertise in technology services, he has an answer. We don't wait with any delay. He's always responsive."

Deputy Treasurer Cynthia Harris said, "Robert, you really deserve this. When you first started coming to our office, I wanted to know why they were sending the baby of the bunch. And then when you came over, you

had on a polo type shirt and khakis. I said, now he's wearing a school uniform. What in the world? You showed up for us at our most critical times when the printer didn't work, when we were in the middle of a tax sale. So, I thank you Robert."

Sheriff Ricky Cox said, "On my end, we have worked 24/7, not just the deputies out there. We have all the technology...and you're on it. And the thing about me as the sheriff, I can call you anytime and you pick up and you fix everything that we have. You're a real asset to me as sheriff."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Public Facilities Capital Budget Released

Includes New Sheriff's Office Headquarters

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Monies to begin planning for a new sheriff's office headquarters are included in the six-year Public Facilities Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) presented to the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on Feb. 6.

The total six-year CIP projected cost is \$44,340,105, with \$ 14,921,756 earmarked for the next fiscal year (FY 2025), according to Capital Projects Analyst Veronica Atkinson.

The six-year plan has \$2.6 million budgeted for a new headquarters at an undetermined location. A county museum is one potential use that has been mentioned for the existing headquarters building at 30 Church Street in Prince Frederick. The sheriff's office is opening satellite offices in Dunkirk and Lusby this month in leased facilities.

The \$2.6 million for the new sheriff's facility is in FY 29 and 30. Commissioner President Buddy Hance noted, "You just don't want anybody look at this and think that we're going to build a new sheriff's office for \$2.6 million."

Public Works Director J.R. Cosgrove said that money would be used "to get the building started." He said it would be for the design, the architect and starting the con-

struction which would be completed beyond the six years included in the plan. Total cost has not yet been determined and a final decision to actually build it has not been made.

Atkinson said of the six-year plan, "The Department of Finance & Budget reviewed the Public Facilities' FY 2025 – FY 2030 6-year CIP Staff Recommended Budget totaling \$44,340,105. The Public Facilities encompass a range of projects, including County Building HVAC replacements, roof replacements, repairs, renovations, and replacements of County Facilities.' The Public Facilities CIP also encompasses projects for the Calvert Marine Museum, Libraries and Community & Senior Centers. The fiscal impact for Public Facilities' six-year CIP proposed budget of \$44,340,105 also includes \$9,749,318 in Grant Funding. The county funding portion is broken out below:

- "Paygo/General Fund: \$ 7,420,984
- "Debt/Bond: \$27,169,803
- "Grants/Other: \$ 9,749,318
- Total County Contribution: \$44,340,105."

The commissioners are in the process of reviewing capital plans for various subject areas in advance of beginning deliberations on next year's budget. No decisions have been made.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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State Grant Awarded for Armory Site Project

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County has received a state grant to help pay for the redevelopment of the Prince Frederick National Guard Armory site. The grant for \$100,000 from the state was less than the county requested.

The grant award was approved on the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Feb. 6 consent agenda.

A memo from Department of Public Works Project Engineer II Jason Leavitt explained, "On June 27, 2023, the BCC authorized staff to apply to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) Strategic Demolition Fund - Statewide Grant Program to support the demolition of the Public Works' armory in Prince Frederick Town Center and the subsequent development of an open-air pavilion. The request amounted to \$392,459, intended to cover demolition expenses retroactive to March/April 2023, as well as site development and architectural and engineering designs at the construction level. It was acknowledged that project awards were expected to average \$250,000."

But Leavitt said, "On December 22, 2023, an award letter was received and the funding for \$100,000 was approved, conditional upon executing an agreement between the BOCC and DHCD. Awarded funds will be used towards architectural and engineering design and predevelopment costs associated with the community pavilion on the former Prince Frederick Armory site. They cannot be used towards demolition reimbursement."

The armory has since been demolished. It was built in 1953, and most recently served as temporary quarters for the Prince Frederick Volunteer Fire Department while their new facility was being constructed.

For a while the site was slated for the new county administration building, but those plans were scrapped, and the facility is being built in old town Prince Frederick.

Former commissioner Tim Hutchins had hoped to save the building for use as a veteran's service center. And a community theater group had expressed hope it could be converted for use as a theater and arts center.

A county spokesperson explained last year that of the proposed pavilion: "Plans include a commercial kitchen, restrooms and a grassy area surrounding the pavilion to support a variety of events including a farmers' market, community events, arts and entertainment."

Leavitt said at a May 17, 2023, planning commission meeting that some of the history will be saved. He noted, "There will be design inclusion of some of the existing building elements. Number one, there is an MNG (Maryland National Guard) concrete monument on the south facade of the building. It's a large concrete slab. So, in the demolition details we are going to attempt to save that so that it can be used in some capacity for something in the new design, whether it's a step or a monument type thing or something of that nature. There are to be six pallets of bricks saved from the building itself and they're going to be cleaned. So, we're going try to use them also in another design capacity."

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Check Presented to Ladies of Charity



On Feb. 6, Mayor Mike Benton presented a check totaling \$10,641.04 to the dedicated members of the Ladies of Charity, representing the net proceeds from the 2024 Polar Bear Plunge. Once again, this spirited group actively participated in the event on New Year's Day, contributing their time to volunteer efforts and selling baked goods, spring rolls, hot dogs, bratwursts, hand warmers, and beverages.

The Ladies of Charity have been serving those in need in the community for over 50

years. In January alone, the organization was able to feed 477 families.

The Ladies of Charity Food Pantry, located at 8833 Dayton Avenue in North Beach, is open every Tuesday from noon to 2 pm; the second Wednesday of each month from 5 to 7 pm; and, the last Saturday of the month from 10 am to noon. For more information, call the food pantry at 410-286-7086, visit the Ladies of Charity, Calvert County Facebook page or send them an email at localvert@gmail.com.

Commuter Bus Service Cuts, Changes Announced Would Impact Calvert County Routes



The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration on Jan. 31 announced proposed reductions in Commuter Bus service. The agency will hold a series of public hearings and a 30-day public review and comment period on the proposed reductions, with changes set to go into effect on Monday, July 1, 2024. The service reduction is in response to the unprecedented structural financial deficit in state transportation funding, recently announced by the Department of Transportation. An additional infusion of funding allocated by Governor Moore from the Fiscal Year 2025 budget proposal will enable the Maryland Transit Administration to maintain Commuter Bus service at a reduced level rather than eliminate it in its entirety.

The proposed service changes would discontinue service on the Prince Frederick/Dunkirk to Suitland/Washington, D.C. Route.

The proposed service changes would reduce the total number of trips on the following:

- 820 – North Beach/PG Equestrian Center to Washington, D.C.
- 830 – Sunderland/Dunkirk to Washington, D.C.
- 840 – St. Leonard/ Prince Frederick to Washington, D.C.

"We recognize that the Commuter Bus service reduction will have a significant impact on many Marylanders," said Maryland Transit Administrator Holly Arnold. "We encourage riders to visit our website to learn about alternate transit options." The Maryland Transit Administration's Commuter Bus service connects riders traveling from the suburbs to job centers in the metropolitan Baltimore and Washington, D.C. region. Prepandemic, Commuter Bus

operated 635 trips across 36 routes, with an average daily ridership of 12,000. Post-pandemic, Commuter Bus operates 599 trips across 36 routes, with average daily ridership of 5,100, or 43 percent of the pre-pandemic average daily ridership. The proposed changes focus on maintaining access across all regions where Commuter Bus currently operates. The agency used ridership data and considered equity and both existing and potential access when creating the service reduction plan.

The agency will hold five public hearings (three virtual and two in-person) on the proposed changes between March 18 and March 27 and will accept public comments through April 29, 2024. Riders and interested parties can visit mta.maryland.gov/commuter-bus2024 for dates, times and information about how to participate in a public hearing. The website also includes the complete list of proposed service modifications and information on the various ways to submit a comment. The service change proposal will also be available in the lobby of the Maryland Transit Administration headquarters at 6 St. Paul St., Baltimore, MD. Riders needing additional information can call the Transit Information Contact Center at 410- 539-5000. The Maryland Transit Administration is one of the largest multi-modal transit systems in the United States, and operates local and commuter buses, Light Rail, Metro Subway, MARC Train service and a comprehensive Mobility paratransit system. The goal of the Maryland Transit Administration is to provide safe, efficient and reliable transit across Maryland with world-class customer service.

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Calvert Native Returns to Jeopardy

Appearance Highlight's Sister's Nonprofit



Taylor Claggett with Jeopardy host Ken Jennings last Fall

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The son of retired Calvert County judges Steve and Marjorie Claggett was expected to make his second appearance on the Jeopardy television show on Feb. 7.

Taylor Claggett, 37, appeared on Jeopardy last fall and was a two-time champion. Formerly of Chesapeake Beach, he grew up in the county and attended The Calverton School, Plum Point Middle School, and DeMatha High School.

He has two siblings, Stephen, 41, who is a commander in the US Navy Reserves (he is a SEAL) and works for the Baltimore Ravens, and Rachel, 39, who is a physical therapist by trade.

According to his mother, Taylor on the show last fall mentioned to host Ken Jennings "of losing his niece, Taylor Anne, at age 7, to an inoperable brain tumor, that led to our daughter, Rachel, forming a non-profit TAF to fund pediatric cancer research and it sparked donations from all over the world." She said he intends to mention TAF on the Feb. 7 show, adding, "we are hoping that more people support TAF."

"In its first year, TAF raised \$50,000, plus, it received a matching grant of an additional \$25,000," Judge Claggett said.

Rachael Claggett is a Calvert High School graduate. The TaylorAnneFoundation (TAF), in its first year, donated \$75,000 (including matching funds) to the two leading pediatric brain research centers in the country- Stanford and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP).

Taylor Claggett is a director for AT&T in Dallas. He is donating a portion of his winnings to TAF. Their website is taylorannefoundation.org.

According to the website, "Taylor Anne Foundation is a 501(c)3 nonprofit started in 2023 to honor the life and spirit of Taylor Anne Burns Huston. Taylor Anne, or TayTay,

was a vibrant, loving and joyful child. She loved to dance, sing, run and spread love wherever she went. When Taylor was six years old, she was diagnosed with a rare but aggressive brain tumor, of which there is no cure nor treatments that have shown to be very effective. Taylor underwent multiple rounds of radiation, surgeries, and two clinical trials all with a joyful spirit, and rarely complaining. Throughout her journey, Taylor Anne had the strongest faith and in August of 2022, Taylor went to Heaven passing away at the age of seven. Taylor inspired us all to be better people and make an impact on this world. It is with her spirit that we started this Foundation to make a difference in the world of pediatric cancer with a dream to find a cure."

Taylor Claggett's mother Marjorie is a retired circuit court judge who still works as a senior judge. Her husband Steve was a district court judge. He is chair of the newly formed Calvert County Trial Board, part of the police accountability process.

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Taylor Anne Burns Huston

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County Employee of the Year Honored



LOCAL 5
Capital construction budget released



ON THE COVER
Calvert resident returns to competition on Jeopardy!

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MON, FEB 12 Showers Hi: 50° Lo: 41°	TUE, FEB 13 AM Showers Hi: 46° Lo: 33°	WED, FEB 14 Mostly Sunny Hi: 46° Lo: 32°	THU, FEB 15 Mostly Sunny Hi: 48° Lo: 32°

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