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St. Mary's County Times

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

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New Normal 7pm

Sunday 4/19 Wesley Spangles 12pm

The Reagan Years 4pm

SAVE THE DATES

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“WHAT PROMISED TO BE THE SESSION OF HOUSING REALLY DID NOT TURN OUT TO BE ALL THAT MUCH.”

DEPUTY COUNTY ATTORNEY JOHN STERLING HOUSER ON THE FAILURE OF GOV. MOORE'S HOUSING INITIATIVE

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LOCAL 5
Panhandling bill passes state legislature











LOCAL 7
Three incumbents, two new-comers file for town council

St. Mary's County Times

TECH CENTER STUDENTS IN HIGH DEMAND

ON THE COVER
Apprenticeship program lets high school seniors earn credit on the job

WEEKLY FORECAST

<p>THU, APR 16</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 90° Lo: 66°</p>	<p>FRI, APR 17</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 83° Lo: 59°</p>	<p>SAT, APR 18</p>  <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 81° Lo: 65°</p>	<p>SUN, APR 19</p>  <p>Showers Hi: 67° Lo: 43°</p>
<p>MON, APR 20</p>  <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 59° Lo: 38°</p>	<p>TUE, APR 21</p>  <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 66° Lo: 54°</p>	<p>WED, APR 22</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 56°</p>	<p>THU, APR 23</p>  <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 73° Lo: 53°</p>



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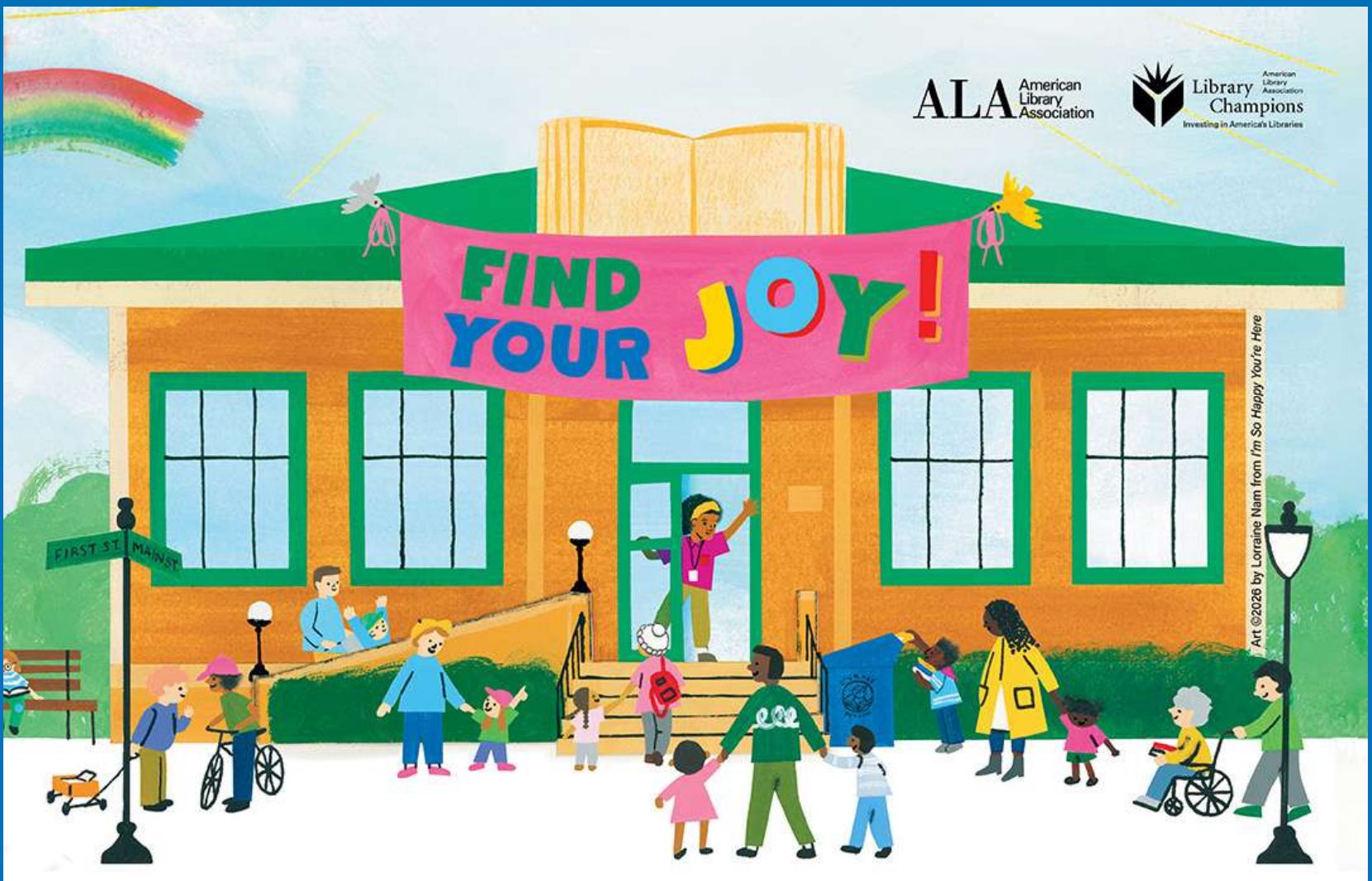
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Tech Center Apprenticeship Program Takes Off

School's Space Needs Lead to Large Waiting List

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County and the Board of Education held a joint meeting on April 14. With the commissioners proposing to fully fund the school board's request, the discussion this time was less about finances and more about programs, such as the James A. Forrest Career and Technology Center (tech center), its growth, its apprenticeship program and its waiting list.

Principal Marc Pirner said, "Each year a thousand students are attending the tech center, and 100 percent of the work we do at the tech center is relevant to immediately preparing students for their next step after high school. We have 22 programs where students learn personal skills like integrity, work ethic, professionalism, workplace skills like communication, decision making, and teamwork, as well as technical skills that are job specific."

He added, "In that effort for our students to earn a relevant education that prepares them for the next step, one of our primary programs that's really important to us is the AMP program, which is what we're here to talk to you about today. So, the AMP program is where students in their senior year can go to a job site. So, the tech center has programs that are one, two year, three year, and students can come to the tech center, take one year, and then their senior year, instead of stepping foot in the tech center, they go to a job site, and they earn the job skills on the job site. They get paid for their time, and they earn their graduation requirements. So, it's a super beneficial for the students in terms of learning the job specific skills on the job site. The program started in 2019 with eight apprentices," adding, "last



year we had 69 students with an apprenticeship, and this year we have 64."

Pirner explained, "You have to be a senior, you have to be a strong student, you have to have your own reliable transportation, and you have to commit to at least 450 hours of this work-based learning."

They identify "who's a best fit for an apprenticeship."

He said Program Coordinator Brian Glasper and his team then identify employers "that we identify from our community that will take an apprentice, and then we match up those students with the employer, where they can get their graduation requirements and get paid for their time, ready for the next line."

A photo montage identified Bryce Burch, who worked as an apprentice for St. Mary's County last year. "So, he graduated and now he still works part-time for St. Mary's and he goes to CSM. So that's just a great

example of one of our students who are in the AMP program."

He was asked if there is a particular type of employer they are targeting. He responded, "We do, but it's kind of a trend. So, in the beginning it was more STEM related, engineering, CAD, even into the manufacturing/engineering. But now we're noticing that the skill trades are becoming more and more popular — electrical wiring, auto and diesel tech, auto repair, even throughout defense contractors and defense industries. They're taking these skilled trades people or students, and they're designating them more and more, just because they can build their future workforce today instead of in four years when they go to college and come back."

The tech center had seven programs that have over 20 students waiting to get in. He said, "That ranges from medical technician, the Academy of Health professionals, welding engineering, electrical wiring, and culi-



Principal Marc Pirner

nary arts. So, there is a great need still within this county for students to have these type of programs."

Several commissioners suggested it was time for expansion. "I honestly, I mean, I think it's something we need to consider because we have 60 percent of our students that actually go onto a traditional four-year college. So that's 40 percent that we need to train and get ready to go out into the world."

"For the coming school year, we've accepted 534 students into the tech center, and we had to wait list of 409 students," Pirner said.

Commissioner Eric Colvin said, "Wow! So, almost as many students as we accepted, we had to waitlist. And the only reason we waitlist them is because we don't have space. That's limiting factor. So that's incredible. That's incredible."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Panhandling Bill Passes General Assembly

Requires State Highway Approval

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

If at first you don't succeed, try again. That's often the motto for those seeking passage of legislation in the Maryland General Assembly. It worked this year as the Commissioners of St. Mary's County got passage of one of their legislative priorities — authority to limit panhandling on county roads.

The bill that passed was amended, but the commissioners seem pleased that they can proceed with limiting panhandling.

Deputy County Attorney John Sterling Houser, fresh from attending the close of the 2026 session at midnight on Monday, April 13 (sine die), said, "They did pass authorization effective as of October 1st for the Commissioners of St. Mary's County and Leonardtown, if Leonardtown's got any roads that apply, to designate roads in the county that are 'inherently dangerous,' and once a state, county, or local roadway has been designated inherently dangerous

(I believe, the statutory definition they gave us was an area where you can't just safely stand there or loiter there or be there without exposing yourself to some heightened danger that ordinary care and caution won't relieve yourself of just because of what conditions on the designation) then it becomes an offense. Going on, we need State Highway Administration's concurrence before we make that determination that it's an inherently dangerous road as well."

Houser observed, "We have it in writing that State Highway Administration thinks the intersection of 235 and 4 would qualify as an inherently dangerous road. The only other step in the process after making that designation is to put signage on there saying that you cannot stand on an inherently designated road. State Highway Administration also has to approve the location, the design of that signage as well."

Houser said he wasn't sure what SHA's opinion would be about the Route 4 and FDR Boulevard intersection, another loca-

tion where soliciting occurs.

Houser said the legislature also approved several routine bills for the Metropolitan Commission.

Several housing bills, that were opposed by counties, were touted by Gov. Wes Moore. But Houser said, "What promised to be the session of housing really did not turn out to be all that much on the housing front. Most of the bills did not pass. The biggest one that did, the Maryland Housing Certainty Act changes effective October 1st Maryland's kind of doctrine of vesting." The bill allows any residential property at any stage of development vesting rights even if the zoning law changes.

Of the six local bond bill requests, Houser said, "The only one that did not receive any state funding that I can tell was Delegate Crosby's request for additional funding for the YMCA going into Great Mills."

Included in bond bill approvals was \$450,000 for the EMS facility at Charlotte Hall Veterans Home.

Houser also reported that a bill creating



Deputy County Attorney John Sterling Houser

a fourth circuit court judge in the county failed after a legislator realized there was no funding for it.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Five File for Three Town Council Seats

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The three incumbents and two challengers have filed to run for the three positions on the May 5 ballot for Leonardtown town council members.

Incumbents Heather Earhart, Christy Hollander, and Mary Maday Slade filed as of the April 13 deadline, as did challengers Rodney Flowers and Ken Held. Held was an unsuccessful mayoral candidate in the 2024 town election.

Anyone with questions about the election can contact teri.dimsey@leonardtownmd.gov.

According to the town, "Election of three Council Members of the Town of Leonardtown will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026. The polls shall be open at the Town Office at 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, Maryland, between the hours of 12 p.m. and 7 p.m., on said date, for voting. Deadline for submitting a completed application for an Absentee Ballot is due by Tuesday,

April 28, 2026, at the Town Office by 4:30 pm. Deadline for Obtaining Emergency Ballot is Tuesday, May 5, 2026, at 7:00 pm.

"Deadline for voter registration is Friday, April 17, 2026. Visit the Board of Elections office at 23250 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650, Monday through Friday, between the normal business hours of 8 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. or call 301-475-4200 ext. 1625 or <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/SupervisorOfElections>

"To qualify to vote in a Town Election one must be registered and must be a resident who lives within the Town of Leonardtown's municipal boundaries for a period of at least 30 days preceding the election.

"To obtain forms or for any questions call Teri Dimsey at 301-475-9791 or email Teri.Dimsey@leonardtownmd.gov

"Forms are available online at <https://leonardtown.somd.com> or email: leonardtown.commissioners@leonardtownmd.gov

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Town Planners Approve Two Office Flex Buildings



Artist's rendering of McIntosh Professional Center

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Leonardtown Planning Commission has approved a concept plan for two one-story professional office buildings next to the new Tractor Supply on the site of the old Pennies Bar and ballfield, on Route 5 south of PNC Bank. The project is called McIntosh Professional Center. Each flex building will be 12,000 square feet.

Town Planning Director Mike Bailey noted the history of the property. He said, "This site has seen concept approval once on April 25, 2005 was renewed on February 19, 2008 and again on November 26, 2012, for the following facilities: a three-story, 47,500-square-foot hotel; 31,170-square-foot retail space; 11,051-square-foot office space and a 2036-square-foot restaurant." So, the current development there is considerably less dense.

Concerns about traffic, especially the left turns into the property from northbound Route 5, which has two lanes and no left turn lane.

Town Administrator Laschelle McKay said, "When Clark's Rest was built, the State required Marrick to build the section of the planned widening in front of their property. The design is complete all the way to Newtowne Neck Road and down to Burch Mart, but they only have had the Clark's Rest section built and the break out section at Moakley Street."

She added, "There is a light that's been approved at Tudor Hall moving forward, and that light will go at the intersection of Tudor Hall, which lines up with Clark's Rest. And so, that will be part of the first phase of Tudor Hall (development)."

"Adding the decel lane will definitely be helpful coming south. It's not going to correct the problem (northbound) until State Highway does the full widening all the way out to Newtowne Neck. But the light will help to give a break in the traffic, which we don't have today. We've been fighting for years to get the light there at Clark's Rest."

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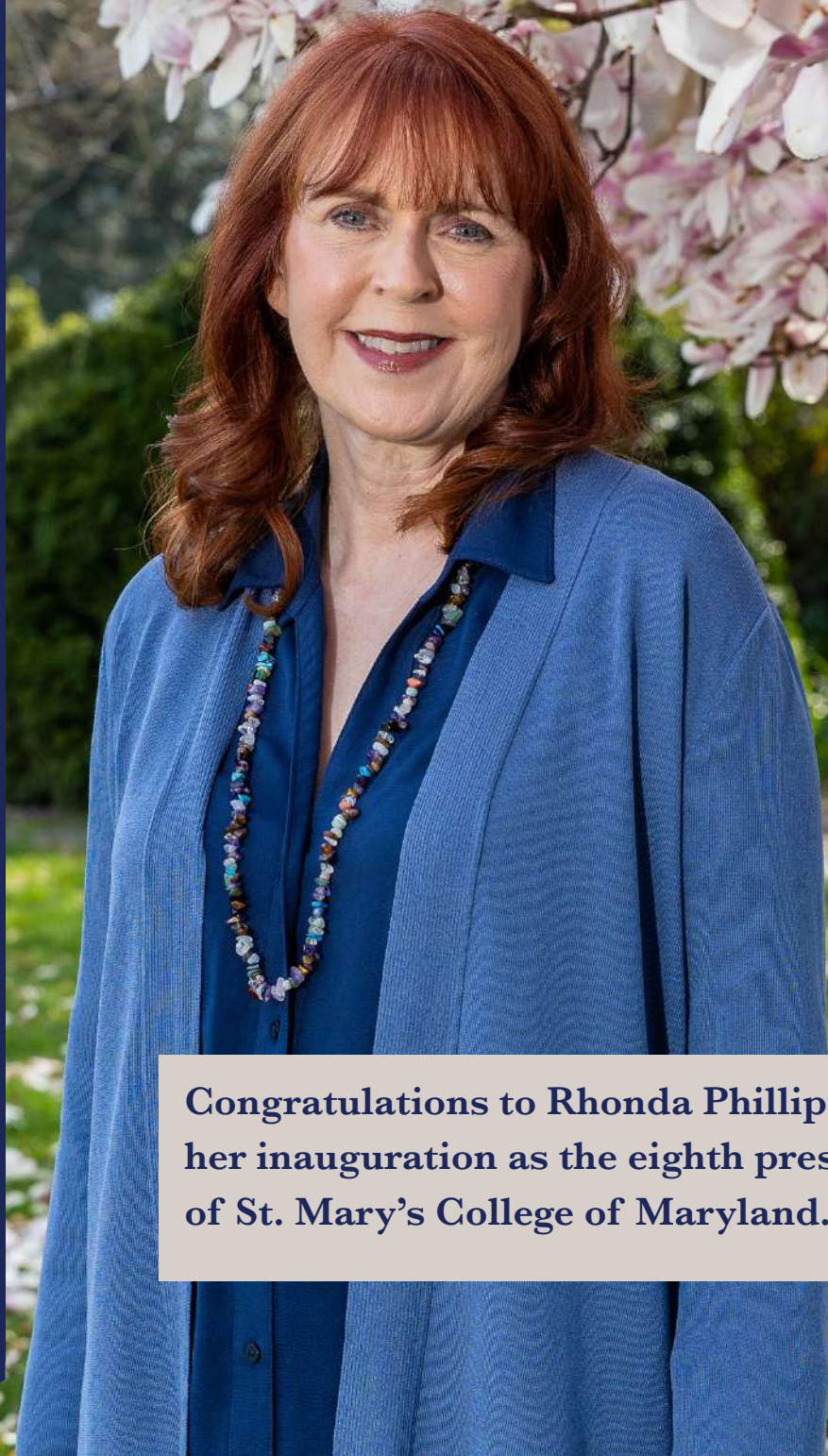
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Congratulations to Rhonda Phillips on her inauguration as the eighth president of St. Mary's College of Maryland.

County Appoints New Human Resources Director

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC) are pleased to announce the appointment of Dina M. Davis as the new Director of Human Resources for St. Mary's County Government (SMCG). Davis brings more than 20 years of public-sector human resources experience, with a strong background in workforce strategy, organizational leadership, and human resources operations.



Dina M. Davis

Most recently, Davis served as Deputy Director of Human Resources for Calvert County Government, where she oversaw Employee Services, Risk Management, and Employee Investigations. In that role, she worked to strengthen compliance, improve internal processes, and support departments in delivering high-quality public services. Throughout her career, Davis has led and supported a variety of strategic human resources initiatives, including the implementation of workforce management systems designed to enhance reporting, improve data management, and strengthen the employee experience.

Davis holds a Master of Science in Human Resource Management from Walden University and a Bachelor of Arts in French from Hollins College. She is certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) and a Public Sector Human Resources Association Senior Certified Professional (PSHRA-SCP).

"We are pleased to welcome Dina Davis to St. Mary's County Government," said Commissioner President Randy Guy. "Her extensive experience in public-sector human resources, combined with her proven leadership and strategic approach to workforce management, make her exceptionally qualified to lead our Human Resources Department."

"I am truly grateful for the opportunity

to join St. Mary's County Government and serve this community," shared Davis. "Having spent my career in local government, I value the important role public service plays in supporting residents and employees alike. I look forward to supporting St. Mary's County Government's mission of delivering high-quality services to the community."

Davis will assume the role of Director of Human Resources effective May 11, 2026.

The Department of Human Resources supports St. Mary's County Government by overseeing recruitment, employee relations, benefits administration, risk management, training, policy compliance, and workforce development initiatives that help maintain a professional and effective public service organization.

Press release from SMCG

Sheriff's Office Responds to Report of Gun at Great Mills High School

At approximately 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2026, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office received a tip indicating a student had reported seeing another student in Great Mills High School with a firearm.

Authorities immediately notified the Great Mills High School Resource officer, who then requested additional law enforcement support. Within minutes, school administrators initiated safety protocols, and additional deputies arrived on scene and began an investigation. A 17-year old male suspect was identified. School administration and officers performed a search of the suspect's person and belongings. During the search, a firearm was not found; however, alcohol and marijuana were located.

The suspect will be charged with the

following:

- Disruption of School Operations
- Possession Of Cannabis By A Person Under 18
- Possession Of An Alcoholic Beverage By A Person Under 21

Law enforcement agencies are prohibited from publicly identifying juveniles due to legal protections that safeguard their identities throughout the judicial process.

School safety remains a top priority with the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, and the prompt report of suspicious activity allowed deputies to resolve the situation quickly and safely.

Press release from SMCSO

THE **Wentworth** **Weekly**

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Leonardtwn Man Arrested Following Assault

Detectives from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division arrested Darrin Michael Atlas, 48, of Leonardtown following an investigation for an assault which occurred on April 10, 2026, in the 22100 block of Bell Farm Way.

The preliminary investigation indicates the victim met the suspect to have a discussion when Atlas allegedly pointed a firearm at the victim and held the firearm to the victim's head. The victim was ultimately able to flee the residence.

Detectives with the Criminal Investigations Division assumed the investigation. Atlas was later apprehended during a vehicle stop and a handgun was located in the vehicle. A search warrant was executed at his residence where additional evidence was recovered.

Atlas was transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown and charged with the following:

- Assault first-degree
- Assault second-degree
- Firearm use during the commission of a felony/crime of violence
- Illegal possession of a regulated firearm



Darrin Michael Atlas

Atlas remains incarcerated pending a bond hearing. Anyone who has additional information is asked to contact Detective Andrew Burgess at 301-475-4200, ext. 8041, or by email at Andrew.Burgess@stmaryscountymd.gov

Press release from SMCSO

Fatal Crash Involving Pedestrian Under Investigation

Sheriff's Office Seeks Witnesses

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputies are investigating a crash that killed a man in California.

At 2:26 a.m. on Friday, April 10, 2026, Deputies responded to the southbound lane of the 22700 block of Three Notch Road for a report of a vehicle crash involving a pedestrian. A male victim, identified as Jesse San Nicolas, 40, of California, was declared deceased at the scene.

A preliminary investigation indicates the victim was attempting to cross the southbound lanes of Three Notch Road when he was struck by more than one vehicle. A 2016 528i BMW sedan being operated by a 21-year-old male resident of Waldorf, was involved in the collision and remained on the scene.

A second striking vehicle failed to stop after the collision and fled from the scene. The second vehicle is believed to be a dark blue or black 2011-2020 Dodge Caravan with front bumper damage from the collision.

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Collision Reconstruction team has assumed the investigation and is requesting eyewitness assistance from the public. If you

were traveling in the area and witnessed anything, or if you have seen a 2011-2020 Dodge Caravan with front-end damage, please contact Sergeant Shawn Shelko at Shawn.Shelko@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, extension 8147.

Tipsters can also submit tips anonymously:

- Text 847411: start your message with "SMCSO", add a space, and then your tip.
- Online: Submit a tip through the Sheriff's Office website at www.FirstSheriff.com/tips.
- App: Send a tip directly through the SMCSO app. Download the free app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.
- Phone: For those who prefer to make a phone call, tips can also be shared through the Crime Solvers line at 301-475-3333.

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

Press release from SMCSO

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Lexington Park Shooting Under Investigation

On Sunday, April 12 at approximately 7:06 p.m., deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the 21000 block of Susan Lane in Lexington Park for a reported shooting.

Upon arrival, deputies located a male victim suffering from a gunshot wound to his leg. The victim was flown to a nearby trauma center with injuries not believed to be life-threatening.

Detectives from the Criminal Investigations Division responded and have assumed the investigation. The preliminary investigation indicates the shooting may have stemmed from a dispute earlier in the day. There is no known public safety threat at this time.

Anyone with video footage of the incident is asked to send footage to the Sheriff's Office at www.firstsheriff.com/uploadevidence

This is an active investigation, and Detective Phillip Henry is the lead investigator. Anyone with information about this

incident or who may have witnessed it is asked to contact Detective Henry at 301-475-4200, ext. 8102, or by email at Phillip.Henry@stmaryscountymd.gov

Tipsters can also submit tips anonymously:

- Text 847411: start your message with "SMCSO", add a space, and then your tip.
- Online: Submit a tip through the Sheriff's Office website at www.FirstSheriff.com/tips.
- App: Send a tip directly through the SMCSO app. Download the free app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.
- Phone: For those who prefer to make a phone call, tips can also be shared through the Crime Solvers line at 301-475-3333.

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

Press release from SMCSO

County Rolls Out New Emergency Alert System

Residents Encouraged to Sign Up and Stay Informed

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Emergency Services (DES) is announcing the official rollout of the new Regroup Emergency Notification System, the county's updated platform for delivering urgent emergency alerts to the public.

As previously announced, following the retirement of the legacy CodeRED platform, St. Mary's County has transitioned to Regroup as its new emergency notification provider.

Regroup will be used by DES to send urgent, time-sensitive alerts related to emergencies and critical incidents. Notifications may be issued for shelter-in-place orders, heavy police presence in an area, sanitary sewer overflows, evacuation notices, and other emergency situations.

Regroup is also integrated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), allowing Tornado Warnings, Severe Thunderstorm Warnings, and Flash Flood Warnings to be sent directly through the platform. Regroup is not used for general information, advertisements, or routine announcements. The system is strictly reserved for emergencies.

Residents previously enrolled in the CodeRED Emergency Notification System have been migrated to the new Regroup platform. Beginning April 13, 2026, migrated users will receive instructions—

via the same method through which they previously received CodeRED notifications (text, phone, or email)—on how to claim their account, verify or update their information, and manage notification preferences.

Residents who are not currently enrolled are encouraged to sign up by visiting: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/alert.

Subscribers can customize how they receive notifications through Regroup based on their personal preferences, including text message, phone call, email, or app notification delivery options.

Alerts issued through Regroup are geographically targeted based on the location of the incident and the address associated with a subscriber's account. Residents will only receive notifications relevant to the address(es) entered in their profile. Subscribers without an address associated with their account will not receive emergency alerts.

Knowing what to do before, during, and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference when seconds count. To learn about potential disasters and hazards, and how to be prepared and stay informed, please visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/es.

Press release from St. Mary's County Government

St. Mary's County

Caregivers' Support Group

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services Caregivers' Support Group is a safe space for caregivers to share their experiences and learn about resources.

**April 28, 2026
6-7 p.m.**

Garvey Senior Activity Center
23630 Hayden Farm Lane
Leonardtown, MD 20650

For more information or to register:
Call: 301-475-4200, ext. 1057
Visit: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/Aging/HCBS-Overview/

Walk-ins are Welcome!

Registration for the Caregivers' Support Group is encouraged, but not required.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Any questions, contact teri.dimsey@leonardtownmd.gov

Deadline to register as a Candidate for Council Member for the 2026 Election for the Town of Leonardtown ended on Monday, April 13, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

Candidates who registered for the 2026 Election for three (3) Council Member positions are:

Heather Earhart	(Incumbent)
Rodney Flowers	
Ken Held	
Christy Hollander	(Incumbent)
Mary Maday Slade	(Incumbent)

LEONARDTOWN ELECTION INFORMATION

Election of three (3) Council Members of the Town of Leonardtown will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2026

The polls shall be open at the Town Office at 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, Maryland, between the hours of 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm, on said date, for voting.

Deadline for submitting a completed application for an Absentee Ballot is due by Tuesday, April 28, 2026 at the Town Office by 4:30 pm.

Deadline for Obtaining Emergency Ballot is Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 7:00 pm.

Voting Qualifications

Deadline for voter registration is Friday, April 17, 2026

Visit the Board of Elections office at 23250 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650, Monday through Friday, between the normal business hours of 8:00 am through 4:30 pm or call 301-475-4200 ext. 1625 or <https://www.stmaryscountymd.gov/SupervisorOfElections>

To qualify to vote in a Town Election one must be registered. Must be a resident who lives within the Town of Leonardtown's municipal boundaries for a period of at least thirty (30) days preceding the election.

To obtain forms or for any questions

Teri Dimsey at 301-475-9791 / teri.dimsey@leonardtownmd.gov
Forms online at <https://leonardtown.somd.com> or
email: leonardtown.commissioners@leonardtownmd.gov



Legal Notice

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

CASE NO: C-18-CV-26-000278

Steven Gingery, Jr.
c/o Cornerstone Law, LLC
Plaintiff

vs.

Jacqueline R. Mitchell

Mill Point Improvement Association, Inc.

St. Mary's County, Maryland
s/o County Attorney

State of Maryland
s/o Attorney General

All persons having or claiming to have an interest in the property situate and lying in **St. Mary's County** and known as **SUNSET DR (LOTS 2 & 3)**

Unknown Owner of the property described as follows: Property Tax ID **04-001702** on the Tax Roll of **St. Mary's County**, the unknown owner's heirs, devisees, and personal representatives and their or any of their heirs, devisees, executors, administrators, grantees, assigns, or successors in right, title and interest in the property.

Defendants

ORDER OF PUBLICATION

The object of this proceeding is to secure the foreclosure of all rights of redemption in the following property (hereafter the "Property") described below in the State of Maryland, sold by the Collector of Taxes for St. Mary's County and the State of Maryland to the Plaintiff in this proceeding:

Sunset Dr (Lots 2 & 3), Chaptico, MD 20621
LOTS NUMBER 2 AND 3, IN BLOCK LETTERED "J", OF MILL POINT SHORES, ACCORDING TO A PLAT THEREOF RECORDED IN PLAT BOOK C.B.G. NO. 1, FOLIO 35, AMONG THE LAND RECORDS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND; 04-001702
Deed Reference: 02893/627

The Complaint states, among other things, that the amounts necessary for redemption have not been paid although more than six (6) months (or nine months if the Property was listed as a Principal Residence by the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation on the date of the sale) from the date of sale have expired.

It is thereupon this 31st day of March, 2026, by the Circuit Court for St. Mary County, **ORDERED**, that notice be given by the insertion of a copy of this Order in some newspaper having general circulation in St. Mary's County once a week for three successive weeks on or before the 31st day of May, 2026, warning all persons interested in the Property listed above to appear in this Court by the 31st day of May, 2026, and redeem the Property described above and answer the Complaint or thereafter a Final Judgment will be entered foreclosing all rights of redemption in the Property, and vesting in the Plaintiff a title, free and clear of all encumbrances.

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

Deputies Respond to Suspicious Activity at Chancellors Run Park

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is investigating reports of suspicious activity on the morning of April 11 at Chancellors Run Regional Park in Great Mills.

At approximately 9 a.m., deputies working security for St. Mary's Little League Opening Day ceremonies responded to reports of a man engaging in suspicious behavior inside a park restroom. One individual was detained, and the investigation is ongoing. The case is being handled by the Criminal Investigations Division.

Anyone who was in the area and may have witnessed anything suspicious or has additional information is asked to contact Detective Andrew Burgess at 301-475-4200, ext. 8041, or by email at Andrew.Burgess@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Tipsters can also submit tips anonymously:

- Text 847411: start your message with "SMCSO", add a space, and then your tip.
- Online: Submit a tip through the Sheriff's Office website at www.FirstSheriff.com/tips.
- App: Send a tip directly through the SMCSO app. Download the free app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.
- Phone: For those who prefer to make a phone call, tips can also be shared through the Crime Solvers line at 301-475-3333.

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

Press release from SMCSO



Letters to the Editor

Data Centers: Pro or Con?

The pros: Data centers provide substantial amount of construction jobs that last around two to three years. According to an internet search data centers do provide some long term positions. They are usually technicians, facility engineers and security personnel. What jobs that continue to exist may be high paid. Data centers will require some infrastructure development with new roads to and from the location. It is unclear if the owner of the data center pays for it or the taxpayer. There may be an increase in the ecosystem. It refers to property value and tax revenue increases. But, in a separate report, I read the opposite. Some things may be bought from local stores to support the data centers. After three separate searches, I could not find any additional positive results for residents. It appears that the vast majority is centered around businesses and governments such as the federal, state and county level. The investors of data centers may throw a bone at whomever is involved in the decision making process, such as county commissioners. For example, they may try to hook the commissioners in to an offer of a new park worth tens of millions. But, at what cost and to whom? Like a fish out of the water, once the commissioners are hooked by the offer, it is too late. From there, the commissioners will likely suffer the consequence at election time.

The cons: According to an internet search the cons of a data center are extensive and expensive for the average citizen. Data centers are likely to cause substantial and on going electricity bill increases. They use a massive amount of electricity. Data center electricity may cause a release of significant greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. Rapid upgrades at data centers can cause substantial electronic waste. Data

centers can cause noise pollution. Data centers can use around five million gallons of water per day. Five million gallons per day is comparable to the daily usage of a town of 10,000 to 50,000. If it is hooked up to a well, this could cause wells to go dry. Drilling a new well will be at your expense. Senior citizens on a fixed income with older wells will likely be hit the hardest. A new well is in the thousands of dollars. And that's if you can meet the county and state requirements to put in a new well. Data centers use large plots of land, removing it from any other potential use. Data centers have a life span of 15 to 20 years. Fire departments may need specialized training, potentially with newer high tech equipment to fight a data center fire. This may lead to new, higher fire taxes since most fire taxes are currently maxed out. Data center fires are rare. But, if there is one, it can be toxic. Data centers can cause significant traffic disruption according to what I read. In addition the potential air pollution and water contamination can be a concern for increase cancer rates. The cost for building data centers can be expensive. Governments are known to place the cost on taxpayers. New taxes can outweigh the local economic benefits. Public schools and other large buildings use a lot of electricity. This increased expense could be placed on citizens in the form of higher taxes. State Route 5 and 235 are designated county evacuation routes. Excessive traffic congestion on any of these routes can lead to life and death situations if not properly addressed by government leaders. I recommend everyone to research data centers and make your own decision.

*Roy Fedders
Dameron, MD*

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 <p>80% Lean Fresh Ground Chuck Patties 5.98 lb.</p>	 <p>Boneless Country Style Pork Ribs 2.98 lb.</p>	 <p>Certified Angus Beef Boneless Shoulder Steak 7.98 lb.</p>
 <p>1-Pc., Frozen Or Prev. Frozen St. Louis Style Pork Ribs 3.19 lb.</p>	 <p>Certified Angus Beef Boneless Shoulder Roast 6.98 lb.</p>	 <p>Certified Angus Beef T-Bone Steaks 13.98 lb.</p>
 <p>40 To 50-Ct. Texas Gulf Shrimp 6.98 lb.</p>	 <p>5 To 8-Oz. Snow Crab Clusters 13.98 lb.</p>	 <p>Fresh Cod Fillets 11.98 lb.</p>
 <p>USDA Inspected Boston Butt Pork Roast 1.98 lb.</p>	 <p>16-Oz., Selected Smithfield Sliced Bacon Buy One, Get One FREE</p>	 <p>Fresh Atlantic Salmon Fillets 8.98 lb.</p>
 <p>Fresh Tilapia Fillets 6.98 lb.</p>		

Beer, Wine and Liquor

 <p>12-Oz., Slim Cans 30-Pack Michelob Ultra 25.99</p>	 <p>12-Oz. Bottles 18-Pack Coors Light 15.99</p>	 <p>12-Oz. Cans 12-Pack Bud Light 12.99</p>	 <p>14.9-Oz. Cans 4-Pack Guinness Draught Stout 7.99</p>	 <p>12-Oz., Cans, Select 12-Pack High Noon 26.99</p>
 <p>1.75L Maker's Mark Whiskey 50.99</p>	 <p>1.75L Original Deep Eddy Vodka 18.49</p>	 <p>1.75L Captain Morgan Spiced Rum 24.99</p>	 <p>1.75-Liter Jose Cuervo Especial 34.99</p>	 <p>750mL Absolute Vodka 17.99</p>
 <p>1.75L Gordon's London Dry Gin 15.49</p>	 <p>1.75L Seagram's VO Whiskey 20.99</p>	 <p>750mL Jameson Triple Distilled Irish Whiskey 27.99</p>	 <p>750mL Patron Tequila Silver 49.99</p>	 <p>750mL, Original Bailey's Irish Cream 29.99</p>
 <p>750mL D'usse Cognac Vsop 56.99</p>	 <p>750mL Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc 13.99</p>	 <p>750mL Alamos Red Blend 10.49</p>	 <p>750mL, Selected La Vieille Ferme Wines 8.99</p>	 <p>750mL, Selected Santa Cristina Wines 10.99</p>
 <p>1.5L Risata Moscato d'Asti 25.99</p>	 <p>750mL Benton Lane Pinot Noir 16.99</p>	 <p>750mL Flowers Rose 29.99</p>	 <p><i>Wine of the Month</i> 750mL. All Flavors Tocco Divino Wines 9.99</p>	
 <p>750mL Cline Shifting Tides Sauvignon Blanc 15.99</p>	 <p>750mL SIMI Cabernet Sauvignon 23.99</p>	 <p>1.5L, Selected Yellow Tail Wines 9.99</p>		

WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUES
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

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NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

NAVAIR to Present Panels at Sea-Air-Space 2026



Representatives from Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) will conduct briefings at the annual Sea-Air-Space Exposition 2026, hosted by the Navy League, April 19-22 at Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center at National Harbor, Maryland.

The panels will highlight the people and products behind existing and future naval aviation systems, services and platforms.

Brigadier Gen. David C. Walsh, program executive officer for Air Anti-Submarine Warfare, Assault & Special Mission Programs, Rear Adm. Joseph B. Hornbuckle, program executive officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs, and Rear Adm. Anthony E. Rossi, program executive officer for Unmanned Aviation and Strike Weapons, will kick off the week's speaking engagements at 2 p.m. Monday at NAVAIR Booth 1646, discussing, "Program Leadership Perspective: Delivering Warfighting Capability to the Fleet."

On Tuesday at 10:45 a.m. in the Potomac C conference room, Rear Adm. Greg Harris (ret.) will lead a panel on "Accelerating Air Power: Bridging Industry and Naval/Marine Corps Aviation for Fleet Readiness." The panel will feature Dan Gillian, Hornbuckle, Lt. Gen. Gregory Masiello and Lt. Gen. William Swan.

Later at 2 p.m. Tuesday at the NAVAIR booth, NAVAIR Commander Vice Adm.

John E. Dougherty IV will be joined by Rear Adm. Todd Evans of the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division and Ann Wood with Commander, Fleet Readiness Centers, to host a panel on the theme of "Start with the Fleet: Readiness, Capability, Speed."

Rounding out the event on Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the NAVAIR booth, representatives from NAVAIR's Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer (SBIR/STTR) will host a panel on "NAVAIR Acquisition On-Ramp: Small Business and Tech Transition Pathways." Irma Alvarez-Alexander, director of the NAVAIR Headquarters Office of Small Business Programs, Kristi DePriest with the SBIR/STTR team and Richard Tarr with the NAVAIR Technology Transfer Office, will lead the panel.

Sea-Air-Space is the Navy League of the United States' Global Maritime Expo, bringing together defense industry leaders, military decision-makers, government officials and academic experts to share the latest advancements in maritime and naval operations, including threats and operations across underwater, surface, air and space domains. The event emphasizes integrated approaches to maritime security and defense, reflecting the interconnected nature of modern warfighting environments. For more information, visit the expo's website at <https://seairspace.org/>

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Remembering the Black Diamond Disaster



St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division invites the community to attend a special remembrance ceremony on Sunday, April 26 at 2 p.m. honoring the 87 lives lost in the Black Diamond Disaster, a tragic and often-forgotten Civil War-era maritime accident that occurred near St. Clement's Island during the hunt for presidential assassin John Wilkes Booth.

Community members are encouraged to gather at the St. Clement's Island Museum site for a wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the disaster, which occurred on April 23, 1865, when the barge Black Diamond and the steamer Massachusetts collided in the Potomac River.

Following the assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, the Quartermaster Corps stationed the Black Diamond off St. Clement's Island on picket duty to help prevent John Wilkes Booth from crossing the Potomac River during his attempted escape.

Meanwhile, the steamer Massachusetts was traveling from Alexandria, Virginia, to Fortress Monroe when it struck the Black Diamond in the darkness. The collision sank the vessel in under three minutes, tragically claiming 87 lives.

Following the ceremony, a concert and reception will take place at 2:30 p.m. at nearby Potomac Gardens featuring a performance by the 8th Green Machine Regiment Band, an early American brass band known for performing 19th-century music on authentic period instruments and mouthpieces.

Guests will also have the opportunity to meet Karen Stone, author of *Shipwreck on the Potomac: Disaster in Pursuit of Lincoln's Killer*, during a book signing reception.

Later that evening, the 2026 Dinner and a Cruise Series (ticketed event) will kick off with the program *The Potomac River and John Wilkes Booth*, presented by local author and Booth historian Michael Kauffman. During the cruise, Kauffman will explore the strategic significance of the Potomac River during the Civil War and its central role in Booth's escape following Lincoln's assassination.

For more information about the event, or to reserve tickets for the cruise, please call St. Clement's Island Museum at (301) 769-2222 or visit Facebook.com/SCIMuseum.

Press release from St. Mary's County Museum Division

County Operations at Great Mills Pool to End April 30

Community Appreciation Event April 20

After 23 years of aquatics fun at the Great Mills Swimming Pool, the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) will conclude operations at the facility on Thursday, April 30, 2026. The facility is expected to reopen this summer as an outdoor pool under the new management of the St. Mary's County Family YMCA, part of YMCA of the Chesapeake.

Public drop-in daily admission will remain available through the remainder of April at rate of \$8 for adults and \$6 for youth and seniors. Current Great Mills Swimming Pool pass holders will receive a 50% discount on daily admission rates to the pool. Any valid punch passes not redeemed at Great Mills Swimming Pool before April 30 can be redeemed at the Wellness & Aquatics Center in Leonardtown through their expiration date.

For questions, please contact R&P via

email to: RPinfo@stmaryscountymd.gov.

As a thank you for being part of the Great Mills Swimming Pool community, all pool members, staff and instructors are invited to stop by the facility on Monday, April 20 between 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. to enjoy light refreshments and receive a goodie bag.

Representatives from the YMCA will be on site from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. to answer questions about future operations.

Additional information about the facility's future operations will be available through YMCA of the Chesapeake at: www.ymcachesapeake.org.

Please note the pool's inflatable dome roof is now available for purchase via online auction. For more information, please visit the dome's auction listing at: www.gov-deals.com/en/preview-asset/98/21845.

Press release from SMCG

Pets of the Week



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MEET JUJU

Hi, I'm Juju, an 8-year-old couch potato and I have a very specific life plan: go for a nice walk, come home, and immediately melt into the couch like a sleepy marshmallow. I'm a big fan of butt scratches, full body massages, and quality TV time with my person, preferably while doing absolutely nothing productive together. If you're looking for a low-key best friend who will happily join you in your daily routine of relaxing, snacking, and being adored, then this girl is ready to move in and take over your living room. Please come meet me during adoption hours, Mon-Fri 11am-4pm and Sat 10am-3pm. I'll be watching for you! To see more of my amazing friends also available for adoption, "like" us on Facebook @ Charles County Animal Care Center or at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/services/animal-care-control/animal-care-center>



MEET JAXX

Jaxx is a 2.5-year-old Pit Bull Terrier who has been waiting far too long, and we truly don't understand why. He's sweet, affectionate, eager to learn, and has that perfect mix of playful energy and snuggly charm. If you've ever wanted a dog who can make you laugh, keep you company, and love you endlessly, Jaxx is your guy. If you are interested in meeting with Jaxx or learning more about him please contact Animal Relief Fund (ARF) at 301-866-0303 or visit www.animalrelieffund.org



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NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026
8:00 AM – 1:00 PM

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TABLE RENTALS \$50

TO BOOK A TABLE CONTACT:
JACKIE MILES – (301) 643-0678
MICHELLE GARNER – (240) 561-5904



CSM AI Task Force Working Towards Ethical Integration

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) AI Task Force is developing policies to guide the use of AI and its strategic integration into academic and administrative tasks.

Formed in spring 2025, the AI Task Force is made up of CSM faculty, staff, and administrators to research AI applications with a focus on ethics, security, privacy, policy, environmental factors, and curriculum.

Task Force Co-Chair Valarie Burks, Vice President of Information Management and Technology, said this work is an important step towards ensuring the college uses AI responsibly.

"When used thoughtfully, AI has potential to reshape how we learn, educate, and operate in the workforce," Burks said. "This Task Force is focused on embracing the opportunities AI provides to better serve our students, faculty, and staff, and doing so in an ethical, secure, and strategic way."

In partnership with the Michelle Simpson Center for Teaching and Learning, the Task Force is expanding professional development and training opportunities for CSM students, faculty, and staff. Workshops, webinars, and discussions are hosted throughout the year covering key topics such as challenges, concerns, and techniques to utilize AI for enhanced teaching and learning.

CSM President Dr. Yolanda Wilson



CSM AI Task Force co-chairs Valarie Burks, Vice President of Information Management and Technology (left) and Dr. Stephanie McCaslin, Dean of Learning Resources (right).

emphasized the importance of equipping students with the skills needed to succeed in a rapidly evolving workforce.

"AI is reshaping every industry our students will enter, and we have a responsibility to prepare them for that reality," Dr. Wilson said. "At CSM, we are not reacting to change, we are helping to shape it by integrating AI in ways that are thoughtful, ethical, and grounded in our mission to expand

opportunity and drive economic mobility."

In January, staff hosted Balancing Technology and The Human Connection, a program focused on using AI to streamline mechanical, routine tasks to make space for exploration, discovery, and a productive learning and working environment.

In March, CSM hosted a workshop on prompt engineering, which offered guidance on how to effectively interact with AI for the

best results. Other workshops have covered topics including scheduling, data analytics, and misinformation.

Task Force Co-Chair Dr. Stephanie McCaslin, Dean of Learning Resources, underscored the importance of human perspectives to responsibly use AI. She said the positive feedback received from workshop attendees reflects an institutional commitment to thoughtfully and effectively implement new technology.

"While AI is a powerful tool, it does not replace human experience or judgement," McCaslin said. "The Task Force is working to build a culture of AI literacy to ensure students, faculty, and staff can balance this technology with human expertise, and navigate an AI world effectively and ethically."

In February, the Task Force opened a survey to learn more about how students, faculty, and staff are engaging with AI, including their current usage, awareness, concerns, and support needs. This feedback will inform ongoing policy development and future training opportunities.

CSM will continue offering workshops and webinars to advance AI literacy. The Task Force expects to have more information on an institutional AI policy for the 2026-2027 academic year.

Press release from CSM.

Spring at *Historic* SOTTERLEY CIRCA 1703

Visitor Experience Center Grand Opening

May 2nd, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Celebrate the opening of our brand-new Visitor Experience Center and the start of tour season!

- New traveling exhibit from Maryland Humanities
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- Puppeteer

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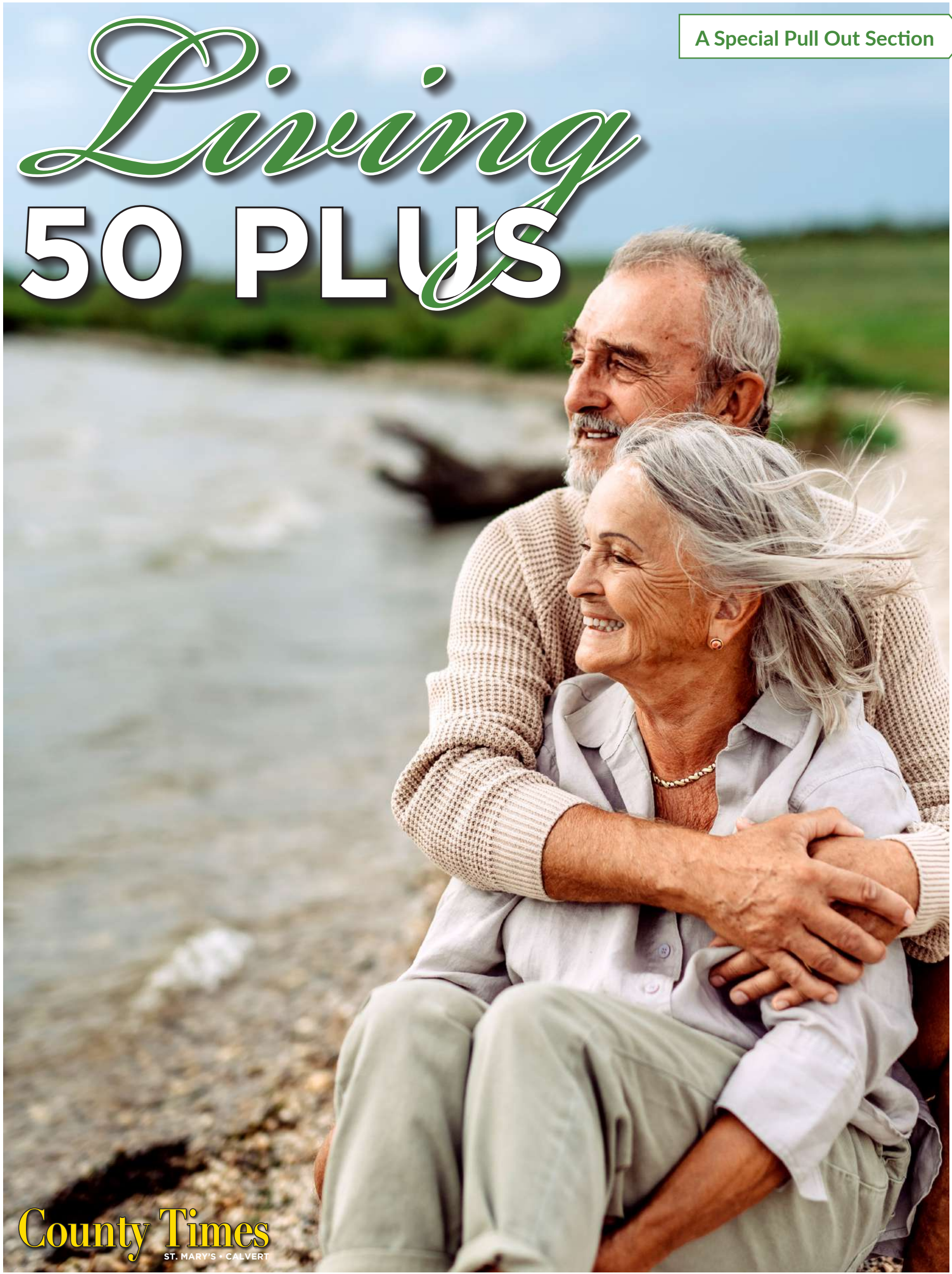
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August 1, 2026
9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Bay District Fire Department's
Braddock Hall
46900 S Shangri-La Dr,
Lexington Park, MD 20653

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services is offering a Volunteer Expo. The Volunteer Expo will educate the public about volunteering opportunities within the community, meet the community agencies in person, and give the opportunity to join as a volunteer. The event will offer a food truck, ice cream truck, D.J., line dancing, and activities for children. A vendor registration fee of \$25 is required. Space is limited. You may register online by June 1 at secure.rec1.com/MD/st-marys-county-md-aging/catalog or mail the form to

St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services
Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650

Amazing Benefits to Seniors Having Pets



Pets bring much joy to the lives they touch. So it should come as no surprise that the 2019-2020 National Pet Owners Survey, which was conducted by the American Pet Products Association, found that about 85 million families in the United States own a pet. In Canada, 7.5 million households are home to companion animals, states the PetBacker blog.

Pets offer companionship and unconditional love. While they are fitting for any family, seniors may find that having a pet is especially beneficial. The organization A Place for Mom, which helps match families with senior living residences, says pets provide a comfort system that produces measurable health results. Caring for pets and being around them can produce a chemical chain reaction in the brain that may help to lower stress hormones while also increasing production of the feel-good hormone serotonin.

This is not the only health benefit pets may provide. A recent study from the Mayo Clinic, which looked at 1,800 people between the ages of 25 and 64 who had healthy hearts, found that almost half owned a dog. Having a dog was likely to spur heart-healthy behaviors, like exercising with the pet, eating well and having ideal blood sugar levels.

Pets also provide emotional support and companionship that can help seniors — including those who may be divorced or widowed — feel more secure and happy. The National Poll on Healthy Aging found that, among respondents who had pets, 88 percent said their pets helped them enjoy life, and 86 percent said their pets made them feel loved.

Seniors considering getting a pet can explore the many benefits to doing so.

- *Reduce pain:* A 2012 study published in Pain Magazine found therapy dogs provided “significant reduction in pain and emotional distress for chronic pain patients.”
- *Feeling of purpose:* Caring for an animal not only stimulates physical activity, but it also can give seniors a reason to get up and go, which equates to a feeling of purpose.
- *Altered focus:* Having a pet can help seniors focus on something other than physical or mental health issues and preoccupations about loss or aging, according to New York-based psychologist Penny B. Donnenfeld.
- *Increased physical activity:* Pets require care, and that interaction can get seniors moving more than if they didn't have a pet.
- *Improved health:* Ongoing research from Harvard Medical School has found dog owners have lower blood pressure, healthier cholesterol levels and lower risk of heart disease than those who don't own a dog.
- *Stick to routine:* Caring for pets helps seniors maintain a routine. Having structure after retirement can be important to ward off risk of depression. Staying on top of feeding, grooming and other pet needs also can help prevent cognitive decline.

Pets bring many benefits to their owners' lives, and they may be the perfect remedy for seniors looking for a friend and purpose.



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Simple Ways to Keep Your Memory Sharp as You Age

Adults confront various age-related side effects as they transition from middle age to their golden years. Skin may begin to wrinkle and hair may turn gray, but those are just the visible side effects of aging. Many additional effects are unseen, but those changes can have a profound effect on adults' quality of life.

According to the Mayo Clinic, various parts of the body are affected by aging. For example, the cardiovascular system changes as people grow older. Blood vessels and arteries stiffen as adults age, forcing the heart to work harder to pump blood through them.

Though many changes are linked to aging, other changes commonly associated with aging, such as a decline in memory, reasoning and other thinking skills, are not natural. The Alzheimer's Association® notes that dementia is not a normal part of aging. There are many different types of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and these are the result of damage to brain cells that affect a person's ability to communicate. That damage is not inevitable, even if it's commonly associated with aging.

The Harvard Medical School notes that fleeting memory problems experienced with aging often reflect normal changes in the structure and function of the brain.



But it's important that those changes not be mistaken for dementia, and it's equally important that adults recognize there are many ways they can protect and sharpen their minds as they age.

- *Continue learning.* HMS notes that a higher level of education is associated with improved mental function-

ing in old age. The reasons for that are unknown, but experts theorize that advanced education compels people to remain mentally active, which in turn helps them maintain a strong memory. Even aging men and women who are still working in challenging fields can benefit from pursuing a new hobby or

learning a new skill.

- *Use the tools at your disposal.* It may seem counterintuitive to suggest that organizational tools like planners, maps and lists can help people maintain their memories. However, HMS notes that expending mental energy on finding car keys or trying to remember what to buy at the store makes it harder to learn new and important things.
- *Let all your senses play a role.* HMS reports that the more senses a person uses to learn something, the more his or her brain is involved in retaining a memory. HMS cites one study in which adults were shown a series of emotionally neutral images that were each presented along with a smell. Participants were not asked to recall what they saw, but were later shown a set of images and asked to indicate which they had previously seen. The participants had excellent recall for the odor-paired images, and researchers believe that's because additional parts of the brain were activated when participants were asked to use more than one sense.

Memory loss is not an inevitable side effect of aging, especially for adults who take steps to maintain their memories as they age.



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Ruth Dixon
Facilitator

How to Plan a Memorable, Celebratory Retirement Party

Professionals spend years saving for retirement. Many enroll in an employer-sponsored retirement plan the moment they begin their careers in their early twenties, and continue to build their nest egg until the day they officially call it quits.

The effort people put into retirement planning makes the moment individuals call it a career worthy of an extraordinary celebration. The following retirement planning party tips can ensure a celebration that suits an occasion as significant as the day professionals call it a career.

- **Pick a unique venue.** Whether the party will be a sizable affair with a guest list that includes long-time colleagues and friends or a smaller gathering with a retiree's close knit inner circle, a unique venue underscores how significant a moment and achievement retirement is. For larger affairs, shop around for venues in much the same way you might when celebrating other milestones, such as a child's graduation from college or a wedding. If the guest list includes just a handful of friends and family members, consider planning a trip to a resort locale or renting an impressive home through a site like Airbnb or Vrbo.
- **Take a stroll down Memory Lane.** In the months leading up to the celebra-



tion, work with the retiree to identify key moments and people in his or her career. A photo montage of those notable moments and individuals can be a great way to commemorate a lengthy career and simultaneously thank and honor the people who helped along the way. Play the montage for guests at a key moment during the party.

- **Ask colleagues to share well wishes.** Brief messages from colleagues, whether they're delivered via handwritten letters or videos each individual films, can be a great way to show the guest of honor how much he or she meant to others throughout their

careers. Messages can be incorporated into a montage video or shared privately with the guest of honor.

- **Kick the curfew to the curb.** It might have been a while since a newly minted retiree had a late night, but a retirement party can stretch into the wee hours. After all, the guest of honor won't need to wake up for work the next day (or any other day), so let invitees know that the party will keep going well into the night. If booking a venue for the party, plan an after party at your home for a handful of guests who are particularly close with the guest of honor.
- **Keep the focus on fun.** While reaching

retirement is a celebratory moment that merits a good party, many retirees also feel a degree of sorrow because they're leaving behind rewarding careers they worked so hard to build. Such sentiments may not be entirely avoidable, but party planners can emphasize fun and a festive atmosphere to ensure the night is celebratory and not sorrowful. Book a band and submit a play list of the retiree's favorite songs, and encourage guests to dance the night away.

The day professionals reach retirement merits a celebration that's worthy of the years of hard work and dedication individuals put in over the course of their careers.

AD8 Cognitive Screening Tool



Worried About Memory Changes? Take the 3-Minute Check

This simple and fast check can help you see if you or a loved one may be showing early signs of dementia.

To Access the Screening Tool, Scan the QR Code or Visit:
marylandaccesspoint.211md.org/ad8

Evaluating Seniors' Biggest Expenses



New parents may not be able to visualize that one day their largest expenditures won't be centralized around providing necessities for their children. Adults go through many years of paying for diapers, toys, clothing, food, and education for their children. Yet, when the children have flown the coop, spending patterns change, and even more changes await come retirement.

According to a 2020 survey from the financial services firm Edward Jones, 68 percent of workers soon to retire said they had no idea how much they should be setting aside for expenses, particularly health care and long-term care. Professionals approaching retirement would be wise to analyze the Consumer Price Index - Elderly (CPI-E). It is a good reference to estimate which future expenses will cost the most after retirement. The Bureau of Labor Statistics looks at consumer spending and uses various data to determine the rate of inflation in key areas that apply to older adults starting at age 62.

Individuals may be surprised to learn about where they'll be spending the bulk of their money when they get older. Here's a look at some key categories.

- **Housing:** According to data from the Employee Benefit Research Institute, in 2017, the most recent year for which data is available, housing accounted for roughly 49 percent of all spending for seniors. Focus should be centered on lowering those costs when a fixed income is imminent. The possibilities include paying off a mortgage; downsizing a home to have a lower rent or mortgage payment; refinancing a home to a fixed-rate loan so that costs are

predictable; and taking on a tenant to offset costs.

- **Food:** The cost of food will not change dramatically, but it can eat into your budget. Even though food costs may decline when there's only two mouths to feed, food and beverage spending may go up due to more leisure time and dining out. Utilize senior discounts by shopping on days when stores offer percentages off purchases. Save money on restaurant spending by eating out at lunch instead of dinner, splitting plates or skipping appetizers.
- **Healthcare:** Experts warn that while many expenses decline in retirement, health care spending increases. According to Fidelity, the average 65-year-old couple retiring in 2020 in the United States needed roughly \$295,000 just to cover their retirement health care expenses. Those with family histories of severe illnesses or those with preexisting conditions will need even more. It's also important to realize that roughly half of the population will need long-term care at some point, offers The Motley Fool, and that requires advanced budgeting as well. Many people find that Medicare supplement plans can bridge the gap in expenses that government-run plans will not cover. Saving through a health savings account (HSA) when employed also can create extra cash on hand for retirement expenses.

Understanding which retirement expenses will be high can help people plan better for the future.

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE'S WELLNESS SERVICES?

WELCOME TO MEDICARE

Medicare Part B covers your one-time welcome to Medicare preventive visit. You must receive this visit within the first 12 months of your Part B enrollment.

ANNUAL WELLNESS VISIT

A yearly appointment with your primary care provider to create or update a personalized prevention plan. Keep in mind this is not a head-to-toe physical.

PREVENTIVE SERVICES

Preventive services include exams, shots, lab tests, and screenings. They also include programs for health monitoring, counseling and education.

For more information, speak with your doctor or call the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services to schedule an appointment with a SHIP counselor.

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evening hours



Considerations for Retirees Thinking of Working Part-Time

Retirement is an opportunity to wave goodbye to the daily grind. Retirees may focus on rest and relaxation, and many make travel a major component of their lifestyle.

According to a 2022 Gallup poll, Americans expect to retire at an average age of 66, up from 62 in 2022. However, most do not hold out that long; the average actual retirement age is 61. Canada used to have a mandatory retirement age of 65, but that mandate was overturned in 2009. Today, the average retirement age for Canadians is 64.4 for men and 63.8 for women, according to Statistics Canada.

Upon retiring, many retirees discover that they sorely miss getting out of the house and being productive through some sort of employment. Others may find it necessary to supplement their retirement incomes. There are a few things to know about working during retirement, particularly if a person is collecting government benefits.

- According to the Social Security Administration, those falling under full retirement age for the entire year (which was raised to age 67 for those born in 1960 or later) will be subjected to an SSA deduction of \$1 from your benefit payments for every \$2 you earn above the annual limit. For 2022, that limit is \$19,560. In the year you reach full retirement age, SSA deducts \$1 in



benefits for every \$3 you earn above a different limit, but they only count earnings before the month you reach your full retirement age. For full retirement age reached in 2022 your limit on earnings for the months before full retirement age is \$51,960. After full retirement age, there is no limit on

earnings.

- The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada reports that individuals between the ages of 60 and 65 who continue to work while receiving a Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) retirement benefit must still contribute to the CPP. Your CPP contributions will

go toward post-retirement benefits. These benefits increase your retirement income when you stop working. However, if you continue to work while getting a CPP retirement pension and are between the ages of 65 and 70 years old, you can choose not to make any more CPP contributions.

- Keep in mind that if you are on Medicare, extra income could potentially trigger surcharges for parts B and D. It's beneficial to speak with a financial consultant to weigh the pros and cons of part-time work during retirement.
- Part-time work does not need to be daily work. Many retirees work according to how they feel. Some options include seasonal jobs, such as driving shuttles in national parks or working during the holidays in retail stores. Or you may use your expertise to consult or start a business.
- A number of people work part-time during retirement simply to get out of the house. Jobs that help you interact with a number of people can be beneficial, as socialization has been shown to benefit the mental health of seniors.

Working during retirement can supplement savings and provide structure that some retirees may be missing.



The Johns Hopkins Memory Care Family Checklist

A resource for people with cognitive difficulties and their caregivers

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Call: (301) 475-4200 ext. 1057
(301) 475-4200 ext. 1058

WHAT IT DOES

The Johns Hopkins Memory Care Family Checklist is a free resource that helps families impacted by memory loss prioritize their needs, access reliable information, and connect to supports to help them develop a larger care plan.

WHO IS IT FOR

This resource is designed to help both the people with memory loss and their caregivers, providing essential information, planning, and education.

HOW IT WORKS

The Checklist integrates with 211's Community Resource Database to connect the caregiver with up-to-date, location-specific supports based on their unique circumstances.



Scan the QR Code or Visit
marylandaccesspoint.info/memorycare
to access the Checklist.



Activities for Seniors with Limited Mobility

Physical activity is a valuable tool in the fight against chronic disease and other conditions. In fact, the Cleveland Clinic highlights physical activity among its nine ways to prevent disease in an effort to live a long and rewarding life.

Children, adolescents, young adults, and even men and women in middle age may not face too many physical hurdles when they try to exercise, but seniors are not always so lucky. Aging men and women with mobility issues may wonder if they can reap the rewards of physical activity, and thankfully there are many ways to exercise even if getting up and going isn't as easy as it might have been in years past. Sometimes referred to as "aerobic exercise" or simply "cardio," cardiovascular exercise is an umbrella term that encompasses a wide range of physical activities that raise the heart rate and improve endurance. Seniors with mobility issues can look to various forms of cardio for inspiration as they seek to be more physically active without compromising their overall health.

- **Walk your way to a healthier you.** Walking is a form of cardiovascular exercise that is ideal for older adults with mobility issues because it need not be physically demanding and it's safe to walk just about anywhere. Walking in a place such as a local park can be particularly good for older adults because they can take periodic breaks on benches if aches, pains or stiffness is affecting their ability to keep moving.



- **Take up swimming.** Swimming might be tailor-made for seniors with mobility issues because it's a great workout and exercising in water tends to be less taxing on muscles and joints. The Cleveland Clinic notes that swimming promotes heart health, strengthens the lungs, helps to burn calories, and builds muscle, among other benefits. And many seniors find swimming is just as fun in their golden years as it was in their youth, which means aging adults might not face problems with motivation when the time comes to get in the pool.

- **Use an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser.** Cycling is a wonderful exercise but one that seniors with mobility issues may feel is no longer possible. If doctors advise against riding a traditional bike, an exercise bike or portable pedal exerciser can provide many of the benefits of cycling without as great a risk for accident or injury. A portable pedal exerciser can be carried to a park, where seniors can still spend time in the great outdoors, which is one of the most appealing reasons to get on a bike and go.
- **Take beginner yoga or tai chi.**

HelpGuide.org notes that gentle yoga or tai chi can help to improve flexibility and reduce stress and anxiety. Though yoga and tai chi can provide as much demanding physical activity as individuals allow, beginner classes in each discipline don't require much movement but do provide enough for seniors hoping to be less sedentary.

Even seniors with mobility issues can find safe and effective ways to be more physically active. Prior to beginning a new exercise regimen, seniors with mobility issues are urged to discuss activities with their physicians.

MEDICARE WILL NOT CALL YOU

- **Fake "New" Cards:** Claiming Medicare is switching to a plastic or chip-enabled card and requiring your number to "verify" or send it.
- **2026 Drug Cap Scams:** Demanding a "processing fee" for access to new 2026 prescription drug benefits.
- **AI Voice Cloning:** Using AI to mimic relatives or doctors to gain trust.
- **Threats of Suspension:** Claiming benefits will be canceled, suspended, or flagged due to fraudulent activity to create urgency.
- **Bogus Freebies:** Offering "free" groceries or services in exchange for Medicare numbers, then billing for fraudulent items like urinary catheters or a back brace.

NO NEW MEDICARE CARDS

BE AWARE OF MEDICARE SCAMS

REPORT SUSPECTED FRAUD

How to Protect Yourself

- **Hang Up:** Medicare will never call, text, or email you unsolicited to request personal information.
- **No "Chip" Cards:** No new Medicare cards are being issued in 2026; your current card is still valid.
- **Verify Independently:** If a call seems official, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE directly.
- **Check Your Statements:** Review your Medicare Summary Notices (MSN) for items you did not receive.
- **Report Fraud:** Contact the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) at the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services, at 301-475-4200, ext. 1050 or use resources like medicareresources.org.



SMP

Senior Medicare Patrol

Preventing Medicare Fraud



REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE TO AUTHORITIES



Elder abuse comes in many forms.

Physical, emotional or psychological, financial, sexual, neglect or abandonment.

Any form is unacceptable.



Wanderings of an Aimless Mind



Going through the Car Wash

By Shelby Opperman
Contributing Writer

Tuesday some of our Christ Church, Chaptico women met for a lunch at The Front Porch in Leonardtown. This was our second lunch bunch this year and we hope to have more women join and have even more fun together. We celebrated the 90th birthday of Barbara L. one of our parishioners, while enjoying delicious food and great service. I have been hooked



now on the seared scallops on a creamy smoky bacon and a bit of jalapeno risotto – it used to be the burgers for me. It's comfort on a plate. I thought it was funny how everyone was waiting to see what the others were ordering. My friend Barbara D. mentioned that it was just in case we wanted to change our minds. I almost ordered the fried green tomatoes, which is much more than just the tomatoes. I've had it before and it was amazing. But next time I may order what my friend Karen C. ordered, which was the fried seafood basket. Well, I actually did order it, but I took it home for my husband to have for dinner since I was heading to Vestry Tuesday night.

As I was leaving Leonardtown I thought it would be nice to give my car a pampering bath at the new Splash In car wash. The real reason why I washed my car is that even with using the windshield wipers in the morning the sticky pollen wouldn't come off, and I couldn't see out of any of the windows. But I will let my beloved little 2009 Hyundai Santa Fe think it was being pampered. Plus, I sang "Working at the car wash" by Rose Royce on the ride through which I know must have made my car's experience even better. You might not want to mention to Robert that I was pampering and singing to my car. And I know you were singing it too even though the column title is worded differently.

The new car wash is completely different than any that I have ever gone through. A young man waved me in and said to put the car in neutral because a track (kind of like a rollercoaster track) pulls your car on through to the end. I was fine for the first minute, but then when all the multicolor suds (or it could be all the neon lights in there) start washing down your windshield I had this awful fear that I was not in control, and the car was going to slip off the track and careen through the wall. They have a sign at the end of the tunnel that says not to apply your brakes, but I couldn't see that when the first suds came down. I think I did tap lightly on the brakes once. It is an eerie feeling.

I left the car wash feeling pretty good; my car wasn't embarrassingly covered in pollen and those caterpillar like oak tree pollen pods called catkins that were stuck in every nook and cranny. My car was pretty bad because I don't drive it as often now that I am home answering pools calls. When I pulled out of the shopping center onto Rt. 5 what is the first thing that happened? Yes, two immediate bug splats. That naturally reminded me of the saying, "Some days you are the windshield, and some days you are the bug". And of course, this morning my car already has a fine dusting of pollen and catkins. With a name like catkins you would think they'd be cute.

You know, even after I arrived home, I was still singing "Working at the car wash". That song came out when my late, middle brother Billy was actually working at the car wash on St. Barnabus Rd in Marlow Heights in 1976 and it brought back good memories of him. Billy, his wife Connie and their two small kids lived off of St. Barnabus Road at Gateway Square apartments during those years, and then later moved to an Oxon Hill apartment. I tried to find the photo I had taken of him and the other workers wiping down cars at the end, but I found one of Billy and Connie from the early 70s. The car wash workers were all smiling and having fun while working. I don't know - maybe it was because Billy was just a good guy...or maybe it was the song.

To each new day's adventure,
Shelby

Please send your comments or ideas to: shelbys.wanderings@yahoo.com or find me on Facebook.

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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.

Lillian Knott, 95



With heavy hearts and cherished memories, we announce the passing of Lillian Cecelia Knott, a beloved mother, grandmother, and friend, who departed this life on April 10,

2026, at the age of 95. Born on March 9, 1931, in Laurel Grove, Mechanicsville, Maryland, Lillian was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, where she met and married her soulmate, John Webster Knott Sr., at St. George's Catholic Church. Together, they built a legacy of love and kindness that extended to all who knew them.

Lillian dedicated her life to her family, serving as a devoted homemaker and farmer's wife who found joy in the simplest of pleasures. Her home was a sanctuary filled with laughter, gardening delights, and a passion for nurturing both houseplants and the hearts of her loved ones. An avid bingo player and pitch enthusiast, Lillian enjoyed the camaraderie of gatherings with friends and family, whether competing in games or canning fresh vegetables from her garden. She found joy in putting puzzles together and had a special love for collecting coffee mugs, with each piece telling its own story. Lillian also loved a bit of thrill, often indulging in playing scratch-offs, always with hope in her heart. Dispensing love and joy wherever she went, Lillian will be remembered for her boundless spirit and the unconditional love she radiated.

She left behind her loving children Mary L. Clements (Jerry-Deceased) of Leonardtown, MD, John W. Knott, Jr. (Jean) of Leonardtown, MD, James L. Knott, Sr. (Betty) of Leonardtown, MD, Emma C. Knott (Ray) of Leonardtown, MD, Peggy A. Abell (William) of Hollywood, MD, Charles D. Knott Sr. (Donna) of Leonardtown, MD, Brother in law, James "Bunky" Knott, Sr. along with 17 grandchildren, 38 great-grandchildren, and 19 great-great-grandchildren, each of whom carries a piece of her spirit and warmth.

Lillian was preceded in death by her loving husband, John W. Knott, Sr., Mother, Sorella Burch, son Joseph E. Knott, siblings, Benjamin Morgan, Charles Morgan, Lewis "Diddley" Morgan, Mitchell Morgan, Emma Walker, and James Morgan.

Pallbearers are Tom Clements, John W. Knott III, James Lewis "JL" Knott Jr., William Ignatius Abell Jr., Charles Donald "CJ" Knott Jr., and Ray Knott III.

Contributions can be made to Our Lady's Catholic Church of Medley's Neck.

In the spirit of her loving nature, we encourage attendees to bring their fondest memories of Lillian to share, as we celebrate a life beautifully lived, honoring a woman whose legacy will forever remain in our hearts.

Family will be receiving friends on Monday, April 20, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 7:00 PM. at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home in Leonardtown, MD. A Catholic Mass will take place at 10:00 AM on April 21, 2026, at Our Lady's Catholic Church of Medley's

Neck in Leonardtown, MD. at 10:00 AM, Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens in Leonardtown, MD.

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.

Louie Buckler, 86



Louis "Louie" Merrill Buckler, 86, of Charlotte Hall, MD, passed away on April 3, 2026, peacefully and at home with his loving wife by his side.

On October 15, 1939, Louie was born at home in Dubois, Maryland, to the late Joseph Gwynn and Dorothy Marion (Wood) Buckler. As a small child, Louis' family moved from Charles to St. Mary's County, living in New Market and later settling down in Oraville.

After graduating from Margaret Brent High School in 1958, Louie enlisted in the United States Air Force as a Military Policeman, based out of Langley, VA. He was proud to be selected to serve in the honor guard for General Douglas MacArthur's funeral. He enjoyed traveling the country and abroad, stationed in Florida during the Cuban Missile Crisis and Southeast Asia, during his tour in Thailand. Later, Louie began work as a power plant operator for PEPCO. For 32 years, his dedication and expertise made him a respected figure amongst his colleagues. Once retired, Louie took on a new job with the Chamber of Commerce for St. Mary's County at the former Charlotte Hall Visitors Center, educating many people on the history of Southern Maryland.

On February 15, 1969, Louie married the love of his life, Janet Lee Asher. They were blessed with two sons, Louis Nicholas Page Buckler of PA, and Andrew Jeff Jeffrey Windsor Buckler of Charlotte Hall, MD. Louie took great pride and joy in being a father and spending time with his sons and later his grandchildren, especially once they were old enough to take part in history discussions and properly enjoy classical operas.

Singing was more than a passion for Louie, with a beautiful voice and an accent as unique as he. Starting at age 13, and for over 50 years, Louie performed as a highly sought-after and respected singer at many weddings, funerals, and community functions, with "Ave Maria" being one of his most requested songs. Louie also took great pride in being a member of the Dr. Mudd House Museum, where he spent more than 20 years as a tour guide and curator; as well as being a member of the Margaret Brent High School Alumni Association, where he served for 2 years as president. Louie had many passions. In his free time, he delighted in studying history and exploring historical locations; watching classic films, playing pitch, and going to dances. He was an exquisite dancer. He enjoyed attending and participating in the theater, helping to found the St. Mary's Community Theatre in the 70's with Janet and a group of others. A man

of many joys, he also loved playing bingo, researching genealogy, sunbathing, gardening, and hunting for good antiques at auctions and thrift stores. Louie tried to enjoy his life to the fullest.

Louie was preceded in death by his parents, his siblings Dorothy Bebe Buckler of Landover, MD; James Oscar Buckler; Howard Allan Buckler; and Charles Maurice Buckler, all of Mechanicsville. He is survived by his cherished wife of 57 years, Janet, sons Page and Jeff with his wife Elizabeth, and his closest sibling, Gwendolyn Faye Johnson of Mechanicsville, MD. Additionally, he leaves behind his grandchildren: Robert Tompkins, Samantha (Steve) Haering, Nicholas Buckler, Donovan (Kara) Buckler, Layla (Allan) Owens, and Joshua Buckler, one great-grandchild, Amelia Haering; along with many special nephews and nieces, cousins, family, and friends.

On Tuesday, April 14, 2026, the family will receive friends for the visitation from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 30195 Three Notch Road, Charlotte Hall, MD 20622. The following day, a funeral service will begin at 10:00 am also at the funeral home with interment following after the service at Trinity Memorial Gardens, 3221 Mattawoman Beantown Rd, Waldorf, MD 20601. A luncheon will immediately follow at the Moose Lodge in Mechanicsville, MD.

Paulbearers: George Buckler, Norman Carrick III, Samantha Haering, Joshua Buckler, Christian Johnson & Don Hammerlund.

Honorary paulbearers: Donovan Buckler (US Navy, currently deployed), JD Shoemaker
Condolences may be made to the family at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Hospice of St. Mary's County in memory of Louis Buckler at P.O.Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or <https://www.medstarhealth.org/locations/hospice-of-st-marys>.

Arrangements by Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., Charlotte Hall, Maryland.

Eddie Knott, 72



Carl Edward "Eddie" Knott of Lexington Park, MD, Passed away peacefully on April 10, 2026, at his home at the age of 72. Eddie was born April 6, 1954, in Maryland to Francis Jerome and Goldie Corrinne (Sexton) Knott.

Eddie was a popular and social man who lived his entire life in St. Mary's County. He was loved deeply and will be greatly missed by all the family and friends he made along the way. Eddie was a man of wisdom, with a kind heart and always looked out for the ones he cared for.

He had a lifelong career in construction as one of the best carpenters and supervisors around. He built the home where he and his wife raised their sons in and later remodeled that home to fit his grandchildren too. Once he retired, he maintained his supervising personality overseeing his wife's many home projects and making his daily laps to socialize.

Over the years, Eddie pursued many hobbies; he enjoyed hunting, especially rabbits, deer and raccoons, and attended many events at the hunting club in Loveville, MD. Eddie knew the local waters well, from the best fishing holes and spots to catch blue crabs, to the best times to go and where to get good oysters. He loved taking his family out on the boat and sharing his passion of the water. Many times, we would send search parties out for him after he had taken off on the boat with no phone, only to find him out having a good time.

Eddie always loved family gatherings, socializing and watching everyone interact and often went to card parties. He loved going out to some of the local bars including the Brass Rail and spent many years shooting pool on the league. Any time he was home you would find a western on the tv and he enjoyed Sunday Night Football.

In his later years, Eddie looked forward to the warm weather. He would spend winters enjoying the company of his family through the holidays. As soon as spring rolled around, he was excited and ready for another season of fun. He would recruit help to get his garden going and prepare his boat for another year on the water. He became the ultimate homestead husband, keeping the grass mowed and keeping fresh tomatoes and cucumbers from his garden ready to share with his loved ones. He kept goats at one point as well as plenty of chickens and some ducks. He enjoyed sitting outside, watching his animals and watching his plants grow. Many of us enjoyed years of Eddie's jokes and stories and even when he became a man of fewer words between his head nods and sighs, he always let us know his thoughts.

Eddie loved his wife and all they built together. He enjoyed having a full house when his children, grandchildren and great grandchildren would all come together. He would sit out on the porch and watch his great grandchildren playing in the same yard his boys were raised in. His legacy will carry on with his sons, grandson and granddaughters, and his abundance of great grandchildren who all carry on his Knott name.

Eddie is survived by his wife Teresa Charlene (Langley) Knott, sons Matthew Carl Knott and Jason Wade Knott of Lexington Park, MD.

Preceded in death are Eddie's parents Francis Jerome and Goldie Corrinne Knott, and siblings Thomas Knott of Ridge, MD, Daniel Knott of St. Mary's City, MD, Robert Knott of Great Mills, MD.

Pallbearers are Tyler Knott, Kayla Knott, Alvin Tippet, Sr., Alvin Tippet Jr., Raymond Morgan and Charles Higgs.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, April 15, 2026, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 7:00 PM. Where a Funeral Service will be held at 10:00 AM on Thursday, April 16, 2026, at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home in Leonardtown, MD. Interment will follow at St. James Catholic Cemetery, Lexington Park, MD.

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.

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.

Sat, Apr 18

Band of Brothers and Sisters

Showtime Deli
21905 Three Notch Rd., Lexington Park
9 a.m..

PTSD/Suicide Prevention Group of So. Maryland, offers support for all Veterans in need of our services, as well as support for the local community. We provide help with VA Military Compensation Claims by appointment. Our method is derived from our military experiences when we were surrounded by others who think and dressed as needed to work together to survive. Our members are supported by text, phone or personal interaction and are available at a moment's notice. For more information call 301-481-6752.

Coming Out Car Show

Bowles Farm
22880 Budds Creek Road, Clements
8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Southern Knights 2026 Coming Out Car & Bike Show. All vehicles welcome (cut-off year for cars 2000). \$25 at gate. Spectators \$5 (under 12 free). Registration cut-off noon. T-Shirts first 100 registered. Swap

meet/flea market. Top 75 Cars & Top 5 Motorcycles and other awards. Information call Bill 301-904-7430.

St. Mary's County History Day

23630 Hayden Farm Ln, Leonardtown
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Local contest affiliated with Maryland History Day and National History Day. It is a district-level contest for middle and high school students to do in-depth research and create unique projects about each year's theme in one of five categories: paper, exhibit, documentary, website, or performance. Students from public, private, parochial, home, and cyber schools are welcome to participate.

Brought by Historic Sotterley, with support from St. Mary's County Library, Maryland Humanities, and the Patuxent River Naval Air Museum. Learn more at: md-smcdc.nhd.org/App?f=592efb3e-2fb3-4606-8006-98696fbaad4e#

Sun, Apr 19

Quarter Auction Event

Immaculate Conception Parish Center

28297 Old Village Rd., Mechanicsville
Doors open at 12 Noon. Auction begins at 1 p.m.

Fundraising event sponsored by the Society of St. Vincent DePaul to benefit Neighbors In Need. For reservations or more information, phone 240-561-4805 or email Tuck262@gmail.com

Tue, Apr 21

Neighborhood Planning Meeting

Lexington Park Library
21677 FDR Blvd., Lexington Park
5:30- 7:30 p.m.

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services would like to invite you to a Neighborhood Planning Meeting hosted by the St. Mary's County Local Management Board and Building Bridges.

This meeting is a chance for residents and organizations to share their voice and help shape community priorities for families in Lexington Park. Input gathered will directly guide future programs, resources, and investments in the community. Light refreshments will be provided. For more information, please contact Amanda

Meatyard at Amanda.Meatyard@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Wed, Apr 22

People & Perspectives with Michael Kent

Historic Sotterley
44300 Sotterley Ln., Hollywood
7-8:30 p.m.

When the international slave trade was outlawed in 1808, other methods were tried to fill the labor void in the South. Border States like Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky began to breed slaves from the enslaved people they already owned. One such enslaved person was Jacob Broom who was owned by the Chew family from Chesapeake Beach in Calvert County. When Jacob was interviewed by a newspaper in 1890, he recalled fathering 375 children. Michael Kent joins us to discuss his book "Jacob's Children: Black History Hidden in Plain Sight," which discusses the horror of breeding and speculates on the plight of the children. This is a FREE hybrid event. Registration is required.

Pre-reception at 6:30 pm with light refreshments.

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UPCOMING EVENTS



Big & Little Yoga Class

Bring your littles along to this Big & Little yoga class taught by Kathy Therrien! Children ages 3 to 10 are invited to join their caregivers at this morning yoga session. Mats will be available, but please feel free to bring your own yoga mat or a beach towel to use. Lexington Park Library on Friday, April 17 from 9 - 10:30 a.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Sustainability Fair at Lexington Park Library

On Sunday, April 19 at Lexington Park Library, attend enlightening lectures, make eco-inspired art projects, and connect with community organizations driving positive change. All ages are welcome! Let's shape a greener future together! No registration, all programs will be filled to capacity on a first-come, first served basis.

- 1:30 - 2 p.m. Sustainability Storytime

- 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Found Object Art Workshop
- 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Creature Feature: Live Turtles, Frogs, Snakes, & More!
- 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Meet and Greet with Local Environmental Groups

St. Mary's County Genealogical Society

Are you interested in researching the lives of your ancestors? Do you watch "Finding Your Roots" and wonder how they find all that information? Members of the St. Mary's County Genealogical Society will be available to give beginners guidance on how to get started. Or if you've already begun they can assist on planning the next step to expand your research. Leonardtown Library on Tuesday, April 21 from 11 a.m - 1 p.m. No registration necessary.

Make Your Own Merch: Keychains

Want to showcase your love for your fan-

dom? This series will show you how to make your own fan merch for whatever it is you love! This session will be about designing and making photo keychains. Charlotte Hall Library on Tuesday, April 21 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Perler Beads!

Make your own melty creations with our perler beads and heat press! This event was designed with lower and upper elementary school students in mind. Lexington Park Library on Wednesday, April 22 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

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

Find great reads at great prices! St. Mary's County Fairgrounds on Friday, April 24 through Sunday, April 26. The Friends of the St. Mary's County Library Annual Spring Book Sale offers thousands of gently used books at amazing prices!

Cash, check, credit cards accepted.

- Friday, April 24, 12 - 8 p.m. is Members Only (Join the Friends online or at the door)
- Saturday, April 25, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. and Sunday, April 26, 12 - 4 p.m. are open to the public.

Intro To Improv Comedy (A Three Part Series)

The SoMD Improv Comedy Club is joining us to teach you how to "Yes, And" your way to confidence and success. This three week (with a week off in the middle) series is aimed at teens. Please try to register on www.stmalib.org for all three sessions to get the most out of this learning experience, as we learn Chicago styled comedy improv.

Lexington Park Library

- Sunday, April 26, 2 - 4 p.m.
- Sunday, May 3, 2 - 4 p.m.
- Sunday, May 17, 2 - 4 p.m.

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JUNE 24, 2026

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JULY 29, 2026

ORIGINAL MEDICARE AND MEDICARE ADVANTAGE APPEALS

AUGUST 26, 2026

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

SEPTEMBER 30, 2026

FALL OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

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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
ST. MARY'S • CALVERT

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

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.

Fri, Apr 17

Maritime Performance Series: Music of the American Revolution

Calvert Marine Museum
7–9 p.m.

Celebrate the 250th anniversary of America's War for Independence with performances of special period music by renowned music historians David and Ginger Hildebrand. Donned in period attire, David and Ginger will perform patriotic songs, ballads, dance tunes, and theater songs known by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and others. The Hildebrands will explain and demonstrate their instruments, including the hammered dulcimer, violin, and Spanish and English guitars—interpreting various musical traditions, featuring both the formal and less refined aspects of music in early America. Doors open at 6 p.m. with beverages available for purchase. Tickets are \$20 online up to one day in advance, and \$25 online or at the door on concert day.

Sat, Apr 18

Otter Trot 5K

Calvert Marine Museum
8 a.m.

The Calvert Marine Museum Society will host the third annual timed race that welcomes runners and walkers of all levels for a morning of “otterly” awesome fun in support of the Calvert Marine Museum. Whether you're sprinting, strolling, or just really into otters, this timed race is for you. Race fees are \$35 for Calvert Marine Museum members (with discount code), plus service fee, and \$45 for non-members, plus service fee.

Pet Loss Workshop

Perfect Pet Resort
840 W. Bay Front Road, Lothian
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For many, pets are cherished family members. When they die, the grief can be profound, but is too often pushed aside or minimized. This workshop creates a safe, understanding space where participants can honor their bond, share their stories and learn practical ways to navigate their grief. Led by grief experts, the workshop includes a welcome, guided time to share individual experiences, an introduction to the grief process, a brief nature walk focused on healing and connection and a discussion of healthy coping strategies.

Chesapeake Life Center registration is required and can be completed by calling 888-501-7077 or emailing griefinfo@chesapeakelifecenter.org

League of Women Voters Information Table

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch

4100 5th St., North Beach
10 a.m.-12 p.m.

A representative from the League of Women Voters will be available to answer questions and provide information about voting in Calvert County. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, Apr 19

Southern Maryland Bluegrass Series

Calvert Elks
1015 Dares Beach Rd., Prince Frederick
Doors open at Noon and the show starts at 2:00 PM, tickets are \$23.00.

Special Consensus is a band that may not be familiar to the Southern Maryland Bluegrass audience, but they have been on the Bluegrass scene, marking their 50th anniversary. Their sound is grounded in a deep appreciation of Bluegrass music. They have the drive and harmonies of traditional Bluegrass, but with a contemporary sound deeply rooted in tradition. For more information, visit www.somdbluegrass.com or call 301-737-3004. Food will be available for sale from Noon til 2 pm and the show starts at 2 pm.

Fairy & Gnome Home Festival

Annamarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Advance tickets required. It's fairy and gnome season at Annmarie! Families are invited to enjoy a magical day of nature play while traveling through the realms of Annmarie Garden, discovering an enchanting variety of activities along the way. Guests can meet fairy friends, search for hidden gnome homes, create crafts, ride a unicorn, and explore the garden's natural spaces. This immersive, imagination-filled event offers an over-the-top day of creative fun for families. Food and drink vendors will be on site. Advance tickets required; \$12/person (\$17 at the gate, if not sold out), Kids 2 & under free; AMG Members free. Unicorn rides require advance separate purchase. Reduced price admission tickets available for SNAP card holders. Rain or shine event; no pets; no smoking. Learn more at www.annmariegaen.org.

Art Workshop: Make a Cove Point Lighthouse Potter!

Calvert Marine Museum
1–3 p.m.

Celebrate Spring with a creative, hands-on workshop where you'll craft a charming Cove Point Lighthouse using stacked clay pots. This decorative piece is perfect for adding coastal flair to your garden or porch. The workshop will be held at our Cove Point campus. All supplies and materials are provided.

Registration is \$30 per lighthouse. We ask that no more than two participants work

together on each lighthouse. Space is limited, and advance registration is required.

CMM Fossil Club Meeting & Public Lecture

Calvert Marine Museum
1:30 and 2:30 p.m.

Join us in the museum's Harms Gallery for the CMM Fossil Club meeting at 1:30 p.m., followed by a free lecture at 2:30 p.m. Dr. Amy Balanoff presents “The Evolution of the Bird Brain and the Origins of Flight”. more than 500 million years of vertebrate evolution, powered flight evolved only three times—in bats, pterosaurs, and birds.

Earth Day 5K

American Chestnut Land Trust
Parkers Creek Loop
676 Double Oak Rd, Prince Frederick
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

www.acltweb.org/events

Freedom 4 Warriors-Veterans Horse Program

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue
7940 N Flint Hill Rd., Owings
1-4 p.m.

Horses and Equine Assisted Learning use a hands-on approach. Horses are sentient and intuitive beings that respond to human emotions and behaviors, making them excellent partners for self-discovery, personal growth and healing. With our team, participants can engage in some basic horsemanship, ground-based exercises, and other activities or games with horses. This is a ground based only program (no horseback riding). To register for this free event please go to: www.fhhr.org/event-details/freedom-4-warriors-veterans-2026-04-19-13-00

Mon, Apr 20

Proven Program to Prevent or Delay Diabetes

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
11a.m.-12 p.m.

Take charge of your health! Join our free, fun and supportive year-long diabetes prevention program for those at risk of diabetes or looking to lose weight. Learn how small changes in eating, activity, and mindset can lead to big results. Please register. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Lawyers in the Library

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
1-3 p.m.

Need help with an expungement? Have civil legal questions? Meet briefly with an attorney at the library to get hands-on help. Maryland Legal Aid serves financially eligible individuals only. 410-257-2411. <https://>

CalvertLibrary.info.

Tue, Apr 21

Kindergarten Gear Up

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
2-3 p.m.

Join us for an 7-week program designed to help prepare kids and their caregivers to start school in the upcoming year. Through instruction and play, kids will learn social and academic skills while caregivers will learn how to better support their children. This program is intended for children not receiving formal childcare. Registration is required, and it is asked that you attend all sessions. This program is a partnership with Calvert County Public Schools. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Dine Out Book Discussion

Neptune's in North Beach
6:00pm-8:00pm.

“Land of Milk and Honey” by C. Pam Zhang. A dystopian novel about a young, unnamed chef in a future ravaged by ecological collapse and famine, who escapes to a secluded, wealthy mountain colony where food and pleasure are abundant. 10-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Social on the Spectrum Neurodivergent Peer Support Group

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

This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with peers about the joys and struggles of being a neurodivergent or autistic adult, or those exploring their identities on the spectrum. We welcome everyone 18+ regardless of ability or diagnostic status. This is a peer-led group, not therapy, and is not intended to diagnose or as medical advice. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Ongoing

The Wizard of Oz

St. John Vianney Family Life Center
225 Holy Family Ln., Prince Frederick
Saturday, April 18 at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.
Friday, April 24 at 7 p.m.
Saturday, April 25 at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Children's Theatre of Southern Maryland presents The Wizard of Oz. Accessible performance with ASL interpretation and sensory accommodations.

Youth (12 and under): \$18; Adult (13 and up): \$24. Information and tickets available at ctsmd.org

Get Ready to Trot!



Last year's Otter Trot 5K first-place finisher, Robbie, with Calvert Marine Museum's resident otters

Lace up your running shoes and get ready for otterly awesome fun at the Third Annual Otter Trot 5K on Saturday, April 18, at 8 a.m.! This family-friendly, timed race offers a fun and active way to support the museum while enjoying the scenic Solomons waterfront.

Participants can run, walk, or "trot" their way along a picturesque 5K course beginning and ending at the museum parking lot. The event welcomes seasoned runners, casual walkers, and families looking for a fun community experience.

\$35 Race Fee + \$2.80 Sign-Up Fee
CMM members) \$45 Non-Member Rate
Race Day Fun & Perks

- Scenic 5K course through Solomons!
- Live Music by Crowe Entertainment – Get pumped up before and after your run!
- Post-race museum visit — meet the museum's live otters
- Race T-shirt and finisher medal for all registered participants

We're grateful for the support of Prince Frederick Ford Jeep Chrysler Dodge Ram, Asbury Solomons, Habit Fitness, SMECO,

Calvert Health, Shore United Bank, Sneade's Ace Home Center, and Blue Heron Bed and Breakfast. Special thanks also go to John and Wendy Peters and Marianne Harms for their generous contributions.

Proceeds from the Otter Trot 5K support the education and preservation efforts of the Calvert Marine Museum.

Explore how the prehistoric past, natural environments, and maritime heritage come to life and tell a unique story of the Chesapeake Bay. The Calvert Marine Museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$11 for adults; \$9 for seniors, military, and veterans with valid I.D., AAA and AARP members; \$6 for children ages 5 - 12; children under 5 and museum members are admitted free. Proud participant in Museums for ALL. For more information about the museum, upcoming events, or membership, visit the website at www.calvertmarinemuseum.com or call 410-326-2042. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X.

Press release from Calvert Marine Museum

Megalodon Designated as Official State Shark

Legislation designating *Otodus megalodon*, the largest shark to have ever lived, as Maryland's official State Shark was approved late Monday evening by both the Maryland Senate and House of Delegates.

With this designation, Maryland becomes the first state in the nation to recognize an official State Shark. Megalodon, an extinct species known primarily through its fossilized teeth, is closely associated with Maryland's geologic record. These fossils are found in the Chesapeake Bay region, offering important insight into the area's prehistoric marine ecosystems.

Although megalodon disappeared millions of years ago, its legacy underscores the long-standing ecological importance of sharks in ocean systems—past and present. The designation highlights Maryland's rich

paleontological and modern marine heritage and provides new opportunities for public education about marine life, conservation, and Earth's history.

The Calvert Marine Museum, Maryland's State Paleontology Center, has long supported research, education, and public engagement related to the region's fossil record, including the study of ancient sharks such as megalodon.

The museum extends its appreciation to Senator Jack Bailey, Delegate Todd Morgan, and their respective staff for sponsoring the legislation, as well as to the many individuals and organizations who contributed their support throughout the process.

Press release from Calvert Marine Museum

Bluegrass Series Welcomes Special Consensus

Grammy Nominee Makes First Time Appearance



The next concert in the Southern Maryland Bluegrass Series will take place on Sunday April 19 featuring Special Consensus. It's the sixth concert of the season taking place at the Calvert Elks in Prince Frederick, MD which is located at 1015 Dares Beach Road. Doors open at Noon and the show starts at 2:00 PM, tickets are \$23.00.

Special Consensus is a band that may not be familiar to the Southern Maryland Bluegrass audience, but they have been on the Bluegrass scene, marking their 50th anniversary. Their sound is grounded in a deep appreciation of Bluegrass music. They have the drive and harmonies of traditional Bluegrass, but with a contemporary sound deeply rooted in tradition. Led by founder Greg Cahill, a recipient of the prestigious International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Distinguished Achievement Award and an inductee into the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music in America (SPBGMA) Hall of Greats, Special Consensus, has been a cornerstone of the Bluegrass community for five decades. The group has released twenty-two acclaimed recordings, earned eight IBMA awards, and received two Grammy nominations.

This band has provided a foundation for some of today's greatest Bluegrass artists who got their start with Special Consensus. With the 2023 and 2025 IBMA Male Vocalist of the Year Greg Blake on guitar, who has a voice with a deep connection to Appalachian mountain sound. He has a rich powerful voice that has earned him widespread recognition in the Bluegrass world. Greg Cahill's unique banjo playing style along with Brian McCarty on mandolin and Nico Humby on bass, these musicians follow their creative desires without straying too far from their roots.

International tours have brought the band to Australia, Canada, Europe, South

America, Ireland, and the United Kingdom. The band has also appeared on National Public Radio, The Nashville Network, the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville, Tennessee, and have appeared in concert with symphony orchestras around the world.

In 1984, Special Consensus initiated the Traditional American Music (TAM) Program to introduce Bluegrass music to students in schools across the country and in several foreign lands.

The band proudly records for Compass Records where their Gordon Lightfoot version of "Alberta Bound" received the 2023 IBMA Collaborative Recording of the Year award, and the first-ever 2024 IBMA Video of the Year award.

Their latest album titled, "Been All Around This World," released in 2025 in celebration of the band's Golden Anniversary included "special" appearances by past band mates Rick Faris, Ashby Frank, Robbie Fulks, Chris Jones, Dallas Wayne, and Josh Williams along with current members. This recording is truly a celebration of the music of Special Consensus over the past 50 years!

Now in its fourth year at the Calvert Elks, Southern Maryland Bluegrass series will continue to host leading artists. There is one more show in the series which will be on Sunday May 3 featuring The Kody Norris Show. This show was originally scheduled for February 1.

Tickets for each concert are \$23.00 per person. They will be sold at the door. For more information, visit www.somdbluegrass.com or call 301-737-3004. Food will be available for sale from Noon til 2 pm and the show starts at 2 pm. The doors open at approximately 12:00. Media sponsorship is provided by Bluegrass Country Radio.

Press release from Southern Maryland Bluegrass

CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of March 23, 2026–March 29, 2026, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,224 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 72
- Disorderly: 23
- Domestic: 29
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 28
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 1026
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 28
- Traffic Complaints: 71
- Traffic Stops: 496
- 911 Hang Ups: 61
- ARRESTS: 54

Burglary: 26-27050 On March 23, 2026, Master Deputy Burgraff responded to the 12400 block of Rousby Hall Road in Lusby, in response to a burglary and theft complaint. The complainant advised an unknown suspect entered his unlocked garage and stole the victim's Milwaukee battery powered impact gun and a used catalytic converter. The estimated value of stolen property is \$509.



Michael Alexander Calloway

CDS Violation: 26-27134 On March 23, 2026, DFC Huy conducted a traffic stop at the intersection of Rt. 4 and Lower Pindell Road in Dunkirk after observing a vehicle run a red light. Upon making contact with the driver, identified as **Michael Alexander Calloway**, 23 of Bowie, DFC Huy detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emitting from his person. Calloway admitted to consuming three beers prior to driving. He subsequently performed a series of standardized field sobriety tests, the results of which indicated he was under the influence of alcohol and unable to safely operate a motor vehicle. A search incident to arrest revealed a container with a white rock-like substance (suspected cocaine) as well as a baggie containing approximately 22 grams of cocaine. Deputies also recovered open containers of beer and alcohol, a loaded revolver, ammunition, and a large amount of U.S. currency. Calloway was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center, where he was charged with CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis; CDS: Possession with Intent to

Distribute Narcotics; Handgun in a Vehicle; Loaded Handgun in a Vehicle; Illegal Possession of a Regulated Firearm; DUI; and additional traffic-related offenses.



Tiffany Erin Lewis

CDS Violation: 26-27366 On March 24, 2026, DFC Hill and DFC Jones responded to the parking lot of Truist Bank, located at 597 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for a report of a suspicious person. Upon arrival, deputies were advised that a male subject was flailing his arms and behaving erratically, while a female was observed slumped over the steering wheel of a vehicle. Upon making contact with the female, identified as **Tiffany Erin Lewis**, 48, of York, PA, deputies observed CDS paraphernalia in plain view inside the vehicle. Further investigation revealed a pill container containing multiple crystal-like rocks (approximately 2 grams of suspected methamphetamine), as well as a hollow pen containing suspected methamphetamine residue. A subsequent search located an additional clear bag containing approximately 6 grams of suspected methamphetamine. Lewis was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Camry Ellen Broome

CDS Violation: 26-27463 On March 24, 2026, DFC Newton responded to the area of Rt. 4 and Ponds Wood Road in Huntingtown to assist DFC Huy with a traffic stop. The driver, identified as **Camry Ellen Broome**, 34, of Lusby, consented to a search of the vehicle. During the search, deputies located a cut plastic straw with white powdery residue on both ends, as well as a glass smoking device. A search of Broomes' person revealed a plastic container containing a white, rock-like substance suspected to be crack cocaine. Broomes was transported to the Calvert

County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Possession with Intent to Distribute Narcotics, CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Anita Marie Thompson

CDS Violation: 26-28497 On March 28, 2026, at approximately 12:31 a.m., DFC T. Bowen initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle along Main Street in Prince Frederick. During the investigation, the driver, **Anita Marie Thompson**, 39, of no fixed address, was found to be operating the vehicle without a valid driver's license. A search of Thompson's person revealed a crack pipe and two in her purse containing a white powdery substance. Thompson was arrested and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis.



Dominique Matthew Williams

Child Neglect: 26-28078 On March 26, 2026, at approximately 1:13 p.m., Deputy Angell responded to Greene House Salon, located at 139 Central Square Drive in Prince Frederick, for a report of a neglected minor. The complainant reported observing a young child left unattended on a couch inside the salon while both parents were not present. Salon employees attempted to locate the parents but were unsuccessful. The child's parents were identified as **Dominique Matthew Williams**, 23, of Prince Frederick, and **Makayla Leeann Brehm**, 20, of Prince Frederick. Witnesses stated the child had been left in a carrier near the front door for approximately 10–15 minutes. Williams and Brehm were subsequently transported to the Calvert County Detention Center

and charged with Neglect of a Minor and Desertion of a Minor Child.

Damaged Property: 26-27030 On March 23, 2026, Deputy Grabill responded to the Highlands Homeowners Association park, located at 8747 St. Andrews Drive in Chesapeake Beach, for a report of property destruction. The complainant advised that unknown suspect(s) drove a vehicle into the park and performed donuts, causing damage to the grass. Deputies observed multiple tire tread marks throughout the area. The estimated value of the damage is \$300.00.

Damaged Property: 26-27287 On March 24, 2026, DFC Daily responded to the 400 block of Chestnut Dr. in Lusby, for the report of damaged property. The complainant reported an unknown suspect shattered the front passenger window of the victim's vehicle. The estimated value of damaged property is \$500.00.

Damaged Property: 26-28098 On March 26, 2026, DFC. A. Dymond responded to the 2100 block of Oliver Drive in Prince Frederick, for a reported damaged property. The complainant advised the siding on his residence was damaged by bullet from a firearm. The estimated value of damaged property is \$300.

Theft: 26-28699 On March 28, 2026, DFC Newton responded to the area of Ginger Lane and Skinners Turn Road in Owings, for the reported theft. The complainant advised a black Sig Sauer P365X 9mm handgun was stolen from the victim's unlocked vehicle parked in the 500 block of Keith Lane in Owings. The estimated value of stolen property is \$0.00.

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

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Commissioner President Speaks Out on Data Centers

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Just hours after voting against a proposed two-year moratorium on data centers, and then listening to considerable outcry to that vote, in rambling prepared remarks, Commissioner President Todd Ireland shared his thoughts about the controversial type of development.

Ireland said, "The data center discussions over the last few weeks have been challenging to say the least. While our board has been cohesive on most of the issues we faced over the last three years, the factors surrounding this particular issue have caused some difference in opinions. I believe all want to do what is best for Calvert County, our residents. We all want to ensure their constituents remain healthy, safe, and comfortable in our homes and our community, and we want Calvert County to be an affordable place to live.

"This process has been a learning experience for many of us. We've been approached regularly by citizens who have thrown information at us regarding the projects that we have had to verify before passing on to you. I've spent countless hours working to sort through and the information that I have heard and tried to correct misinformation and share the facts through the Calvert County government website. Our citizens elected us to make decisions for the betterment of our county. And we took an oath in office to do just that. Many of us grew up in Calvert County. We love this county and we know it like the back of our hands. It can sometimes be difficult to see the changes that have taken place over the last 35 years."

Ireland related the decisions of previous boards to approve first the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant and then the Cove

Point LNG facility, both of which have brought in considerable revenue that has allowed for community improvements that continue today.

He also noted decisions by previous boards and the work of the current board to control growth.

And then he curled back to data centers. He said, "There are currently two companies that are interested in developing data center complexes only, only two parcels of land that are zoned to allow data centers in Calvert County. The first parcel of land is owned by Constellation, is on the same property as Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. Amazon Web Services and Constellation have been in negotiations for unknown period.

"The speculations surrounding the magnitude of this project are ongoing. No specific details have been announced and the only permits that have been requested are those from the Maryland Department of Environment that show either seven or eight structures being built. The cooling system, from what I understand, is going to tie into the existing infrastructure of the power plant that pulls salt water from the bay and returns it to the Bay as well.

"The second parcel Calvert County owns and a developer who is interested it is the Natelli group. Their proposal is more detailed and shows four buildings being built on approximately 100 acres of cleared and impervious surface that at Offsite A on the west side of the intersection of Route 4 and Cove Point Road. The cooling system for this project has been identified as using the gray water from the Solomons Sewage Treatment Plant.

"During last night's proposal for developing the Offsite A property, Natelli offered to purchase land near Mill Creek Middle,

where Patuxent High School is, and built a \$30 million park very similar to the one that was designed for Offsite A. It was also stated that once operational, the tax revenue to Calvert County would be approximately \$45 million a year when averaged out over a four-year depreciation value of personal property. There have been mixed reviews on a new park and citizens have questioned why the park wasn't built. Some people want the park on Offsite A while others like the idea of moving the park away from the sewage treatment plant, the transfer station and the CCSO gun range. The potential site near the schools on the east side of Route 4 has been appealing to some and not to others.

"Dominion gave the county approximately \$9 million prior to this board to build that park at Offsite A. Approximately \$800,000 of that was used to design the park and the rest remains earmarked to build a park. The main issue is the estimated cost of the park that was designed is approximately \$30 million. Right now, we don't have an additional \$22 million to throw at that park.

"The majority of this board agrees that we are at a critical point financially and decisions must be made to ensure our future financial obligations are sustainable. A recent tax adjustment increased revenues by about \$9 million. We are at a point where we cannot tax our way out of future debt. While some of our debt can be controlled and predicted, there are a lot of unknowns that exist. This opportunity has come at a time where debt has increased substantially, primarily due to rising costs across the board. We need a substantial revenue source to assist with our current debt situation as well as the plan for our future. Is this a perfect scenario for a county? No, nothing's perfect, but this is an opportunity.



Commissioner President Todd Ireland

"We protect our water resources and ensure all infrastructure updates are paid for by the developers. We can capitalize on needed community infrastructure, whether it be a firehouse or park, or just minimizing residential growth. This will be accomplished with a significant hike to our commercial tax base. In lieu of raising personal property taxes, I would like to explore, given the percentage of the revenue generated from a data center back to our residents. We'll continue to educate ourselves and our residents about data center development and we'll continue to follow a public process involved. We will continue to work diligently on hearing your concerns and incorporating them into tax amendments to protect all of us so that Calvert County remains the best county in the state of Maryland."

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Newsome: Don't Stress Students Over Tests

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

"It's testing season," according to Calvert County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Marcus Newsome. "We're going to be engaged in testing from now until school is out and most prominent is probably the MCAP (Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program), but there are other assessments. There are the advanced placement assessments. dual enrolment, there are so many assessments."

The MCAP program has been controversial and may be changed or modified in the coming years.

According to the Maryland Department of Education, "The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that states administer annual statewide assessments to all students in English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics in grades 3-8 and once in high school, as well as in science once in each grade span (3-5, 6-8 and high

school), and annual English language proficiency assessments in grades K-12 for all English learners. In addition to these federally mandated assessments, Maryland State law (Md. Ed. Art. §7-203) requires a social studies assessment once in the middle school grade band (administered in Grade 8) and the High School Assessment in American Government. Maryland also provides Alternate Assessments aligned with the Alternate Standards for students who require this accommodation. Additionally, the majority of Maryland kindergarteners are administered the KRA to determine their readiness for kindergarten."

Newsome told the school board on April 9, "I think the best way we can treat MCAP is to make sure that our children are getting rest and that we don't break routines, and that we build confidence and we don't put too much pressure on them."

Newsome, who had years of experience as superintendent of other schools before

being appointed to head the Calvert district, recalled, "as the principal, a fifth grader who was coming to our school, was in a car accident. She needed to go to the hospital, and she started crying because she didn't want to miss her Maryland assessment. And that's the pressure that we put on young children."

Dr. Newsome said, "So we have to be careful to make sure that we don't stress them out over these tests. There are samples that families can go to the Maryland State website to understand the format. But the most important advice that I can give is you don't prepare for an assessment like this the day before or the week before, even the month before. This is every day, regular attendance. that we're reading and making sure that our children are reading at home every day for a minimum of 15 minutes, that they're completing their assignments, that they're prepared every day for success. Thus, when it's time they'll be prepared for that assessment as well."

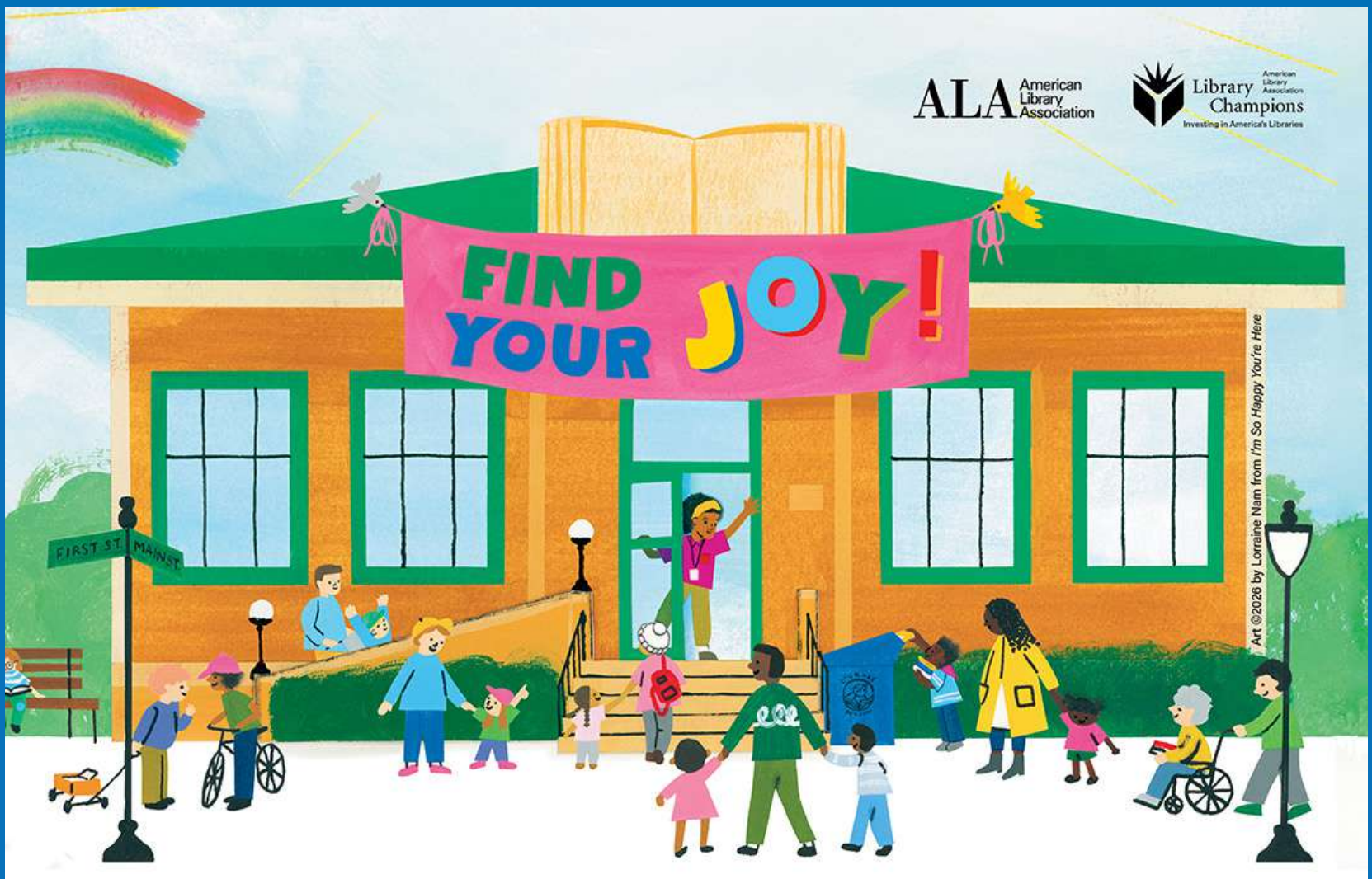


School Superintendent Dr. Marcus Newsome

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Student Grading System Changes Proposed

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of Education is considering proposed changes to the school system's grading policy that would in part eliminate the system of giving a 50 percent grade even though a student did not take a test or show up for class. The policy changes will be available for comment by the public for 30 days after the April 9 school board meeting at which the changes were discussed.

The changes were forged by a committee formed after the issue was raised by board Vice President Lisa Grenis, who said the majority of teachers advocated for change.

At the meeting, Director of System and Instructional Performance Scott McComb presented the proposed changes on behalf of the committee. He said the committee "was designed to ensure that in CCPS (Calvert County Public Schools) grades accurately reflect student achievement, promote clarity and fairness, transparency, and align with research-based practices in grading."

He added, in a statement prepared by the committee, "The purpose of grading in Calvert County Public Schools is to provide clear, consistent, and accurate communication about a student's mastery of curriculum and standards. Grades reflect what students know and are able to do academically. Grades inform students, families, and educators about the progress and guides instructional decisions that support growth, continuous improvement, and long-term success."

He said, "We found that teachers, students, families, and at times, even administrators, were not consistently clear on the expectations of our grading procedures. That needs to change. To address this, we are recommending annual training for all teachers and administrators. This training will be differentiated with new staff members having a more comprehensive training, and then a focused review on key expectations for returning staff. We'll also implement an annual communications to families, including both parents and students, to reinforce class expectations, promote consistency, and ensure greater uniformity of grading practices across classrooms."

McComb said, "At the middle school level, recommendation one is to increase

the minimum average required that a student needs to earn in order to pass the course. Currently, students may pass with an average of 0.5. Under the new grading procedures, the threshold will be raised to 0.75. It's important to note that under the current model last year, fewer than 0.1 percent of middle school students, less than one 10th of 1 percent passed with an average of 0.5. And while this occurrence is rare, this recommendation raises the expectation to a more rigorous standard."

McComb explained, "In our district, we use process grades and product grades. Process grades reflect learning as it occurs, and they're derived from things like practice assignments, homework, activities that support skill development.

"Product grades, on the other hand, are based on assessments such as tests, quizzes, and projects. They represent student mastery at the point that the assessment is given."

He went on to say, "At the middle school level, there will no longer be a floor for process assignments. Students will be given the grade that they earn. Students will, as they currently are, be given the opportunity to make up an assignment that is missed. However, if the assignment is not completed after the opportunity, a score of zero will be recorded for product assignments. Students who earn below 50 percent on a product assignment will be given the opportunity for relearning and reassessment, and the higher of the two scores will be recorded. If following a student's good faith participation and relearning and reassessment, the score remains below a 50, it will be adjusted to the minimum of 50 percent. However, if students do not participate in relearning and reassessment, the original score will remain even if it's below a 50 percent, which is a change to our current practice.

As to high school, he said, "CCPS will continue to use the numeric 100-point scale that we currently use. One of the advantages of a 100-point scale is the level of granularity that it provides. And this was something that in focus groups, that the students specifically called out as something that they appreciated. However, research indicates that when a 100-point scale is used, a grading floor must be applied to ensure fairness and accuracy. And that was consistent across the research that we did."

He added, "However, CCPS will limit the

use of the percent floor to the first half of a course. Currently, for a full-year course, the grading floor exists for three marking periods and is only removed in the fourth marking period. In this instance, for a full year course, the grading floor will apply only during the first two marking periods. And for semester long courses, it will apply for the first marking period of those two marking periods.

"This approach increases student accountability in the latter half of the course while ensuring that no student is placed in a position where it is mathematically impossible to pass midway through the course. And I have to stress, this is a situation that neither serves students, nor the school, nor the classroom that student sit in halfway through the year with no proper chance of passing."

He said, "The high school committee also tackled the issue of academic dishonesty, which is currently addressed through progressive discipline solely. This will continue, meaning the progressive discipline will continue for each offense. Also, the student will receive that consequence through the code of conduct, but they will also, for the first offense, receive a zero. They may, as they currently can, complete a reassessment, but now it will be for partial credit where they will earn 75 percent of whatever they scored on that reassessment. For a second offense, the student will be given an opportunity to reassess again, as they currently do. But in this particular instance, they will only receive 50 percent of whatever score they earn. For a third or any subsequent offenses, no reassessment will be permitted, and the student will earn a zero. This policy balances accountability with opportunities for learning and growth. Progressive discipline and grading consequences, hopefully will deter misconduct."

"At the elementary level," McComb explained, "we utilize a letter grade system and then maintain an assignment level grading floor. The committee recommends continuing to use the 50 percent grading floor at the assignment level as this approach is developmentally appropriate for elementary. The committee emphasized that grading at the elementary level should focus on clearly communicating how well students are progressing towards foundational skills and the mastery of standards. And as a result, the committee also recommends that CCPS



Scott McComb

initiate a formal study (that) should include research, stakeholder engagement, and careful planning to determine how standards-based grading can improve accuracy in alignment with state standards and equity goals. Standard-based grading further shifts the focus away from points earned towards mastery. When a student performs poorly, the communication is not about a numerical score, but rather that the student is not yet meeting the standard. Similarly, if a student does not complete an assignment, the communication would be that the student has not demonstrated mastery of that standard.

"At the elementary level, the emphasis should be clearly communicating where a student is performing in relation to a standard. The approach ensures that grading remains focused on learning growth and progress towards mastery, which is what we would want for our elementary level."

Grenis said, "These changes will greatly benefit our students by holding them accountable for their work and for encouraging higher levels of academic achievement. The new procedures also address the frustration expressed by our teachers, who are tired of giving students a free pass for not completing assignments and projects."

She said St. Mary's tried the standards-based grading system years ago but failed to convince parents. They now have embraced the system after devoting more time to explaining it to the parents.

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It's Next Year for a New St. Leonard Firehouse

Solomons Schedule Advanced by Commissioners

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has changed the date of their budget public hearing from May 5 to May 12. The change came after the commissioners delayed a decision on their proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) after Commissioner Mike Hart questioned whether keeping the Triple-A bond rating was worth deferring needed projects.

The capital decisions included starting construction of a new St. Leonard firehouse early next year and advancing the new Solomons firehouse at a new location from Fiscal Year 2030 to Fiscal Year 2029.

The commissioners also delayed Hart's pet project, turf fields at the four high schools until Fiscal year 2028 after School Superintendent Doctor Marcus Newsome estimated the cost to be \$10 million.

Capital Improvement Projects and Grants Manager Danielle Russell threw water on slackening up on the bond rating by reporting that by increasing the bond sale term from 15 to 20 years could mean an annual increase of capital availability of \$2.5 million. Russell reported that the county's financial advisor says, "\$2.5 million annually in relief. It adds \$26.2 million in additional debt over the life of the bond."

The county, in order to get the Triple A bond rating has to adhere to a 35 percent reserve required by one of them, which is twice as high as the other two. Russell said that is a strict requirement.

So, at the April 14 BOCC meeting there didn't appear to be any stomach for doing anything to harm that bond rating.

Commissioner Buddy Hance observed that the Triple A bond rating was on shaky ground. "In my entire time here, that we are a high risk because we depend on two facilities for commercial tax rates. I have said that. And so that's why I think that the OPEB (paying ahead for retirement benefits) gets offset when their rate ranking us because they say, what if we're getting \$80 million from two facilities, what if one of those were to close? How would you cover that gap?"

Russell outlined some CIP changes. "The Cove Point Lighthouse had a statement of work come back from the lighthouse restoration company that they have been working with. They needed an additional \$237,000 to go with the \$250,000 that they had requested. We're looking currently to use county administration building bond funding that is remaining, that has to be expended by November of this year in order to start depreciating on the asset that is this (county administration) building. We'll be looking to move that bond funding to

some of these projects that we can accomplish quickly. Cove Point Lighthouse is an example, the Armory Pavilion at \$2.8 million and the sheriff's office getting the crime lab conceptual design started.

The lab would go in the current Harriet Elizabeth Brown center, so the new Brown center has been advanced from 2030 to 2038.

Russell said, "We also had some additional apparatus submitted by the Fire and Rescue Commission – an additional command vehicle, a Rescue 5 and Power Truck 2.

"So that was an additional \$3.4 million. We're looking to use capital contingency funds."

While St. Leonard is now in the next fiscal year for construction, Solomons remained in FY 30, which led to press for advancing the schedule.

The Solomons firehouse, which at one time had a higher CIP priority but fell behind St. Leonard because they were farther advanced in their planning.

Hance said that Solomons still hadn't resolved with the State Highway Administration getting access onto Routes 2/4 from their new property in Lusby.

He added, "Solomons has not started on their design yet. So, when you have found funding to move forward with one, it didn't seem fair to push the one out that's almost ready to go and put one in front of it that

doesn't have a design yet."

But Hart said, "We told Solomons we were looking for a shovel and dirt in January of 28," adding, "And now we are saying they're not even going to get started till 30. And so, I was here when we built both of the places in Prince Frederick. We did the firehouse and rescue squad at the same time. And we're not shifting that much debt by waiting a year or two because the way you have to do this, you have to borrow so much of it upfront anyway. But what we're shifting is cost."

Director of Public Works J.R. Cosgrove expressed reservations about staff being able to handle that many projects at one time, although it was suggested he could hire outside help.

Hart insisted, "We have kicked Solomon and St. Leonard down the road even when going from my first to when I got elected the second time. So, this is eight years plus and we're still kicking it because that CIP's written in pencil. I have no desire to move those projects out any further. Every year we wait, the cost goes up more and more."

In the end there was consensus to move the Solomons project up to Fiscal Year 2029, which starts on July 1, 2028. That and the rest of the proposed budget will be presented to the public on May 12.

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“WE HAVE KICKED SOLOMONS AND ST. LEONARD DOWN THE ROAD [FOR YEARS].”

COMMISSIONER MIKE HART ON THE TWO NEW FIREHOUSES



LOCAL 4
School board considers eliminating 50% minimum grading policy



COMMUNITY 9
Otter Trot 5K this weekend



ON THE COVER
Capital Improvement Plan includes new St. Leonard firehouse next year

WEEKLY FORECAST

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MON, APR 20 Mostly Sunny Hi: 57° Lo: 38°	TUE, APR 21 Mostly Sunny Hi: 65° Lo: 54°	WED, APR 22 Partly Cloudy Hi: 76° Lo: 56°	THU, APR 23 Partly Cloudy Hi: 71° Lo: 53°



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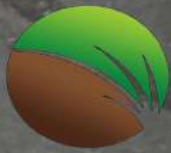
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