

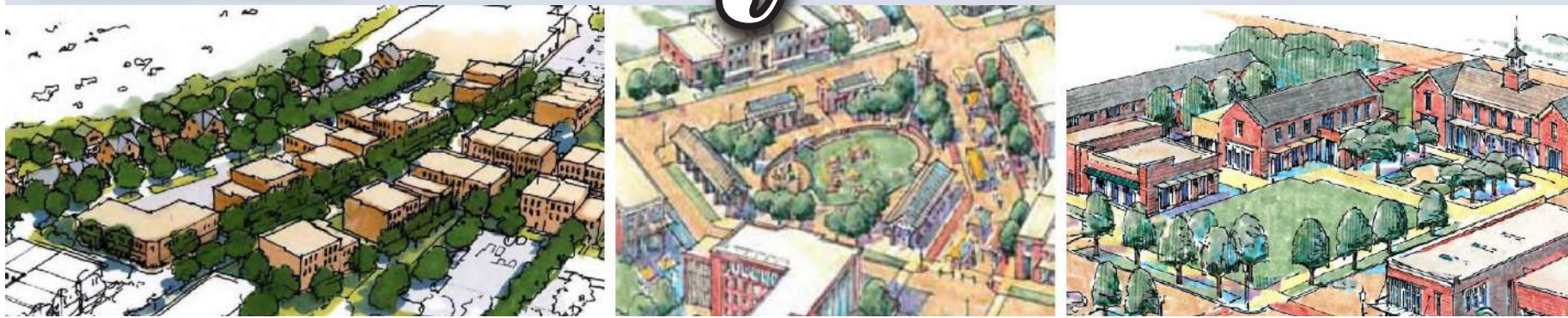
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2022

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"I LEARNED FROM THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS."

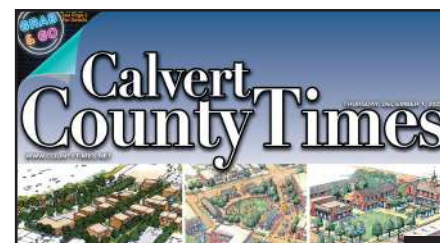
BOB CARPENTER ON LEARNING FROM HIS WIFE PAT CARPENTER IN CONTINUING THE NORTH BEACH HOLIDAY PARADE NAMED FOR HER.



LOCAL 4
County increases environmental health fees



LOCAL 7
Holiday parade carries on in North Beach



ON THE COVER
5
Shrinking Town Centers



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FRI 12/2	55° / 43°	Plenty of sunshine	1%	TUE 12/6	59° / 40°	Cloudy with showers around	60%
SAT 12/3	64° / 36°	A couple of showers; windy	83%	WED 12/7	55° / 32°	Cloudy with a passing shower	55%
SUN 12/4	48° / 38°	Partly sunny and cooler	4%	THU 12/8	47° / 31°	Cooler with a few showers	58%

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Environmental Health Fees Increased

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), acting as the Board of Health, has approved an increase in environmental health fees and charges proposed by Health Officer Dr. Larry Polsky. The approval came after a Nov. 29 public hearing.



Health Officer Dr. Laurence Polsky

At the hearing Dr. Polsky said the fees his office charges haven't been raised for at least 15 years "despite significant changes in costs of basic operations. The

new fees are necessary to maintain adequate staffing in the department. Without proper staffing, we risk major disruptions to vital services for homeowners and businesses across the county."

Polsky said, "One year ago, eight of our 13 staff resigned in a four-month period to take higher paying jobs elsewhere. These jobs were both in the private and public sectors. We were down to two staff to cover all of the well and septic needs for our entire county. For homeowners and businesses with failing septic systems, we were unable to inspect and approve applications in a timely fashion. We had almost no ability to respond to requests for new systems."

The health officer said, "In response to the rapid exodus of staff, we were able to petition the Maryland Department of Budget Management to raise salaries to more competitive levels. Over the next six months, we were able to hire new staff. We now need the means of covering these new expenses. Failure to adopt

to the realities of the job market will lead us to where two other Maryland counties currently have collapsed Environmental Health departments with no means of processing permits."

He said, "Our options are to draw general taxpayer revenue or adjust user fees. It is our goal to avoid shouldering the general taxpayer with the provision of these services. The proposed fee adjustments bring us to within one percent of our current costs. There is no profit for the health department. The second item in the proposal is an automatic adjuster that should prevent our current dilemma from repeating in both private and public sectors."

Environmental Health Director Matthew Cumers said staff turnover is detrimental to the public. He observed, "Well-trained staff can really help negotiate. When you bring someone in new and you're constantly trying to train them, you've got the rule book and so you end up referencing the rule book strictly. When you have well-trained staff that know how to negotiate and navigate through the regulations, but still

keeping in compliance, this helps us help our citizens stay in compliance, but yet move through the process more expeditiously. So, recruitment is one thing, but retention is also a huge element of that."

Commissioner Mike Hart, who is a businessman, said, "I hate to rehire; it's costly. Commissioner Nutter had a great saying when he was in enforcement: 'They tell us what we can't do, but let's see what we can do.' And that was really a mantra Calvert had for a long time. Unfortunately, when you don't know the job and you're fresh out of school, you don't know what you can do. And that is a big disconnect."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance added, "There's got to be some common sense in play here that, I understand the rule says what it is, but I also understand that you have some leeway."

The commissioners unanimously approved the fee increases. Commissioner Kelly McConkey was not in attendance at the Nov. 29 meeting.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Adequate Public Facilities Changes Approved

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

With many concerns hanging over the initiative, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved changes to the county's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) regulations. The changes include the way adequacy of roads is determined and adds other infrastructure needs such as "Water & Sewer, Stormwater Management, Solid Waste & Recycling, Fire, Rescue and EMS services, and Law Enforcement," according to Planning and Zoning Director Mary Beth Cook.

The decision to make the major changes came after a Nov. 29 joint public hearing with the planning commission at which several representatives of community and environmental groups expressed concern about the effort's lack of clarity and how it will be administered.

But Commissioner Chris Gadway noted that now the APF only addresses roads and schools, and the road section is inadequate. "Something is better than nothing. And once they're in, future commissioners or future leaders can build upon this base that we're looking to try and establish today."

The proposal was such a work in progress that changes were made between the earlier BOCC meeting and the evening Nov. 29 public hearing. Commissioner Steve Weems explained the changes in making the motion to move forward. "Number one, at Section 3-6 require that each lane and lane approach for roadways in the impact area must operate at or above the minimum level of service of

'C' using the highway capacity method and two, at section 3-14a.1 and 3-15a change 80 percent to 90 percent."

The Level of Service refers to the wait times at traffic lights. The change made at the earlier meeting increased the requirements in town centers from Level 'D' to Level 'C,' which Director of Public Works Kerry Dull said would require working closely with the State Highway Administration since state roads are ultimately involved.

The 90 percent will be the capacity of public water and sewer systems after which they would be deemed to be inadequate, and a project could be shut down. Currently the state requires planning to begin at 80 percent capacity.

Current APF regulations for schools give the county six years to provide space if a school is deemed over capacity and development halted. County Attorney John Norris said the six years is the maximum the courts will allow the county to deprive a property owner of development rights.

That same six years will be applied to roads as well. At the pressuring of Commissioner Mike Hart, Cook admitted, "In so far as they wish to not wait the six years, it would be, whether it's a residential development business or a commercial business, their responsibility to incur those costs and get the permits to do the work or pay into a fund to get the work done. If they wish to wait the six years, they'd still have to get the state highway permit if they're going to impact the state road, but they would not incur those costs."

Hart said, "Then that's a problem be-

cause some people can wait."

Hart said, "This is an antiquated document. It needs to be addressed. That's why we're here today. There's no doubt about that. But I don't want the loophole to be, well six years from now, I can just do what I want and hey, you guys signed it off that way. I don't want that. People spoke very clear to me, the people that supported me. They're like, Mike, we want this stopped. They were very clear, we don't have the infrastructure, we don't want our quality of life ruined."

Hart issued a stern warning: "I would caution, do not use this as a springboard to go to planning and zoning tomorrow and stand in line and try to play that game. I would caution responsibility and respect because it will be met with as much opposition as I can physically bring to it."

Cook said projects that have submitted concept plan applications will be grandfathered and have a year to begin work or lose that exemption from the new regulations.

Several speakers at the hearing expressed concern that the new ordinance would be administered by bureaucrats instead of elected officials.

Len Zuza, speaking for Calvert Citizens United, urged delaying the decision, so that:

- clearly label key stakeholders,
- use more accurate language to clarify intentions,
- set clear and recognizable benchmarks that are consistent with traditional APFO and professional standards,
- clearly identify procedures and processes that can shift costs to taxpayers,



Director of Planning and Zoning Mary Beth Cook

and

provide Calvert Commissioners and residents full accountability for costs shifted from builders to taxpayers.

And Joseph Cormier of Owings also urged caution: "I know that some of you might be in legacy building mode because your time is short. Please don't feel like you have to rush this. The train will stay on the tracks and keep moving forward."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Commissioners Reduce Town Center Sizes

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

During their first year in office the current Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted the update of the county's land use plan that had been the subject of many public meetings over the previous three years. The vote was 3-2.

Now in the waning days of their term, the board has voted to overturn some key provisions of that master plan update. They reversed expansions of four town centers that had been the most controversial aspects of it. The plan

during their term spawned creation of a new community group Calvert Citizens United (CCU), which has taken a legal challenge of the plan all the way to Maryland's highest court.

The vote after a Nov. 29 public hearing to rescind the town center expansions was unanimous, 4-0, with lame-duck Commissioner Kelly McConkey not in attendance. Two properties owned by McConkey were removed from the Huntingtown Town Center with the vote.

In the original master plan update vote in August of 2019, commissioners Buddy Hance and Steve Weems were opposed, and they were two of the four

votes affirming rescinding the expansions. Mike Hart originally voted for the master plan, and he has since admitted it was a mistake and voted this time to rescind the town center vote.

The fourth vote in favor was by Chris Gadway, who was appointed during the term to fill the unexpired term of Tim Hutchins, who resigned for health reasons. Hutchins was one of the votes in 2019 in support of the plan update.

The amendments to the master plan approved on Nov. 29 were:

Remove land on the east side of Routes 2/4 from the Huntingtown Town Center, including McConkey's properties and Huntingtown High School

Remove most of the Phase 2 expansion of the Prince Frederick Town Center, land along Route 231.

Remove a portion of the southernmost part of the Lusby Town Center adjacent to Solomons, but retain the Patuxent Business Park, which was added to the north side of the town center.

Remove the portion of Dowel peninsula that had been added to the Solomons Town Center.

After the hearing, Gadway, who lost a bid to return to the board in the primary, said, "Mr. President, it'd be my honor and privilege to make the motion that we close the record and approve and adopt the ordinance and enact the changes to

the Calvert County Comprehensive plan as recommended."

During the public hearing representatives of American Chestnut Land Trust, Friends of Hunting Creek, and Keep Calvert Country -- Grow Responsibly spoke in support of the amendments.

Former planning director Greg Bowen said, "During the preparation of the plan, consultants heard loud and clear that rural lands and Chesapeake waterways were the things that the citizens most loved about Calvert County."

Bowen added, "Traffic congestion was one of the biggest concerns. On page 73 of the plan, the authors acknowledge that congestion caused by commuters typically occurred through Prince Frederick, Huntingtown, Dunkirk and Solomons, at the Thomas Johnson Bridge. And yet the consultants eliminated a build-out limit and initiated an expansion of town centers and residential zonings that could add up to 28,000 more households, an 80-percent increase as soon as 2040, to a highway that cannot handle all those cars."

Later in the evening the commissioners also approved changes to the county's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance which in part address road concerns (see separate story).

dickmyers@countytimes.net



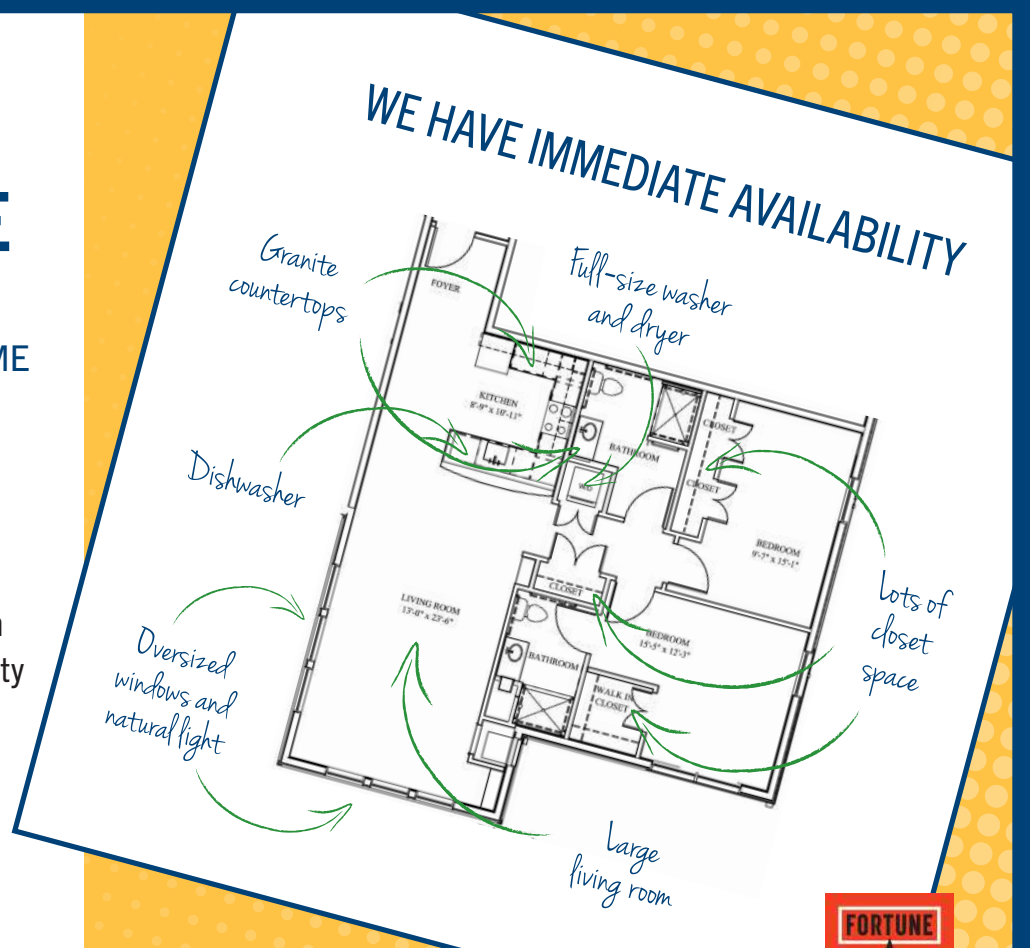
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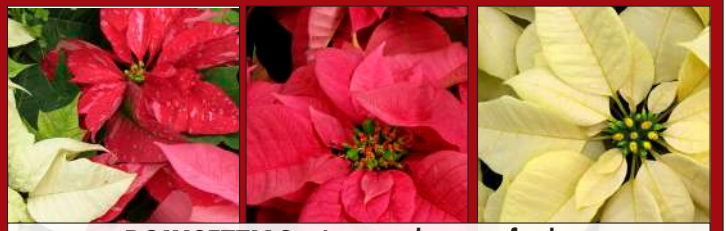


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Holiday Parade Carries on Founder's Vision

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Pat Carpenter and her younger brother were sitting around one Saturday afternoon 16 years ago and they decided that North Beach needed a Christmas parade. "It was based on they grew up in a small town called Hoisington, Kansas, which is in the center of the state. And Hoisington always had a Labor Day parade. And the various classes would plan their high school reunion around Labor Day, and then they'd have a float in the parade," the late Pat Carpenter's husband Bob told The County Times.

Bob said Pat approached the Garden Club and the Bay Business Group and "kind of pitched the idea, and both groups loved it. So, they, along with the town, were kind of the sponsors of it and Pat did all the planning and sending out the invites and doing the lineup and

writing the script for the MC, who for most years was George Owings (current Maryland Veterans Secretary)."

Carpenter noted, "It all came about because we should have a parade to bring Santa in. The Garden Club had always done Santa on the Beach. And so, why not build a parade around that existing event to bring Santa in for that event? And so that's really how the parade came about."

"Rain, snow, dark night, the show went on and this is the 14th," Carpenter said. Actually, it should be older but for the last two years they had to cancel because of Covid.

Ironically, Carpenter is recovering this week from Covid, which he contracted while on a cruise. Since Pat passed away, Bob has been leading what has become one the most anticipated events in the area. Early in the week before this year's Dec. 3 parade, 60 units had signed up, somewhat below pre-pandemic levels,

although Carpenter is anticipating more before registration closes.

It just grew over the years. Bob, who was a Chesapeake Beach town councilman when the parade began, said. "Over the course of time, we learned. Some of the first years we tried to line everyone up in the St. Anthony's parking lot," adding, "we'd go out early in the morning with sidewalk chalk and mark it out. Here's entry number one, here's entry number two. And it's just kind of grown from there. And it's a lot of fun to do. The kids love it. We have girl scouts, boy scouts, the elementary schools. We've had Northern High School and in the past a lot of elected officials, a lot of community groups, a lot of church groups."

Carpenter said it's always been a cooperative effort between North Beach and Chesapeake Beach. "They've always been very forthcoming in terms of their support, in terms of staff time. The Chesapeake Beach folks have always had entries in the parade. They've always convinced their golf carts to be used, whether it's the Marine Museum otters or whether it's just transportation for me because I'm running around liked chicken with his head cut off.

North Beach is phenomenal in terms of opening their streets or really closing their streets. It's a community effort, from the sheriff and state police doing traffic control because we have to cross Chesapeake Avenue. We line up at First and Chesapeake there next to Neptune's and when the parade starts, we have to cross Chesapeake."

Pat Carpenter passed away in March of 2012. As to taking over the parade, Bob said, "What choice did I have?" When she

died, he said, "The Bay Business Group renamed the parade. Prior to that it was just the Northeast Holiday Parade. They renamed it the Pat Carpenter Holiday Parade, and it's been that ever since."

The idea for the renaming came from Lynn Striegel, who was president of the business group at the time. Of the change, Carpenter said, "The local businesses were very supportive. You know it's a community event with kids and church groups and businesses and we've had kids on bikes. We've had dogs. The first year we had a couple of horses and we decided that it was not a good idea."

It's a juggling act, getting all of the participants in the proper order, so the music acts aren't too close to each other to drown each other out and all the other behind the scenes balancing.

His wife was a good mentor for parade organizing. "I learned from the best in the business," he said.

But this year because he's still recuperating, Carpenter is passing the leader's baton off to Hillary Dailey, the county's tourism director, who has been involved with the parade since its inception.

Everything marches off at noon this Saturday, Dec. 3 following a route along Bay Avenue from 1st St. to 7th St. You can watch the whole parade at a vantage point along the boardwalk and have the Chesapeake Bay as a backdrop.

The highlight of the parade is the annual arrival of Santa Claus on a North Beach fire truck. After Santa hops off the truck, he will join Mrs. Claus under the tent to greet the children with their gift wish lists.

If you would like to join in the fun by participating in the parade, contact Bob Carpenter by email no later than Dec. 1 at patcarpenterholidayparade@gmail.com

dickmyers@countytimes.net



Attendees at the North Beach Christmas Parade in honor of founder Pat Carpenter

Zoning Approved for Lusby Cigar Lounge

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved an amendment to the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance to allow cigar lounges in the Lusby Town Center. The 3-0 decision came after a Nov. 29 joint public hearing with the planning commission and the issue was not without controversy. For instance, the planning commission was split and after two notion attempts was unable to come up with a recommendation to the BOCC before their vote.

According to Zoning Planner Rachel O'Shea, "Planning & Zoning staff received a text amendment application from Lincoln Lawrence requesting that the use of a cigar lounge be added to the Lusby Town Center Use Chart as a separate use and be permitted within

the town center. The applicant states that within the town center and within proximity to the proposed location for his cigar lounge is a liquor store and a restaurant/bar. The applicant stated that the current ordinance does not lend to this type of business model that is growing throughout the Delaware, Maryland and Virginia (DMV) area and that this proposed change will allow for growth of these types of businesses within the Lusby area of Calvert County."

The lounge is proposed to be located in the shopping center behind the post office. Such lounges are allowed in two other commercial zoning categories in the Lusby Town Center.

In making the motion to approve the zoning text change, Commissioner Chris Gadway said, "I as a veteran also feel that we have a free country and that if someone chooses not to participate in a particular activity, then they're welcome

not to participate in it. But I'm not going to be here to stifle small business or growth or an adult's right to choose what they care to do as long as it's consistent with the law. And in the 1920s or 30's, there was a prohibition against alcohol that was overturned after a few years. I'm not here to stifle someone's use of tobacco products, especially when there's a nationwide movement to approve the use of other smoking products that don't seem to have the objections."

Several people also spoke in favor at the public hearing, including

Craig Gough of Owings, who said he has lived in the county for 26 years and "it seems the past 26 years I had to go to the four surrounding counties if I wanted to go and do a little adult recreation of smoking a cigar...just to have a cigar and get away and decompress from my job, because I have a pretty stressful job."

He added, "Calvert County was built

on the tobacco product back in the day."

But Joseph Cormier of Owings was adamantly against. "I understand that Calvert has a long history with tobacco, but we spent a lot of money paying tobacco farmers to stop growing tobacco because we know the harms of tobacco. We spend so much time and money in the schools trying to get kids to not start tobacco. And we spend so much money in the health department and local hospitals trying to help adults cessate from tobacco. I don't understand why we would open the door on this policy to bring back indoor smoking."

In the commissioner vote, Mike Hart recused himself. He owns a liquor store in Lusby.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

December Events at the Calvert Marine Museum

November 29, 2022 – 'Tis the season to celebrate the holidays with Santa and the Otter mascot at our annual Solomons Christmas Walk. It's a magical evening and a fun time to visit the museum after hours. Join us for our educational programs, designed to keep kids engaged while school is out! For more information, please visit: www.calvert-marinemuseum.com

Thursdays, Dec. 1, 8 & 15 – Sea Squirts 10:15 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

This month's theme is Dinosaurs. Children 18 months to 3 years, with an adult, are invited to discover the museum together through music, stories, and special activities. Join us for story time and a takeaway craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. For more information, visit: Sea Squirts | Calvert Marine Museum, MD - Official Website

Saturday, Dec. 10 – Solomons Christmas Walk 6 - 9 p.m.

The museum is open and FREE to the public. Enjoy musical entertainment, Santa, the Otter mascot, holiday crafts, and shopping in the Museum Store. Santa's Coffee House will be open with

complimentary hot cocoa, coffee, hot tea, and holiday cookies. Museum Members save 20% in the Museum Store during the walk and all weekend!

Tuesday, Dec. 20 – CMM Members Save 20% in the Museum Store 10:15 a.m. – 4:45 p.m.

CMM members enjoy a 20% discount in the Museum Store today and on the 20th of every month. Purchases can be shipped via USPS, Priority Mail, or held at the store for curbside pickup. For more information, call the store at 410-326-2750 or visit: Museum Store | Calvert Marine Museum, MD - Official Website

Thursday, Dec. 22 – Little Minnows 10:15 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.

This month's theme is Dinosaurs are Fossils Too. For preschoolers ages 3 – 5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story time and a takeaway craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Capacity is limited. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. Cost is free with admission. For more information, visit: Little Minnows | Calvert Marine Museum, MD - Official Website

Saturday, Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve

Holiday Hours 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Calvert Marine Museum and Museum Store will close at 2 p.m.

Sunday, Dec. 25 – Christmas Day All day

The Calvert Marine Museum and Museum Store are closed on Christmas Day. We will reopen at 10 a.m. on Monday, December 26.

Wednesday, Dec. 28 – Winter Break Programming: Hibernation 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

While winter air temperatures throughout the Chesapeake region are relatively mild, the water temperatures are downright icy! Discover how different species cope with the arrival of winter at the museum. Activities appropriate for ages 4-10. Included with museum admission.

Thursday, Dec. 29 – Winter Break Programming: Chesapeake Horseshoe Crabs 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Called living fossils by some, horseshoe crabs are a truly ancient species that we are fortunate to have as part of today's Chesapeake ecosystem. Identify the amazing adaptations that have helped horseshoe crabs to survive for millennia and see live Atlantic horseshoe crabs in the museum's animal collection. Activities appropriate for ages 4-10. Included

with museum admission.

Friday, Dec. 30 – Winter Break Programming: Evolution and Extinction: Megalodon 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

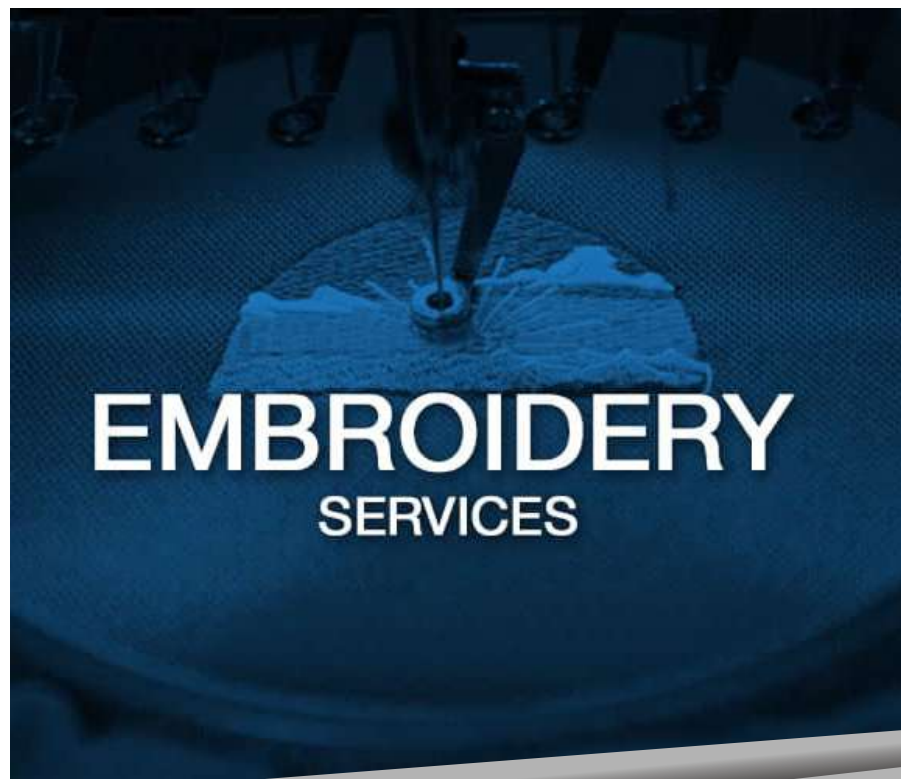
Today is all about the top predator of the Miocene seas – Megalodon! Discover how this massive shark evolved and how it ultimately met its extinction during the Pliocene Epoch. Activities appropriate for ages 4-10. Included with museum admission.

Saturday, Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve – Members Only & Holiday Hours 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Calvert Marine Museum and Museum Store will close at 2 p.m. The museum will be open for MEMBERS ONLY. The Museum Store will be open and welcomes all shoppers.

Saturday Dec. 31 – NOON Year's Eve Party Members Only! 10 a.m. - noon

We are excited to host the Noon Year's Eve party for museum members. Make a party mask, confetti popper, marvel at the juggler's skills, and join the dance party with Bubbles the Otter mascot. Toast in the new year with sparkling ginger ale, fish cracker snacks, and a giant confetti blast at high noon. FREE for CMM members of all ages!



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CALVERT SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

During the week of November 21 – November 27, 2022, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,417 calls for service throughout the community.

Burglary: 22-69018

On November 26, 2022, Deputy Lee responded to the 3500 block of Ponds Wood Road in Huntingtown, for the report of a burglary. Investigation revealed sometime between 3:30 p.m. and 8:19 p.m., an unknown suspect (s) entered the residence through a rear sliding glass door and stole several pieces of jewelry from the master bedroom including a 20-karat gold bangle with a scallop design valued at \$700.00, and a gold necklace with a pendant bearing 3 diamonds valued at \$400.00. The suspect (s) fled the home in an unknown direction. The total value of the stolen property is unknown at this time.

Damaged Property: 22-68514

On November 24, 2022, Deputy Dymond responded to the 1700 block of Orwell Court in Prince Frederick, for the report of damaged property. The complainant advised sometime between 10:30 a.m. on Nov. 23 and 10 a.m. on Nov. 24, unknown suspect (s) shot the victim's front passenger window out with a BB gun. The estimated value of the damaged property is \$300.00.

Theft: 22-67813

On November 21, 2022, Deputy Ashley responded to the 6200 block of Parker's Wharf Road in St. Leonard, for the report of a burglary that had already occurred. The complainant advised sometime between Nov. 6 and Nov. 13, the victim's garage was burglarized and a Ravin Crossbow (\$1800), 6 Ravin Crossbow arrows (\$100), and a pack containing 3 Rage Crossbow broad heads (\$40) were stolen from a truck inside the garage of the residence. The total value of the stolen items was \$1940.00.

Theft: 22-68886

On Nov. 26, 2022, Deputy Novick re-

sponded to the 2100 block of Timeless Drive in St. Leonard, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed two unknown suspects removed two dirt bikes: a 2023 Honda CRF-450R (valued at \$9,599.00) and a 2022 Honda CRF-250 (valued at \$5,500.00) from the bed of a pickup truck parked in the driveway of the residence. Anyone with information in regard to the theft or the identity of the theft suspects, is asked to please contact Deputy C. Novick at (301) 641-2933.

Theft: 22-68140

On November 22, 2022, Deputy Shoemaker responded to the 100 block of Hospital Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised an unknown suspect (s) stole the victim's purse containing approximately \$50 worth of gift cards, \$50 US currency, 5 credit cards, and one bank card. The estimated value of the stolen property is unknown at this time.

Theft: 22-68312

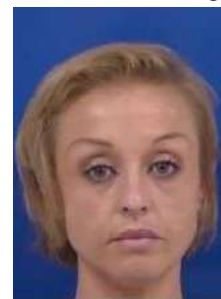
On November 23, 2022, M/DFC Aurich responded to the 9200 block of Baker Street in Owings for the report of a theft. The complainant advised sometime between 9 p.m. on Nov. 22 and 2 p.m. on Nov. 23, an unknown suspect (s) stole the front registration plate from the victim's vehicle. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$50.00.

Arrests



On November 25, 2022, Deputy J. Smith received a report of a theft at the Giant located at 11740 Rousby Hall Road in Lusby. Investigation revealed store employees observed a subject wearing a blue hooded jacket, jeans, and a backpack fill a shopping cart with paper towels, paper plates, and other assorted

items and flee the store. Deputy Smith made contact with a suspect matching the description identified as **Ted William Taylor, Jr.**, 33 of Prince Frederick. A search of Taylor's person incident to arrest revealed a glass pipe with suspected crack cocaine residue. Taylor was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Theft: \$100 to Under \$1500, CDS: Possession- Not Cannabis, and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



On November 21, 2022, Deputy Hendrickson initiated a traffic stop in the 12000 block of Rousby Hall Road in Lusby, for a traffic violation. A probable cause search of the vehicle revealed 2 ½ Xanax bars, a syringe containing heroin residue, and 2 bags containing crack cocaine. The driver, **Chelsea Lee Hoofnagle**, 36 of Lusby, was placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center (CCDC). A search of Hoofnagle's person upon entering the CCDC revealed a second syringe and two additional bags containing a heroin-fentanyl mix. Hoofnagle was arrested and charged with CDS: Possession- Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and Possession of Contraband in a Place of Confinement.



On November 24, 2022, DFC Anderson conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle SB Rt. 4 in the area of the Thomas Johnson Bridge in Solomons, for an equipment violation. Upon making contact with the occupants, a strong odor

of marijuana was emitting from the vehicle. Investigation revealed the passenger, **Caitlin Ann Mossbarger**, 33 of no fixed address, was wanted on two open warrants. A search of Mossbarger's person incident to arrest revealed a broken glass pipe containing suspected crack cocaine residue. Mossbarger was placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where she was charged with CDS: Possession- Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



On November 21, 2022, DFC Wilder initiated a traffic stop with lights and sirens activated on a vehicle SB Rt. 4 in the area of the Calvert Cliffs State Park in Lusby, for an equipment violation. As Deputy Wilder approached the vehicle to make contact with driver, the driver quickly accelerated and drove away. Deputy Wilder began a pursuit of the suspect's vehicle. The suspect vehicle continued north on Rt. 4 traveling at speeds in excess of 100 mph. The driver was observed passing vehicles on the shoulder nearly striking MDOT crews and cones. Upon approach to the intersection at Calvert Beach Road, the driver identified as **Rezone Rylander Duncan**, 32 of Capitol Heights, began to slow down as if he was preparing to stop, but quickly accelerated and the erratic driving continued. As Duncan approached the median to Calvert Beach Road, he ended up on the grassy shoulder striking the guardrail causing the vehicle to come to a rest. Duncan was apprehended and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Reckless Driving, Fleeing and Eluding, and other traffic-related charges.

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small parking lot at 5th St. and Bay Ave.

<https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Pat Carpenter Holiday Parade

North Beach, 12 noon
1st St. to 7th St. along Bay Avenue.

Watch the annual holiday parade from the boardwalk and await the arrival of Santa & Mrs. Claus.

Santa & Christmas on the Beach

North Beach immediately following the parade. In the tent on the boardwalk, Santa and Mrs. Claus meet with each child and listen as they share their wish list. Warm up around the campfire and enjoy hot chocolate while you roast marshmallows.

Brain Games: Mahjongg, Scrabble & More

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

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

Dungeons & Dragons – TEENS

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 12:30-4 p.m.

Meet up the 1st Saturday of each month and have fun with D&D. Players of all levels and interest welcome. Please register, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Monday, December 5

Mechanical Mondays

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

Become a scientist and explore topics related to STEAM on the first and third Monday each month! Build, code, count, and create with different activities each session. Registration required. Intended for scientists in grades K-2, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tuesday, December 6

Social Security and Retirement

Calvert Library, Zoom, 1-2 p.m.

Join Diana Varela, Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration to learn more about eligibility requirements for Retirement and Medicare, factors to consider to make the best decision and how to file for benefits. Presentation followed by Q&A. Co-hosted by MD Department of Health. Please register to receive Zoom link. Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Writers by the Bay

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, online, 7-9 p.m.

Looking for a writers' group? All writers and would-be writers are welcome to come for critique & camaraderie. Please register by the day before the event in order to receive the link the evening of the event, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

Thursday, December 8

Sea Squirts

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

This month's theme is Dinosaurs. Children 18 months to 3 years, with an adult, are invited to discover the museum together through music, stories, and special activities. Join us for story time and a takeaway craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. For more information, visit: Sea Squirts | Calvert Marine Museum, MD - Official Website

Upcoming

Free Paper Shredding Events

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

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

Proof of residency or business location is required. All paper must be removed from plastic bags and cardboard boxes prior to shredding. Paper clips and staples are acceptable. Binders and binder clips are not acceptable.

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

Chesapeake Beach Holiday Lights Tour

Saturday, December 10, 5-8 p.m. For registration information contact town hall.

Solomons Christmas Walk

Saturday, December 10, Solomons, 6 - 9 p.m.

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

Caroling with a Cop

North Beach, Saturday, December 10, 2-4 p.m.

The jolly Calvert County Sheriff's deputies and Windy Hill Elementary students will walk the town and sing the sounds of the season. This event is coordinated by Calvert Sheriff's Office Support Services Unit and Calvert Family Advocates.

Ongoing

Annmarie Garden in Lights

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

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

Santa Sundays @ Annmarie Garden In Lights

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

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

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

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

Included with cost of admission. ADVANCE TICKETS REQUIRED

Holiday Magic

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

Holiday Train Display @ Annmarie Garden In Lights

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center, 5-9 p.m., through Dec.14 in the Arts Building. Guests of all ages will delight in this beautiful train display by George Leah, Jr., and his holiday helpers! It's a charming exhibit that will spark memories of Christmases past and delight those new to model trains.

Art in the Stacks: Photography by Gary Scribner

Calvert Library Fairview Branch, Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings 1 month of December

Calvert Library's Art in the Stacks is delighted to exhibit the amazing photographs of local artist Gary Scribner for the months of November through January at Fairview Library. Gary has traveled to all 50 US states and over 35 countries capturing landscape photos on film and digital media since the early 1970's. During his travels, Gary has also enjoyed capturing street scenes of ordinary people in cities he has visited, some of which will be in this exhibit. Check-out his website @ www.scribbleimages.com; 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Art in the Stacks): Photography by Ray Saunders.

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way; Month of December

For Ray K. Saunders it's all about the images, the moments and the light. Ray spent his professional life as a photojournalist working for newspapers in Virginia, spending 23 years as a photo editor at The Washington Post. , 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Art In The Stacks: Art by Mimi Little
Calvert Library Southern Branch, 13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons; month of December

Mimi Little's paintings will be on display at the Southern Branch during the months of November and December. Mimi works with acrylics, collage, and cold/wax oil to create paintings that are abstract in nature. Although the majority of her painting are done in the studio, she enjoys painting en plein air (in nature). Mimi's passion is to make paintings that relate to her life, where she lives, what she is doing and what is socially important to her, 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

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facebook.com/CountyTimesCalvert

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.

Thursday, December 1

SMCPS Teacher Virtual Job Fair

Online
2p.m. to 9p.m.

Join our team! We would love to talk with you if you are looking for an immediate teaching position, graduating mid-year, or looking forward to 2023-2024! Sign up for an interview at cfplus.page.link/dgkv.

American Legion Post 221 Meeting

21690 Colton Point Rd.
Avenue,
8p.m. to 9p.m.

American Legion Post 221 invites all active duty personnel and veterans to join us for our monthly meeting on the first Thursday of each month at 8:00pm. Visit our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/American-Legion-Post-221-105239187962458/ or e-mail us at alpost221@aol.com. Call 301*848*9458 for more information. Tell them you saw the announcement on the SoMD Internet Calendar.

Friday, December 2

Chopticon H.S. Chorus Madrigal Weekend

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
27108 Mount Zion Church Road
Mechanicsville
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The Chopticon High School Chorus invites you to Madrigal, a night of song and merriment from the Elizabethan era. Celebrate the season with holiday music by the Peace Pipers and Divas accompanied by a delicious meal from Mission BBQ.

Tickets: \$40

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 6:00 p.m.

Reserve your seats at: ChopticonChorus.org

Madrigal weekend events are located at Mt. Zion Methodist Church in Mechanicsville, MD.

For questions please email: ChopticonChorus@gmail.com

Sat, Dec 3, 2022

Handel's Messiah @ St. Mary's College of Maryland

Nancy R. & Norton T. Dodge Performing Arts Center @ St. Mary's College of Maryland
2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The SMC Chamber Singers, under the direction of Larry Vote, will give their annual performance of Handel's Messiah. This is a free, ticketed event.

Get freetickets: www.eventbrite.com/e/handels-messiah-tickets-463650369737

Christmas Stroll ~ Christ Child: God's Bridge to Us

Patuxent Presbyterian Church
23421 Kingston Creek Road
California
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

We look forward to welcoming all to stroll our grounds to see the Live Nativity, check out the live animals, have a cup of cocoa and a cookie by the fire, listen to seasonal music in the Sanctuary, enjoy the BELONG dinner of chili and hot dogs (with all the fixins) in the Fellowship Hall, participate in a cookie decorating contest, and so much more! The event is free of charge, though guests are asked to bring a donation of a toiletry item or cold weather gear for W.A.R.M. (Wrapping Arms 'Round Many). Join us

as we celebrate the birth of Jesus! Stay tuned for updates at: www.paxpres.com/christmasstroll.

Sun, Dec 4, 2022

Children's Santa Bingo

28165 Hills Club Road
Mechanicsville
12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Doors open at 12:30

Bingo Starts at 1:00

\$5 per child, 4-12 years old and must be accompanied by an adult.

10 games will be played. Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

Homegrown Farm Market's Holiday Market

21078 Three Notch Road
Lexington Park
Noon to 4p.m.

Local crafters, fresh made wreaths, baked goodies, jams n jellies, Mary Lou Troutman and more! Kids craft station. Story time in our kids' corner.

Santa will be taking requests for Christmas.

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thursday, December 1

Sea Squirts

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

This month's theme is Dinosaurs. Children 18 months to 3 years, with an adult, are invited to discover the museum together through music, stories, and special activities. Join us for story time and a takeaway craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. For more information, visit: [Sea Squirts | Calvert Marine Museum, MD - Official Website](https://SeaSquirts.org)

Teen Gaming Thursday

Join our Discord server! Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, 4:00pm-5:00pm.

Teens! Join us the first Thursday of the month for gaming! We'll have a variety of games on offer like Among Us, Jackbox, and Codenames, starting at 4 pm on the first Thursday. If you haven't already signed up for our discord server, you can register to receive the invite link. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. [https://](https://CalvertLibrary.info)

CalvertLibrary.info.

Helping Your Child Manage Big Emotions

Calvert Library Prince Frederick, 850 Costley Way, Zoom & In Person; 5:30pm-7:30pm.

Does your child have meltdowns you would love to prevent? Do you want to help your child learn how to regulate their emotions and become a self-aware problem-solver? "The Zones of Regulation" will help you learn regulation strategies to teach your child for managing emotions and sensory needs. Focused on ages 4+. Presentation followed by Q&A. In partnership with Calvert County Public Schools. Rooted in cognitive behavioral therapy, the framework uses colors to help individuals identify how they are feeling in the moment given their energy, emotions, and level of alertness. By understanding how to read their bodies, detect triggers, think about the social context, and consider their reactions, individuals learn a system for how to increase their ability to regulate their emotions, manage their sensory needs, and become more self-aware and skillful problem solvers.,

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

Pints and Private Eyes Book Discussion: The Maid by Nita Prose.

Calvert Library, Zoom, 7:00pm-8:00pm.

Have you always longed to drink beer and talk detective books with a librarian? Pints and Private Eyes is a book group for fans of noir, detective and crime fiction. We are currently meeting online on the first Thursday of the month from 7 - 8pm.

Scout Caroling Night @ Annmarie Garden In Lights

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center, 5-8 p.m.

Don't miss this jolly and fun event as area scouting groups carol outside at Annmarie Garden In Lights! Are you a Scout group interested in registering for this event? Email programs@annmariegarden.org for details. Participating Scout groups get a complimentary light show patch and hot chocolate!

Saturday, December 3

CAWL Joyful Paws Holiday Open House

Calvert Animal Welfare League, 1040 Prince Frederick Blvd., 12 Noon to 4 p.m.

Photos with Santa (children and pets welcome), Bake Sale, Vendors, Holiday Shopping and Bid or Buy it Now Baskets.

Home for the Holidays

King Memorial Park, 65 Church Street Prince Frederick, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This holiday season, Calvert County Parks & Recreation, the Calvert County Chamber of Commerce and the Calvert County Historical Society have teamed up to host Home for the Holidays. The event will be held at King Memorial Park and the adjacent Linden House. Join us for children's games and activities, visits with Santa, merchandise and food vendors and more. A day of FREE holiday fun for the whole family. 410-535-1600 ext. 2659

Christmas Market

North Beach, Corner of 5th St & Bay Ave.; 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Visit food and craft vendors at the

Grey Beard Stump Grinding



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GAMES & PUZZLES

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Chop up
- 5. Ones who utilize
- 10. Sings with closed lips
- 14. South American hummingbird
- 15. Serves as a coxswain
- 16. Liquor distilled from coconut or rice
- 17. Spur
- 18. Senile
- 19. Tanzanian people
- 20. Cruel
- 22. Boxing's "GOAT"
- 23. Yokels
- 24. London soccer team
- 27. Chinese chess piece
- 30. Supervises flying
- 31. 007's creator
- 32. Shaft horsepower (abbr.)
- 35. A spider makes one
- 37. Liquefied natural gas
- 38. Opaque gem
- 39. Brazilian palm
- 40. Periodical (slang)
- 41. You might step on one
- 42. Marvin and Horsley are two
- 43. Partner to cheese
- 44. Unpleasant smell
- 45. Field force unit (abbr.)
- 46. Fashion accessory
- 47. Cool!
- 48. Time zone
- 49. Songs to one's lover
- 52. German river
- 55. Go bad
- 56. Sword
- 60. Very eager
- 61. Leaf bug
- 63. Italian seaport
- 64. Napoleon Dynamite's uncle
- 65. Member of Jamaican religion
- 66. Large wading bird
- 67. Carries out
- 68. Eternal rest
- 69. It holds up your headwords

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Not low
- 2. Small water buffalo
- 3. A mark left behind
- 4. Archaic form of have
- 5. Fiddler crabs
- 6. Popular Hyundai sedan
- 7. Deport
- 8. Making over
- 9. Midway between south and southeast
- 10. Arabic masculine name
- 11. Type of acid
- 12. Popular 1980s Cher film
- 13. Outdoor enthusiasts' tools
- 21. Chinese city
- 23. "Star Wars" character Solo
- 25. The bill in a restaurant
- 26. Old, ugly witch
- 27. Burn with a hot liquid
- 28. To claim or demand
- 29. "A Doll's House" playwright
- 32. Involuntary muscular contraction
- 33. Pea stems (British)
- 34. Double or multiple fold
- 36. No longer is
- 37. Lakers' crosstown rivals (abbr.)
- 38. S. American plant cultivated in Peru
- 40. Cloth or fabric
- 41. Flanks
- 43. Disfigure
- 44. Angry
- 46. Baltic coast peninsula
- 47. Large, flightless birds
- 49. Plants of the lily family
- 50. Medieval Norwegian language
- 51. Polio vaccine developer
- 52. Not soft
- 53. Exchange rate
- 54. Voice (Italian)
- 57. Baseball's Ruth
- 58. Famed guitarist Clapton
- 59. Take a chance
- 61. Wife
- 62. Elaborate handshake

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LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE SOLUTIONS

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Light Up Leonardtown

First
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Friday, December 2

10 a.m. – 7 p.m. The Old Jail Museum & Visitor's Center will be open with extended hours for First Friday – facebook.com/theoldjailmuseum

10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Shepherd's Old Field Market specials throughout the Market - shepherd-soldfield.com

11 a.m. – 5 p.m. North End Gallery – Holiday Show – northendgallery.com

11 a.m. – 8 p.m. St. Mary's County Arts Council – extended holiday hours– stmarys-artscouncil.com

4 p.m. – 6 p.m. Viking Axe Throwing in the Brudergarten at Shepherd's Old Field Market - First Responders throw for \$15 - www.facebook.com/vikingaxethrowingandrentals

5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Port of Leonardtown Winery – Music provided by Shortcut Sunday, food truck on site – facebook.com/portoftownwine

6 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. eliv8 – First Friday cycling event - facebook.com/eliv8somid

6 p.m. – 9 p.m. Viking Axe Throwing in the Brudergarten at Shepeherd's Old Field Market – Bow & Throw Night - www.facebook.com/vikingaxethrowingandrentals

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Wine & Design - Kids Open Studio - facebook.com/wndstmaryscoun-tymd

6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Wine & Design - Open Studio for teens to adults - facebook.com/wndstmaryscoun-tymd

8 p.m. – 11 p.m. Doc Lohn at The Rex Restaurant & Bar - facebook.com/therexleonard-town

This information is accurate at the time of printing and is subject to change. Please visit the business websites or contact them directly for current information.

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Info: Facebook.com/1836Light
301-994-1471

St. Clement's Island Christmas Doll & Train Exhibit

December 1, 2021 to January 1, 2022
12PM to 4PM daily
(Closed 12/24 & 12/25)
Info: Facebook.com/SCIMuseum
301-769-2222

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Letters to the Editor

CountyTimes

Every Day is Thanksgiving

Every day is Thanksgiving in our home. This may seem strange to some people, given the heavy load of grief our family has carried over the last year. But from our view, we have so much to be grateful for. Let me back-up a moment for anyone who is new to the area and does not know our story.

September 25, 2021 our world changed forever. Our spunky, red headed, 3 year old daughter Erin Nicole Bean tragically drowned. The initial feelings of shock, anger and frustration have long since gone. While the sadness of our loss will always remain close to our heart, we have found comfort in our faith, family and friends. Believing with certainty that her short life and death was for a greater purpose to serve not only our family, but the residents of Southern Maryland. The confidence in our peace would not be possible without the loving support and generosity of you – the community. This is where our daily thanks and gratitude are rooted.

Shortly after Erin's funeral my mom wrote a message to the people of St. Mary's County - in a letter to the Edi-

tor of The County Times. Her words beautifully illustrated the extensive efforts of first responders, neighbors and volunteers who poured their hearts into searching for our girl. My mom went on to describe the outpouring of compassion from the community through meals, ribbons on mailboxes, and a spaghetti dinner fundraiser. To paraphrase her, "Negative news media would often have us think that the world is full of strangers who don't want to be bothered by their neighbors I will tell you that is so wrong!" I am here to tell you that your acts of kindness, your generosity, your prayers – these are the things that have carried us through the last year. Through the fog of grief, we always knew how incredibly blessed we were (and are) – for the short time we had with Erin, and for the gifts bestowed upon us from you - the community. I attempted to handwrite Thank You notes to everyone but I know there were many anonymous donors whom I simply could not reach.

As I reflect on the past year that has come and gone, I think of all that I have been able to accomplish. I know that

I have been able to do these things because of the generosity and support of our community. One month after Erin passed away, I attempted to return to my part-time job. As some of you unfortunately know, a mother's grief is like no other. It was too soon and my heart was not ready. I have spent the last year focusing on taking care of my boys, nurturing our marriage, healing my own heart and honoring Erin's memory. I can tell you that every single one of those days, whether crying in sorrow or celebrating in joy – has been a precious gift that I do not take for granted.

I knew fairly quickly that I wanted our loss, and Erin's life to bring a lasting change and impact for the people of Southern Maryland. She brought out the goodness in so many people, and her story needs to be shared to raise awareness for Autism and Childhood Drowning Prevention. This would be my way of giving back to the community, and honoring my daughter. Just 6 months after her death, the stars aligned and I was connected with several amazing women who shared my vision. Together we created the mission statement for what would become Erin's Star, Inc., which officially became a recognized 501(c)3 non-profit organization in April 2022. We successfully completed two major fundraisers during our first six months in operation. This winter we are continuing our work to finalize the applications for our two major goals: (1) to distribute wearable GPS tracking devices for children with autism in Southern Maryland and (2) to provide training scholarships for new Infant Swimming Resource (ISR) instructors in our area. Erin was undiagnosed Autistic; we were on a waiting list for assessment and formal diagnosis. As we have since learned, Autistic children are known to wander and often drawn to water. In fact, while drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children ages 1 to 4, children with Autism are 160 times more likely to drown. [source: Columbia University School of Public Health, research 2017] <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/public-health-now/news/individuals-autism-substantially-heightened-risk-injury-death> I want to remind families that the risk for wandering and elopement does not start with diagnosis - it is already there. If you receive a referral for an Autism evaluation, please do not wait until you see a specialist to take action. Start safe-guarding your child immediately. I believe that a wearable GPS tracking device would have drastically reduced the time spent searching for our princess and possibly saved her life. I recently learned that our local Sheriff's Department participates in the Project Lifesaver Program, which provides tracking devices to families and then works in partnership in case of an emergency. Like all things innovative, I learned that Project Lifesaver has pros and cons. The GPS industry has numerous options, but for Autistic wearers with sensory needs the most popular are

AngelSense and Jiobit. The cost of this investment, while altogether necessary, is an additional expense nonetheless for families already inundated with medical bills and therapy. Erin's Star will be bridging that gap in our local autism community - by providing wearable GPS devices and linking families with other valuable autism-related resources.

The second part of our mission is to increase the number of ISR instructors in our area. These instructors are trained to teach children (generally ages 6 months to 6 years) how to swim and float in the event of a water emergency. I am incredibly proud to say that my boys completed these self-rescue swimming lessons. They now have the skills to give themselves a much better chance at survival should they fall in the water (as their sister did) fully clothed. This was no easy task. Especially for our older son, now age 6, who was traumatized by Erin's drowning. His fear-filled lessons were emotionally challenging. Whereas our younger son, age 3, faced the physical challenges of a preschool age child learning to use his body safely in the water. We are forever grateful for the experience we shared with SOMD ISR. Susanne was patient, compassionate and knowledgeable about both water safety and children. Unfortunately, for Southern Maryland she is the only certified ISR instructor in the region; which means her wait list is 'a mile' long. This seems absurd for a geographic area where summer activities often revolve around the pool and bodies of water are prevalent year-round. We believe ALL children should have the opportunity to learn these life-saving water safety skills. In order to make this opportunity available we need to increase the number of instructors in our area. Erin's Star will provide training scholarships for new ISR instructors over the next several years or until the geographic instructor capacity has been reached. Once this has been accomplished, we will focus on providing scholarships for local children to receive ISR swim lessons. For more information about these survival swim lessons please visit www.infantswim.com or www.somdisr.com. For more information about Erin's Star and to learn more about autism and childhood drowning prevention please visit our website www.erinsstar.org or find us on Facebook @Erin's Star.

So, as you see, I have been putting my days to good use. I love to tell people, one day soon I will be back in the workforce, but for now I am cherishing the window of time where I can focus on healing, family, grieving and celebrating our daughter as we create Erin's Star. Every day is Thanksgiving.

Eternally grateful and paying it forward,
Erin's Mommy
Cara Bean
Hollywood, MD

The Friends of the St. Mary's County Library

WINTER BOOK SALE

Saturday, December 10

Leonardtwn Library

Members Only: 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Open to Public 12 - 4 p.m.

Memberships available at the door or online
(<https://folstmalib.wildapricot.org>) in advance.

Members can check-in after
the Library opens at 9 a.m.

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Legal Ads

IN THE MATTER OF SETH ALEXANDER DYSON
FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO SETH ALEXANDER THOMPSON
BY AND THROUGH THEIR MOTHER/FATHER/GUARDIAN STACEY THOMPSON

In the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County, Maryland

Case No.: C-18-FM-22-000734
Notice (Minor)

The above Petitioner has filed a Petition for Change of Name from SETH ALEXANDER DYSON to SETH ALEXANDER THOMPSON. The petitioner is seeking a name change because "I would like to change the name to their native heritage."

Any person may file an objection to the Petition on or before the 12/11/2022. The objection must be supported by an affidavit (written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation) and served upon all parties (Md Rule 1-321). If no timely objection is filed, the court may enter a default judgement or grant the name change.

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

IN THE MATTER OF SPENCER ANDREW DYSON
FOR CHANGE OF NAME TO SPENCER ANDREW THOMPSON
BY AND THROUGH THEIR MOTHER/FATHER/GUARDIAN STACEY THOMPSON

In the Circuit Court for St. Mary's County, Maryland

Case No.: C-18-FM-22-000733
Notice (Minor)

The above Petitioner has filed a Petition for Change of Name from SPENCER ANDREW DYSON to SPENCER ANDREW THOMPSON. The petitioner is seeking a name change because "I would like to change the name to their native heritage."

Any person may file an objection to the Petition on or before the 12/11/2022. The objection must be supported by an affidavit (written statement confirmed by oath or affirmation) and served upon all parties (Md Rule 1-321). If no timely objection is filed, the court may enter a default judgement or grant the name change.

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

**If you would like to place a
LEGAL NOTICE contact**
AlDaileyCountytimes@gmail.com

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library



St. Mary's County Library Upcoming Closures

All three locations of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Friday, December 2 for staff training. All three locations will be open regular business hours on Saturday, December 3.

All three location of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed starting Friday, December 23 and remain closed through Monday, December 26. All three locations will be open regular business hours on Tuesday, December 27.

Internet Basics Computer Class

Get better acquainted with how the Internet works and how you can get it to work better for you! Leonardtown Library, Wednesday, December 14 from 10 - 11:30 a.m. Almost everything is online these days so being able to use the Internet is now an essential skill. Boost your confidence with this introductory class where we'll talk about how to perform web searches, judge if a website has legitimate information, create an online account, and fill out forms or registrations online. Register on www.stmalib.org.

DIY Winter Wreath

Are you feeling creative? Come to this event to make a decorative win-

ter wreath to celebrate the changing of seasons at Charlotte Hall Library on Monday, December 5 from 6 - 7 p.m. You will be provided with supplies consisting of an embroidery hoop, pine cones, pine stems, and a bit of hot glue. Class size is limited. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Cozy Mystery Book Club

Join us at the Leonardtown Library on Thursday, December 15 from 6 - 7 p.m. to discuss & do a matching themed activity. Be ready to talk about a genre that puts us all at ease while keeping us on our toes. The theme for December is Baking Bedlam! The book for this month is Chocolate Chip Cookie Murder (2000) by Joanne Fluke. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Friends of the St. Mary's County Library Winter Booksale

The Friends of the St. Mary's County Library will hold their winter booksale at Leonardtown Library on Saturday, December 10. Members will be able to shop from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m., and then the sale will be open to the public from 12 - 4 p.m. Memberships available at the door or online (<https://folstmalib.wildapricot.org>) in advance. Members can check-in after the Library opens at 9 a.m. Cash, Checks, and Credit Cards accepted

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Staff Writer	Guy Leonard

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The St. Mary's County Times is a weekly newspaper providing news and information for the residents of St. Mary's County. The St. Mary's 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 St. Mary's 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 St. Mary's 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 St. Mary's County Times and its licensees may freely reproduce it in print, electronic or other forms. We are unable to acknowledge receipt of letters. The St. Mary's County Times cannot guarantee that every letter or photo(s) submitted will be published, due to time or space constraints.



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

ST. MARY'S SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the person pictured in a theft investigation. On Monday, Nov. 14, 2022, at 3:40 pm, the suspect entered a vehicle in the parking lot of the Ace Hardware in Charlotte Hall and stole cash. The suspect attempted to access two more vehicles before leaving the area on foot toward Route 5.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect or this incident is asked to call Deputy Paul Rodriguez at 301-475-4200, ext. 78139 or email paul.rodriguez@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 58497-22

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



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the person pictured in a theft investigation. On Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022, at 6 am, the suspect entered the California Walmart, removed a computer from the shelf and walked out of the store without paying. The suspect was wearing a Space Jam jacket.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspect or this incident is asked to call Deputy Alexander Tasciotti at 301-475-4200, ext. 78151 or email alexander.tasciotti@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 58246-22

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

in Mechanicsville in a white four-door sedan. The person shown in the black hat removed a fire extinguisher from a gas pump, placed it in the white sedan and the group left in an unknown direction.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspects or this incident is asked to call Deputy First Class Dianne Hersh at 301-475-4200, ext. 78155 or email dianne.hersh@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 53050-22

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



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the man and woman pictured. On Saturday, Nov. 19, 2022, at 1:12 pm, the suspects used distraction tactics to steal numerous pairs of shoes from Famous Footwear in California. The two suspects then attempted to return the shoes at another Famous Footwear in another jurisdiction.

Anyone with information about the identity of the suspects or this incident is asked to call Deputy Joseph Senatore at 301-475-4200, ext. 78163 or email joseph.senatore@stmaryscountymd.gov. Case # 59323-22

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



The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is seeking the identity of the persons pictured in a theft investigation. On Sunday, Oct. 16, 2022, at 1:30 am, the individuals pictured arrived at the Wawa

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The Way We Were...

History and Stories of St Mary's County from long-ago to just yesterday

ST. MARY'S COUNTY, A PRIEST, AND A POPE

In 1911, Fr. John LaFarge, SJ, was sent to St. Mary's County becoming Pastor at St. Aloysius Church in Leonardtown. Born in 1880 in Newport, RI, into an aristocratic and artistic family, John LaFarge held one of the most distinguished surnames in the United States. His father was an artist whose works graced many of the most famous churches and museums in the US. A Harvard graduate, LaFarge wanted to become an academic but owing to his poor health and fear that he would work himself to death, his Jesuit superiors assigned him to parish work which, in short order, brought him to St. Mary's County.



Fr. John LaFarge, SJ

Here, he was brought into intimate, grass-roots contact with the problems facing the Church in the US: the problems of rural life and rural economy, of life in a racially mixed community and the kindred problem of racial prejudice, and of religious and secular education for people in backward communities.

In 1926, LaFarge founded the Cardinal Gibbons Institute in Ridge. Initially conceived of as an industrial school for African-American boys, the school became and was coed staffed by almost entirely by African American teachers, most being graduates of the Tuskegee Institute. Despite "a disheartening obstacle of general public indifference to anything connected with the South or the Negro," LaFarge claimed, [it was] "the first national project undertaken by Catholics on behalf of the Negro." The school struggled from the beginning, hurt both by the financial catastrophes of the Great Depression and the indifference of many Catholics. Its doors closed in 1934.

True to his academic interests, LaFarge wrote prolifically on matters of race and justice. Leaving St. Mary's County in 1926, he joined the staff of the Jesuit magazine America later becoming its editor-in-chief. (His autobiography, The Manner is Ordinary published in 1954 and a sequel, An American Amen: A Statement of Hope in 1958, can both be found on Amazon.)

At America magazine, LaFarge wrote and spoke extensively on interracial dialogue and racism. In 1934 he founded the Catholic Interracial Council of New York, which included among its goals the elimination of ignorance regarding race issues, social justice on the model of the old Catholic Action movement and a struggle against Communist inroads. In 1937, LaFarge's most important book on race relations was published, Interracial Justice: A Study of the Catholic Doctrine of Race Relations, which grew out of his education in philosophy and his experiences in St. Mary's County.

LaFarge's arguments there and elsewhere impressed Pope Pius XI, who asked LaFarge to help write an encyclical on racism, to be titled "The Unity of the Human Race" (Humani Generis Unitas). The Pope had been struck by LaFarge's arguments seeing that they could be applied to any society with racist policies, including Nazi Germany. While the encyclical was never released it was only years later that its existence and LaFarge's participation in its writing came to light. (Controversy still surrounds the reasons why the encyclical was not published. A 2020 PBS documentary Holy Silence addresses the controversy.)



Pope Pius XI

The motto of the St. Mary's County Historical Society's reads: Ordinary People. Extraordinary Lives. Lasting Legacies. While some contemporary historians argue that for all his progressive ideas on race, LaFarge (like other white pioneers for racial justice) was unaware of his own paternalistic attitudes, surely few residents of this County have lived such an extraordinary life as Fr. John LaFarge, SJ, or have left such a profound legacy.

Learn more about the extraordinary history of this County at the St. Mary's County Historical Society.

Sell it - Buy it at Auction

Southern Maryland

Farm & Country Christmas Auction

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

Saturday, December 10, 2022 – 9 am

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



MEET JUNIOR

"It is so often surprising, who rescues you at your lowest moments."
-Aimee Bender

Who's that HANDSOME DOG? That's Junior!
Hi, my name is Junior. I'm an 11 MONTH OLD GOOFBALL who is always by your side. My TCAS gang says I'm a HAPPY-GO-LUCKY BOY that likes to let you know I'm ready for a walk. I'll pick up my leash to start walking myself! I also LOVE EXPLORING the neighborhood, hiking on trails, or hanging out at the park. And, I especially enjoy a big, fluffy dog bed after all my adventures during the day. If you are ready to add me to YOUR FAMILY then email animalshelter@charlescountymd.gov to schedule an appointment to meet me ASAP! BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! When you choose to adopt from TCAS, you are literally saving a life.

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

TRI-COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER

FINANCIAL FOCUS

COLA is Sweet for Social Security Recipients

If you receive Social Security, you've probably already heard that your checks in 2023 will be bigger – considerably bigger, in fact. How can you make the best use of this extra money?

Here's what's happening: For 2023, there's an 8.7% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Social Security benefits – the largest increase in 40 years. Also, the monthly Medicare Part B premiums are declining next year, to \$164.90/month from \$170.10/month, which will also modestly boost Social Security checks for those enrolled in Part B, as these premiums are automatically deducted.

Of course, the sizable COLA is due to the high inflation of 2022, as the Social Security Administration uses a formula based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). So, it's certainly possible that you will need some, or perhaps all, of your larger checks to pay for the increased cost of goods and services. But if your cash flow is already relatively strong, you might want to consider these suggestions for using your bigger checks:

- *Reduce withdrawals from your investment portfolio.* When you're retired, you will likely need to withdraw a certain amount from your portfolio each year to meet your expenses. A boost in your Social Security may enable you to withdraw less, at least for a year. This can be particularly advantageous when the markets are down, as you'd like to avoid, as much as possible, selling investments and withdrawing the money when investment prices are low. And the fewer investments you need to sell, the longer your portfolio may last during your retirement years.
- *Help build your cash reserves.* When you're retired, it's a good idea to maintain about a year's worth of the amount you'll spend from your portfolio in cash, while also keeping three months' of your spending needs in an emergency fund, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Your higher Social Security checks could help you build these cash reserves. (Also, it's helpful to keep another three to five years' worth of spending from your portfolio in short-term, fixed-income investments, which now, due to higher interest rates, offer better income opportunities.)
- *Contribute to a 529 plan.* You could use some of your extra Social Security money to contribute to a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan for your grandchildren or other family members.
- *Contribute to charitable organizations.* You might want to use some of your Social Security money to expand your charitable giving. Your generosity will help worthy groups and possibly bring you some tax benefits, too.

While it's nice to have these possible options in 2023, you can't count on future COLA increases being as large. The jump in inflation in 2022 was due to several unusual factors, including pandemic-related government spending, supply shortages and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. It's quite possible, perhaps even likely, that inflation will subside in 2023, which, in turn, would mean a smaller COLA bump in 2024.

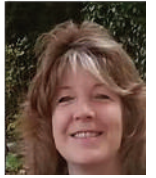
Nonetheless, while you might not want to include large annual COLA increases as part of your long-term financial strategy, you may well choose to take advantage, in some of the ways described above, of the bigger Social Security checks you'll receive in 2023. When opportunity knocks, you may want to open the door.

*Article was contributed by David McDonough
Financial Advisor at Edward Jones
Office located at 41680 Miss Bessie Dr. Suite 302
Leonardtown, MD 20650
301 997 1707*

Wanderings

of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



A LIFE, AND MIND, ON PAPER

Are anyone else's hands or fingers still stained from peeling and chopping sweet potatoes and potatoes for Thanksgiving dinner? Mine finally look better today, but for the last week and a half my fingers looked rusty orange to dirt brown around the fingernails and in in any creases. I made my candied sweet potato tray early last week - put on all the brown sugar, syrup, and butter on and froze them. I know by now that with autoimmune diseases and the fatigue that comes along with it to pace myself and make and freeze ahead. When I made my pumpkin cheesecake whipped mousse dessert cups for our church's Thanksgiving dinner and gathering on the 20th, I also had the other half of the dessert cups covered and frozen ready for when my late brother's family was coming for the 26th, when my Lee side celebrates Thanksgiving.

And of course, since I am a bit of a compulsive list and timeline-maker, I had everything timed out for completion of every Thanksgiving task, just like I do for Halloween in my notebook. That is an absolute necessity. This was actually the first year since my mother's passing 22 years ago, that



I didn't hear her voice in my head admonishing me for not making the family's Hungarian recipes perfectly to the letter. Even though I didn't hear my mother's voice, I am sure she heard mine a few times, when on the brink of tears, and along with a bit of no sleep for a few days, I was begging out loud for her to please help me remember some of the little things about the recipes that only she would know. I never heard her voice, but her hands must have been involved in every recipe, because it all worked; everything seemed to come out perfect and on time this year. It was also the first year that each dish tasted exactly like how I remembered my mother's cooking.

It must have been because I had my timeline correct in my notebook, because I know it wasn't because of my stored memories of recipes and such. I look back at when I was in my late 20s early 30s with two young boys and was either PTA President or some office holder, a Cub Scout leader and later a very involved Boy Scout mom, plus taking my sons to music lessons, sports practices, and games, plus doing art shows, working, and everything else one has to manage in life, along with RA and OA and wonder how did I manage all that? I still had my notebooks (40 years' worth) to write down important things; each 4" x 6" notebook usually lasting about a season to every six months, but I also remembered so much without the aid of paper and pen, and we also didn't have those futuristic cell phones that contain our calendars, lists, most of our life, and such. I was still using a flip phone well into the 2000s. Thousands of tiny details to be done, or make something special, were just stored in my head. Now if I don't write everything down from when and who to make phone calls too, or some days to even write, "eat something", "take meds", take shower" then things get lost in my mind. My notebooks are my life, or rather lifesaver.

Now, I marvel at moms I see who are doing all those things I did and more and get totally exhausted watching all they accomplish. For me, if I get back up off the couch to go down to the laundry room after the end of Jeopardy I feel like I want to do a dance in the endzone. If I get up off the couch at all after 8 pm is a cause for celebration. This will have to change. I'm usually pretty energetic after I get a couple cortisone shots and when my Prednisone gets upped, but as many of you know too well, those are only temporary fixes, and in the long run, harmful solutions.

Last night, I really didn't want to get up off the couch because an old favorite show was coming on: Rudolph, The Red Nosed Reindeer from 1964. What comfort, what memories (ones that will forever be stored in my mind and senses, no notebook needed. If I closed my eyes, I could smell that old smell of the big strings of large Christmas lights with what was probably old style wiring overheating. The smell of the old fragile glass and thin metal ornaments from my mother's childhood being brought out of the dusty cardboard box they were stored in also came to me. And I see again my mother's hands, carefully taking out the old ornaments and even more carefully handing them to me to place on the tree. I look down now at my own hands, stained and battered, but still, I see my mother's hands. When my son's two little boys come over to help decorate, especially on the vintage tree downstairs, I hope they will remember my hands carefully placing those same family ornaments in their small hands to keep tradition alive.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby Please send your comments or ideas to: shelbys.wanderings@yahoo.com or find me on Facebook



PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR STATION

News

Pax River wins NDW Region Installation Excellence Award

Commandant, Naval District Washington, Rear Adm. Nancy Lacore has named NAS Patuxent River the NDW Regional winner of the Installation Excellence Award — Large Shore category — which recognizes quality in installation management, program excellence and community outreach.

"I truly appreciate all that you, and your teams, have done over the past year," wrote Lacore in an email message announcing the win. "Congrats to the selectees and thank you again to all for what you do each day."

All of the NDW installations were judged on air and port operations; fire and emergency management; security; safety and health; conservation efforts; planned or completed energy projects; facility improvement; property stewardship; fleet and family readiness; communications and public relations.

"pilot" program assessment of Fire and Emergency Services.

- Pax served as a pilot program for CNIC's Healthy Food Initiative in March, informing the future of food services across CNIC.

- Pax supported Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) operations in May and June 2022. The LCACs landed and launched from our beach to deliver high-value equipment for crucial Special Operations Group testing.

- Pax Air Ops team earned a 94% on the triennial CNIC Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization (NATOPS) Airfield Evaluation, exceeding the Fleet average of 85%. Airfield Services (AFS) earned a grade of OUTSTANDING during their concurrent Carrier Airfield Service Unit (CAFSU) inspection, and our Search and Rescue (SAR) Dogs executed eight real-world SAR operations and rescued six personnel.

- Pax supported Calvert Exercise (CALVEX) 2022, a FEMA evaluated exercise at the St. Mary's County EOC, strengthening bonds with state and local partners.

- Fire and Emergency Services from NAS Pax River responded to 1,021 real-world events, most notably, a quickly growing structural fire at building 440. Pax Fire's rapid response saved CNIC approximately \$1M.

- Pax Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) department programs provided responsible liberty solutions for over 3,000 Sailors with more than 11,000 program sign-ups. Through innovative third-party commercial sponsorship, the Liberty program provided free golf, bowling, and movies to E-4 and below Sailors. Our CYP served over 575 children, youth, and teens in the Navy's largest Child Development Center.

- Pax received a \$2.7M Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Challenge award to restore eroding shoreline that contains a nesting area for diamondback terrapins. The REPI program acquired two conservation easements, totaling 300 acres, in the Harriet Tubman Rural Legacy Area on Maryland's Eastern Shore. These easements are located beneath Navy airspace and now support wildlife, agricultural productivity, climate resilience, and military readiness.

- Pax Environmental completed 427

FY22 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews.

"This award is no small feat, and representative of the hard work from each of our Sailors and civilian teammates," said Capt. Derrick Kingsley, NAS Patuxent River Commanding Officer. "All of our 'Pax Pros' should be proud of this achievement. Everyone did their job to make this happen."

As a result of the win, Pax River will

now advance to the CNIC-level of competition as the NDW nominee, facing other regions around the world for the Navywide award. Winners of the CNIC-level Installation Excellence Award will go on to compete with installations from other branches of the military services for the DoD-wide Commander in Chief Awards.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Named O'Neill Officer of the Year



Lt. Cmdr. Chad Henderson, Direct and Time Sensitive Strike Weapons (PMA-242) class desk engineer, receives the Naval Air Station Patuxent River 2022 Admiral Merlin O'Neill Officer of the Year award from Col. Neil Johnson, U.S. Army (ret.), a representative from the Military Officers Association of America, during a ceremony Nov. 10 on base (U.S. Navy photo)

Lt. Cmdr. Chad Henderson received Naval Air Station Patuxent River 2022 Admiral Merlin O'Neill Officer of the Year award during a ceremony Nov. 10 on base.

The Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) local representative Col. Neil Johnson, U.S. Army (ret.), presented the award to Henderson who was recognized as a junior officer that has demonstrated superior performance and leadership, with an emphasis on volunteer activities and involvement in the community.

"Chad is an exemplary naval officer and leader in both our office and the community," said Capt. Alex Dutko, the Direct and Time Strike Weapons (PMA-242) program manager who oversees Henderson. "This award reflects his sustained superior performance and clearly reflects those values that Admiral O'Neill espoused throughout his career."

Henderson is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy and earned his wings in 2012. He attended the Empire Test Pilots' School in 2017 and holds a master's degree in business administration from the Naval Post Graduate School.

He has supported Air Test and Evalu-

ation Squadron (VX) 23 at Pax River, working as the F/A-18 A-F and T-45 project officers. He served as the officer-in-charge of multiple detachments, leading pilots, engineers and maintenance personnel to complete the KC-46 in-flight refueling capability for Navy aircraft. Currently, Henderson serves as the class desk engineer for PMA-242 and leads a team of more than 100 engineers to support 18 weapons systems, including the Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile-Extended Range (AARGM-ER) integration on Navy and Air Force aircraft.

Outside of work, Henderson is active in the local community and volunteers for the Navy Patuxent River Sailing Club and serves as a youth group leader and Sunday school teacher at his church.

The Southern Maryland Chapter of MOAA established the Admiral Merlin O'Neill award in 1981 to recognize exemplary junior officers assigned to duties at NAS Patuxent River. This award is named in honor of Admiral Merlin O'Neill, Commandant of the Coast Guard from 1950 to 1954, and a southern Maryland resident in his later years.



The NAS Patuxent River Search and Rescue squadron trains in nighttime water rescue techniques at the Patuxent River Aviation Survival Training Center, Oct. 1, 2021

The following are just some of the activities and initiatives that earned Pax River its award:

- Pax Military Working Dog (MWD) Kennel opened in May 2022, and houses four canines supporting two President of the United States missions, VQ-4 MWD requirements, 147 Random Antiterrorism Measures, and 741 hours of Explosive and Narcotics detection across six fence-lines.

- Pax Operations earned an 82% overall grade for the Command Assessment for Readiness and Training (CART) including maximum points for the Incident Management Team and a successful



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MAG Aerospace Receives Community Support Award



MAG Aerospace received The Maryland General Assembly Official Citation in recognition of their efforts in supporting the homeless population in St. Mary's County, St. Mary's Caring, Toys for Tots, Charlotte's Hall Veterans home holiday project and much more.

MAG is also part of the team that is helping with the formation of the Lexington Park Business Association to improve this area of St. Mary's County. Director of MAG, Stephen Cassetta, "it is an honor to work with our MAG Pax River staff. Not only do they provide critical products and services to our Navy and Marine Corps custom-

ers, but they are invested in our local community. Our associates are very passionate about ways to give back! We all strive to live our company motto; SERVE>WIN>PERFORM".

MAG Aerospace is headquartered in Fairfax, Virginia and is one of the fastest growing aerospace companies in the world using Real-time situational awareness that saves time, lives, and dollars. We specialize in technology integration, program management, systems engineering, cyber, communications and networks, and turnkey C5ISR Services. Visit MAGAERO.COM

WARM Seeking Volunteer Drivers

The St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services is seeking additional volunteer drivers for Wrapping Arms 'Round Many (WARM), a winter emergency shelter program for homeless individuals in St. Mary's County.

If you have ever wondered how you can make a difference regarding homeless individuals in our county, this is an opportunity. The Department of Aging & Human Services coordinates transportation for the WARM program, including recruiting and scheduling volunteer drivers. Drivers must be 18 years of age or older and have a valid driver's license. Volunteers will be given access to a county-owned van. Volunteer slots are open seven days per week while WARM is operational.

Volunteer drivers are divided into an evening and a morning shift. Evening drivers pick up WARM guests at the Church of Ascension at 5:30 p.m. for transportation to the selected host site for the evening. Morning drivers arrive at the host site by 7 a.m. the next morning to transport guests back to the Church of Ascension.

The WARM program is a partnership between the faith community, local human service agencies and citizens to provide safe shelter and hot meals to homeless citizens during the coldest months of the year. The first WARM season took place in October 2009 and has become very successful with over 50 churches currently working together to provide food and shelter. WARM operates in close partnership with St. Mary's County Government including: the Department of Aging & Human Services, the Department of Public Works & Transportation, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, the St. Mary's County Department of Social Services, Pyramid Walden, Three Oaks Center, and Med-Star St. Mary's Hospital. This year's WARM season began Sunday, Nov. 13, 2022, and will end Monday, Mar. 27, 2023.

To volunteer, contact Ursula Harris at 301-475-4200, ext. 1658, or at Ursula.Harris@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Lexington Park Holly Days Lights Up St. Mary's Square

The Lexington Park Business Association is excited to announce Lexington Park Holly Days on Saturday, December 3, 2022, in St. Mary's Square in Lexington Park.

Longtime residents of Lexington Park remember fondly a time when St. Mary's Square was the center of the holiday hustle-and-bustle. The square was lit, the shops were open, and the people were full of holiday cheer. This year, the holiday fun is back! From 2-5 p.m., families can shop the festive holiday vendor village, take pictures with Santa, participate in fun holiday-themed crafts and take in the decorations while carolers entertain. Visit our Facebook page for details by searching for Lexington Park Holly Days.

Holiday shoppers can expect to find great gifts for loved ones at Lexington Park Holly Days. Craft vendors boast a mix of handmade items such as resin art, wood flowers, crocheted items and more. A host of other vendors will be selling jewelry, accessories, holidays fashions, candles, handbags, makeup and other gift items. There will also be a food court for hungry shoppers, which will have nachos, hot dogs, burgers, baked goods, barbecue, hot chocolate and more! Entertainment for the event is provided by carolers from The Newtowne Players and Zumba instructors from Potomac Total Fitness, both proud Lexington Park businesses.

In addition to the fun in St. Mary's Square, businesses up and down Great Mills Road will be decorating for the

holiday! They'll be competing for the title of Best Business Decorations on Great Mills Road. The winner of the contest will be announced in mid-December. Stop by your favorite decorated Great Mills Road business and let them know how great they look!

The Lexington Park Business Association is working in close partnership with the St. Mary's County Community Development Corporation to make this event a success. All proceeds from Holly Days sponsorships will go to the CDC to fund its mission of revitalizing the greater Lexington Park community through investment in residential and commercial neighborhoods.

The organizers of Lexington Park Holly Days would like to thank its major sponsors: Cedar Point Federal Credit Union; Personalized Therapy, LLC; MAG Aerospace; Precise Systems; St. Mary's County Department of Economic Development; Community Bank of the Chesapeake; Primary Residential Mortgage, Inc.; Avian; NFP Insurance; APG Media, The County Times; Reach Back & Lift 1; Potomac Total Fitness; The Newtowne Players; Willows Recreation Center; and McDonald's G.C.G.C. Fair Corp.

Come out to Lexington Park Holly Days on Saturday, December 3 from 2-5 p.m. to experience the holiday cheer. This event is outdoors and is located in St. Mary's Square at 21600 Great Mills Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653. We hope to see you there!

Saturday, December 3

**Lexington Park
Holly Days**

2-5 p.m.

St. Mary's Square

Holiday Shopping
Craft Vendors
Local Businesses
Pictures with Santa

Community Carolers
Holiday Crafts for Kids
Food Vendors
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James Lee Letcher, 75

James Lee "Jim" Letcher, 75, of California, MD, passed away peacefully on November 19, 2022 at his home in California, MD. Born on June 19, 1947 in Washington, D.C., he was the son of the late Frank Letcher and the late Ruth Letcher. Jim was the loving husband of the late Paula Jan Letcher, whom he married on August 29, 1981 in Bowie, MD, and who preceded him in death on March 15, 2020. Jim is survived by his children Shannon Roecker (Andy) of Mechanicsville, MD and James "Jimmy" Letcher (Jennifer) of California, MD, and two grandchildren James "JR" Roecker and Heather Roecker. Along with his brother Richard Letcher of Ogden, UT and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his sister Pauline Poole.

Jim moved to St. Mary's County, MD in 1952 and attended Great Mills High School. He was an exterminator for Koley's Exterminating for over 30 years.

Jim was a member of the All-American HOG chapter, Chesapeake Ranch Estates Horseshoe Club, Sanner's Lake Sportsman Club, and various fishing clubs. He was an avid fisherman and crabber. He loved going on family cruises.

The family will receive friends on Monday, November 28, 2022 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held on Tuesday, November 29, 2022 at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Bishop Louis Larson officiating. Interment will follow in Ft. Lincoln Cemetery Bladensburg, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be James "JR" Roecker, Vernon Thoren, Kolby Corrigan, Jim Warman, Rob Littleton, and Gary Davis. Honorary Pallbearers will be Richard Letcher, Mark Letcher, Paul Letcher, Nate Larson, Eddie Osborne, Walt Hunt and Brad Carey.

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

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

Wanda Lee Ammann, 67

Wanda Lee "Tillie" Ammann, 67, of Leonardtown, MD, formerly of Cambridge, MD, passed away on November 17, 2022. Born on June 2, 1955 in Cambridge, MD, Tillie was the daughter of the late Wanda Dayton Dillon and Nathaniel Lee Spear. Tillie was the loving wife of the late Aloysius "Al" Ammann, Sr. whom she married in Leonardtown, MD on September 11, 1984, and who preceded her in death on April 10, 2021.

Tillie is survived by her children Renee Rosenzweig (Robert) of Leonardtown, MD, Aloysius Ammann, Jr. (AJ) of Leonardtown, MD, one grandchild, Sierra Mattingly, one great grandchild, Sophia Hoppes, as well as a special sister-in-law Diane Ammann, and many nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles, and cousins. She was preceded in death by her sons William Jefferson and Jefferson Corbett.

Tillie was a Registered Nurse for over 30 years, retiring in 2017.

A funeral service will be held on November 29, 2022 at 3:00 PM in Faith Bible Church, Mechanicsville, MD, with Pastor Robert McNutt officiating. Interment will be private.

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.

John Joseph Thompson, Sr., 84

John Joseph (Johnny) Thompson, Sr., 84, of Avenue, MD, passed away peacefully at his home on November 22, 2022, with his family by his side. Born March 9, 1938 on the family farm

in Avenue, he was the son of the late Thomas Bertrand Thompson, Sr. and Anne Louise Russell Thompson. He is survived by his loving wife Janet Hill Thompson, whom he married on August 31, 1963 at St. John's Church in Clinton, MD, and his two children, John Joseph "Jay" Thompson, Jr. and his wife Sharon, and Diane Marie Thompson, and her friend Stan, both of Avenue. He was preceded in death by his Daughter, Debra Lynn Thompson (1965). He is survived by four grandchildren, John Joseph Thompson, III and his wife Jessica, Candace Nicole Thompson Nelson and her husband Andy, Natalie Marie Thompson and her friend Jason, and Leanne Grace Fenwick, and five great-grandchildren, Hunter Thompson, Cooper Thompson, Danielle Nelson, Grace Nelson, and Carson Guy.

Johnny is also survived by his siblings Thomas "Billy" Thompson of Mechanicsville, George Thompson of Hollywood and Harriet Cuel of Tracy, California. He was preceded in death by his siblings, Mary Ann (Sr. Mary Martha) Thompson, of Georgetown, Theresa Mills, of Leonardtown, Dorothy Reichard, of Leonardtown, and Robert "Butch" Thompson, of Avenue.

Johnny was first employed as a tile setter for Pierotti Tile Company for 11 years. He started his own tile setting business, Thompson & Guy Tile, in partnership with the late Joseph Matthew Guy in 1969. The partnership ended in 1986 and he continued as Thompson Tile Company until he retired in 2002. Johnny was a remarkable tile setter, well known by all the builders in Southern Maryland as "The Tile Man", and his work is still talked about and admired today. In his early years he was a mem-

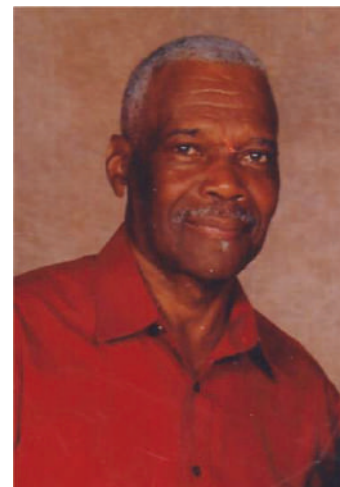
ber of the 7th District Volunteer Fire Department, an Honorary Member of the 7th District Volunteer Rescue Squad and member the 7th District Optimist Club. Johnny loved his family most and his activities outside of work always revolved around family and friends. He spent his years camping, boating, fishing, hunting, farming, and making memories with his family. He loved to have the family together for holidays or any reason. He always cherished visits from his siblings and family gatherings with them. He was a very devoted husband, father, grandfather, and brother. He was always kind and smiling and made everyone around him laugh and smile. Everyone who knew him loved him.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, November 30, 2022 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown MD, where prayers will begin at 7:00 PM. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:00 AM on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at Holy Angels Church, Avenue, MD, with Father Stephen Wyble officiating. Interment will follow in the Sacred Heart Cemetery. Serving as pallbearers will be Glenn Thompson, Tommy Thompson, Bobby Thompson, Bobby Raley, Johnny Thompson, III, and Andy Nelson.

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

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September 27, 1938–November 30, 2019



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But through your memories, we remember you still.
Missing your voice, your laughter, and the way you made us smile.
Wish we could have you here with us, even for a short while.
We think about you with love today and that is nothing new.
We thought about you yesterday, and the days before that too.
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Living in your shadows, until the day we meet again.*



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Hall Set To Take Command at Sheriff's Office

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Capt. Steve Hall, St. Mary's County's new sheriff elect, says that he is ready to start a program for school resource officers dedicated to county elementary schools shortly after he takes office Dec. 5.

"We are training people for this as we speak," Hall told The County Times this week. "We want to effectively have visibility in the elementary schools throughout the year.

"It's a small contingent now, but it's a good place to start."

So far, the unit has a supervisor and one deputy assigned to it, Hall said but he wants to assign more to make the program grow to all elementary schools here.

"That's one of the things I heard most from people on the campaign," Hall said. "My idea is to have individuals trained and ready to go after the first of the year."

The program is one of several initiatives Hall wants to pursue or continue as the county's new sheriff.

He follows Sheriff Tim Cameron, who served as sheriff and one of the county's most popular elected officials for 16, who will move on to become superintendent of the Wyoming Highway Patrol.

Hall said his predecessor and mentor has put the agency on the right track and he intends to see it stays there.

"The agency is going in the right direction," Hall said. "We were fortunate to have a sheriff for so long who had that forward thinking and forward leaning mentality.

(DROP) that allowed them to stay on with the agency for several more years, Hall said, but that meant that when the program option had reached its limit then those senior level deputies — and their experience and institutional knowledge — must leave for good.

Paired with deputies achieving higher rank the situation leads to key positions in patrol and corrections unfilled, Hall explained.

The incoming sheriff said there are approximately 25 vacancies in corrections and 13 vacancies in street patrol, but classes continue to graduate from the Southern Maryland Criminal Justice Academy and Hall is confident the agency can attract the men and women it needs.

"It's always been a challenge, recruitment and retention," Hall said. "It comes and it goes.

"But these young men and women are still raising their hands and taking the oath."

Expanding the reach of the sheriff's office into the community at large beyond patrol vehicles is also an initiative that Hall wants to continue to pursue through the new district offices and by creating a community-oriented policing (COPS) model in the northern section of the county.

The sheriff's office has been criticized at times for building district offices in communities such as Lexington Park and not having enough deputies to staff it regularly.

Hall said the recruitment of more patrol officers was key to ensuring these offices could be properly staffed.

"This takes the strengths and resources of the sheriff's office and puts them where they belong," Hall said. "I don't want to have skeleton crews out there [at district stations] and pull them back... I don't want an outpost mentality."

Hall said combatting violent crime continues to be the most critical need in the community from a law enforcement perspective; gun violence has rocked the



Incoming Sheriff Steve Hall, Assistant Sheriff Clayton Safford, and retiring Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron

Lexington Park community for the most part for the past two years in an ongoing escalation.

But for nearly two months there have been no shootings — fatal or otherwise — in the county.

Hall credits a coordinated and dedicated investigative effort in the agency for the recent lull in gun violence and fatal shootings.

"They have done great work to remove some of the most dangerous people and put them where they need to be [in jail,] Hall said. "That's the absolute result of the work being done by the CIU (Criminal Intelligence Unit)."

Part of curbing the violence among young people that has arisen is early intervention with the youngest members in the community, Hall said.

That means more positive engagement in local elementary schools, where deputies are already quietly, Hall said,

mentoring young children there and helping with their reading and homework assignments.

"We're focusing where the at-risk kids are," Hall said, noting that he wants to bring the D.A.R.E program back to elementary schools as well.

This outreach extends to the families of the children as well to show that deputies are there to help.

"By doing that you're talking to thousands of people in this county," Hall said.

Hall said he is looking forward to the transition and is trying to make it as efficiently as possible.

"I want to put people in the right places to maximize opportunities and output," Hall said. "This includes working with the new state's attorney [Jaymi Sterling] on ways to improve collaboration, processes and planning."

guyleonard@countytimes.net



"That trail has been blazed."

But challenges remain and perhaps the greatest of those challenges is one that has dogged the agency for years. "The one challenge is positions being filled and staying filled," Hall said. "We are facing man power issues."

In recent years some of the senior employees in the agency had taken part in the deferred retirement option program



Photos courtesy of St. Mary's Sheriff's office



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Huge Housing, Commercial Project Planned for Lexington Park

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A massive development for the Great Mills Road Corridor that was approved almost 30 years ago as a planned unit development (PUD) may finally be built.

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

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

About 20 acres would be used for commercial development.

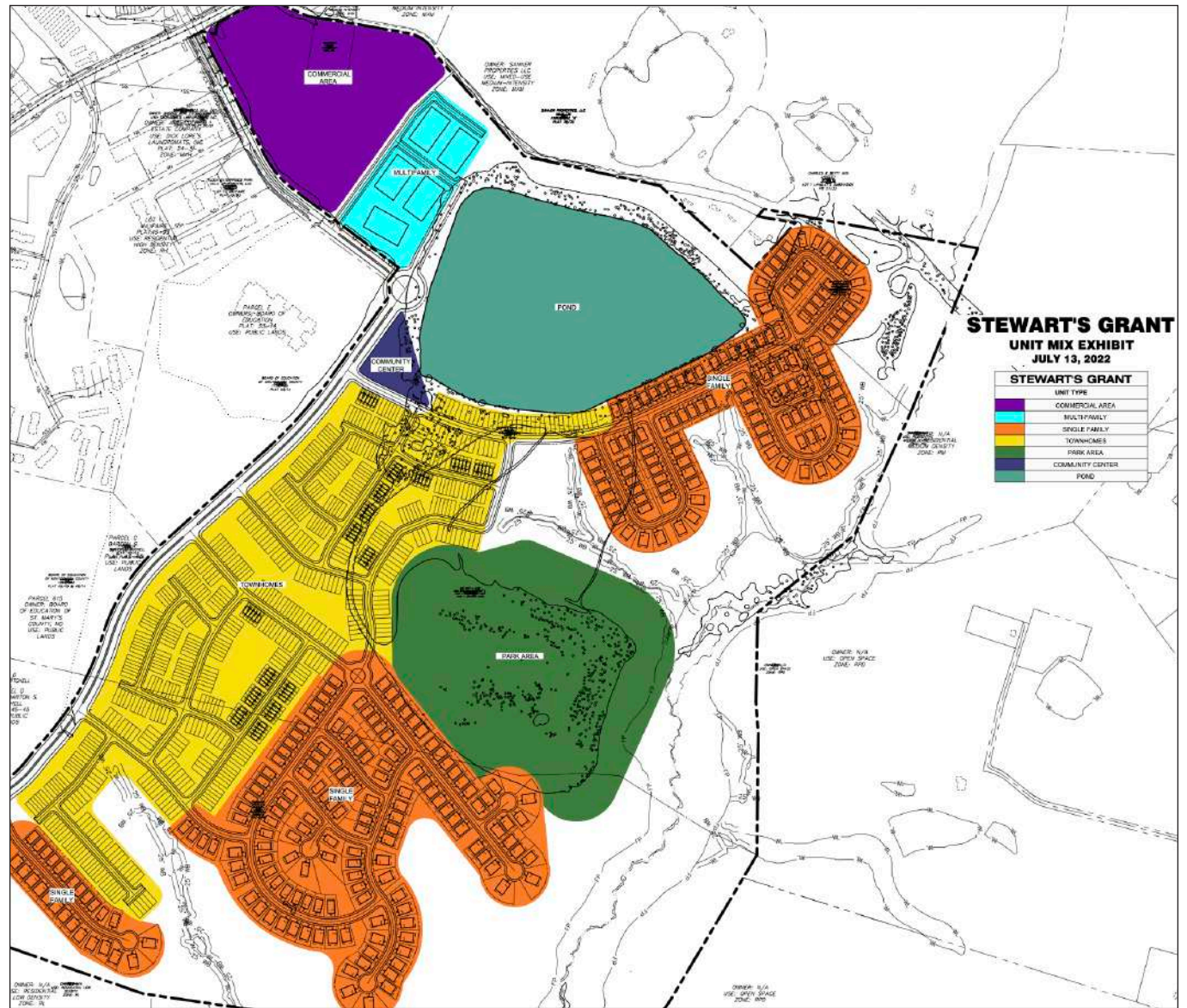
The project is set to be heard before the county’s planning commission in December.

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

The project has a prominent place in the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan as part of the overall plan to improve the Great Mills Road Corridor.

“Approximately 50 percent of the site will remain as recreation or preserved open space to protect Hilton Run,” the notation in the master plan stated. “The village center will face onto the main street with parallel parking on the street side and access parking behind the units.

“Each housing area will be built around public open spaces, in both the multifamily and single family areas.”



Two Arrested in Leonardtown on Murder Charges

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Two men, one of the them a Leonardtown resident, are awaiting extradition to Westmoreland County, Va. for allegedly killing a woman in Montross earlier this week.

Demitri R. Gardiner, 28, of Leonardtown and Michael J. Gardiner, 35 of Montross have been arrested and jailed at the county’s adult detention center in

connection with the murder of Taylor A. Wood, 29, a 5th grade school teacher at the Washington District Elementary School in Colonial Beach.

According to a statement from the Westmoreland County Sheriff’s Office their deputies responded to a house fire at a residence on Crystal Lane after midnight on Nov. 28 and found the remains of one person and three animals inside the residence.

Westmoreland County sheriff’s investigators developed both Demitri Gardiner and Michael Gardiner as suspects in the homicide and charged them with one count each of second-degree murder, arson and three counts of animal cruelty.

St. Mary’s County Sheriff’s Office spokesman Jason Babcock told The County

Times that the suspects are brothers and were taken into custody during a traffic stop in the “early morning hours” the same day of the alleged homicide in the 22000 block of Archer Street in the St. Clements Shores neighborhood.

The investigation continues. Anyone

with information is asked to contact First Sergeant Brian Vanlandingham by emailing bvanlandingham@westcoco.us or calling (804) 493-8066. All information is confidential and anonymous.

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Demitri Raymond Gardiner



Michael John Gardiner

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Report Shows Problems with Local Food Security

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A report issued by the St. Mary's County Health Department shows that more than 30 percent of respondents to a survey regarding their access to abundant and healthy food believed their food security was either low or very low.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food security as consistent and equitable access to enough food for an active, healthy life, according to the report's findings.

Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet though little or no indication of reduced food intake is defined as low food security.

Very low food security is defined as reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake, according to the report.

Dr. Meena Brewster, county health officer, said food security had been under much scrutiny over the last few years.

"The survey is one way to identify input from our citizens; there has been a lot of work done on this topic," Brewster said. "We're excited to have some data."



In St. Mary's County, the report stated, the communities with the lowest levels of food security are Great Mills, Lexington Park and Park Hall on an index from zero to 100 to show the severity of need.

Lexington Park has an index score of 46.5, Great Mills a score of 41.1 and Park Hall a score of 39.7.

The report was conducted as part of the Healthy St. Mary's Partnership con-



Dr. Meena Brewster

ducted a series of town hall meetings, two for local food pantries and one for community stakeholders.

Between August of October of this year a total of 750 community residents took part in the survey.

"When discussing the reasoning behind local food insecurity, town hall participants cited low wages, unemployment, and increased cost of food, housing, and utilities as potential factors," the report stated.

The report recommended more access to local food pantries to help offset food insecurity among families through extended evening and weekend hours as well as encouraging residents to grow their own vegetable gardens.

The report also advocates for mobile food distribution through food pantries as well as an increase in agroforestry — or the growing of trees and shrubs that provide fruit, nuts, berries for foraging — at schools, parks and publicly owned areas.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Commissioners Support Broadband Grant Partnership

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County voted this week to support a Verizon/FIOS application for state grant funding to bring broadband internet access to the last remaining homes in St. Mary's County without the service.

Robert Kelly, director of the Department of Information Technology, said there are still approximately 1,600 homes without broadband internet access in St. Mary's — of those, 500 are slated for hookup to broadband through funding the county has already allocated.

"If this grant is awarded then every home we have identified as not having access to broadband will have access to broadband in St. Mary's County," Kelly told commissioners at their Nov. 29 meeting.

The grant request being made to the state's Office of Statewide Broadband is for approximately \$6.3 million.

Kelly said the county would match that with \$215,000 in county funds.

Commissioner Eric Colvin said the grant application was "another step" forward in making broadband internet available to 100 percent of county homes.

"You're not getting FIOS tomorrow," Colvin said. "It's not happening that quick."

"But it shows another step in trying to increase competition, provide alternative resources, and helping those who are underserved."

"It's awesome."

Kelly said the county would know by April of next year if the grant application was successful.

"So, it's probably July when the funds come available," Kelly said. "It's a huge project."

The funds to be awarded, if any, Kelly said, would be from the federal American Rescue Act, which must be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

For years both citizens and commissioners have complained publicly about the level of service provided by Breezeline — formerly known as Atlantic Broadband — including outages, slow connection speeds and increasing high costs.

The county currently has a cable franchise agreement with Breezeline to provide broadband internet service and has also partnered with the vendor to use millions in American Rescue Act funding to expand fiber down long driveways to homes that must have it to get internet connectivity.

The franchise agreement in no way prohibits competition or grants a monopoly to Breezeline but citizens have continued to complain that there being only one major service provider in the county means conditions are approaching those of a monopoly.

In October the commissioners approved a partnership agreement to bring a Chestertown-based broadband provider — Think Big — to St. Mary's to offer competition to Breezeline.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

SMADC Announces Funding for Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant Program

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland, is pleased to announce the 10th Round of the Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant Program.

SMADC is now accepting Mini-Grant applications from November 30, 2022. The Mini-Grant closes on February 15, 2023, with awards announced in early-March 2023.

The Mini-Grant program aligns with SMADC's mission to support farms and the future of agriculture in Southern Maryland and is designed to assist

new and beginning farmers who own or lease existing agricultural properties with small start-up projects, and to assist experienced farmers who are looking to diversify or expand a current agriculture project. The projects should be simple in scope and must be successfully completed within one year.

Grant awards are up to \$2,000 per applicant and/or farm entity and are a one-to-one match by the farmer. A total of \$40,000 in funding is available for this grant round. However, it is anticipated that the number of applicants may exceed the amount of funding avail-

able, therefore grant applications will be ranked and awards may be less than the requested amount. To date, the program has received 173 applications with 129 funded for a total of \$203,813.

Grant funds may be used for equipment and services that help transition a farm's sales strategy (such as online sales, home delivery, on-farm sales, etc.), for other projects that allow the farm business to maintain and/or expand sales, for the purchase of foundation livestock, purchase of plant stock, marketing and promotion of current farm operation, new fencing, hoop house, and

materials needed for value-added food production and on-farm upgrades to enhance food safety. Both Rural and Urban farms are encouraged to apply.

For complete details of the SMADC Southern Maryland Farmer Mini-Grant Program, including Round 10 Criteria and Guidelines, and to access the online Mini-Grant Application Form visit www.SMADC.com 'Farmer Resources' to find the Mini-Grants information page.

County Collects \$2.6 Million in EMS Fees

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Since hiring paid emergency medical technicians and paramedics just over two years ago, the county has also engaged in “soft billing” of residents who get ambulance services during medical emergencies and the collections process seems to have finally been worked out after some initial teething problems.

The latest report from the county’s Department of Emergency Services shows that in the initial months of the billing program — which actually bills the insurance companies of residents — brought in no fees.

But that has steadily increased to the point where the county has collected \$2.6 million in emergency medical transport fees as of October of this year, the latest reports showed.

The average monthly intake of fees is a little over \$192,000.

Despite the progress, though, challenges remain in getting all of the fees that the county desires.

“EMS billing continues to be a work in progress as it is not yet at peak performance,” the latest report reads. “We continue to meet weekly with our ven-

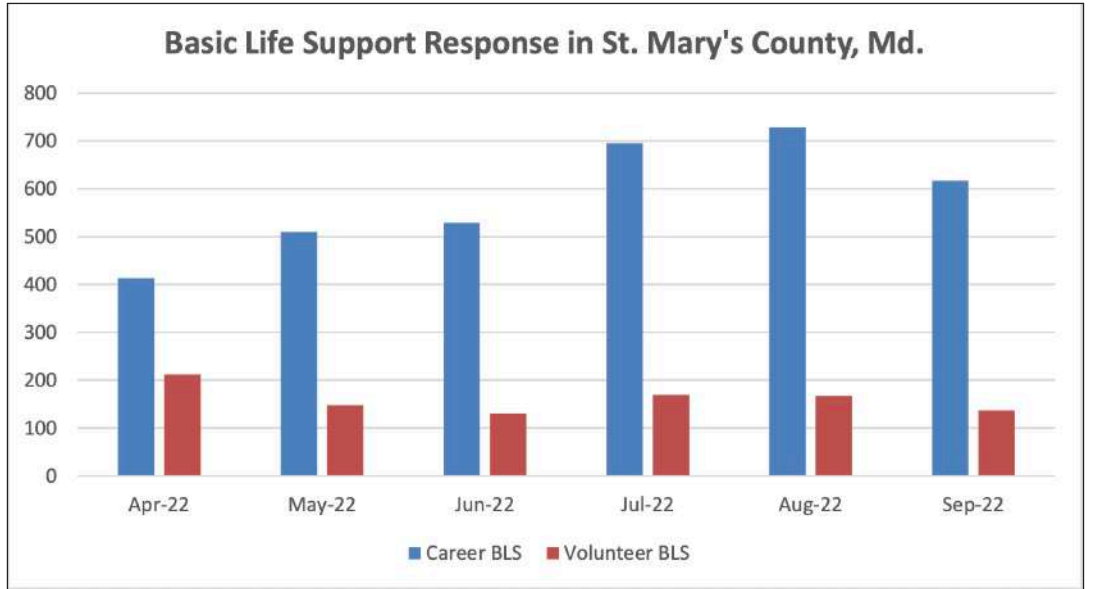
dor, Quick Meds.

“One of Quick Meds continued challenges is significant staff turnover. This impacts our operations as new employees must be trained and become familiar with our operations.”

The ambulance billing program came about as a way to help pay for the daytime staffing of volunteer rescue squads throughout all of St. Mary’s with career staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic kept many aging volunteers away from active duty at the stations and only exacerbated a long-term problem of rescue squad recruitment and retention.

The intrusions of modern life, such as the necessity for a two-person income to support a family, said Steve Walker, emergency services director to the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County, was another reason for the steep decline in volunteerism.



The county also continues to deal with vacancies among EMTs and paramedics.

“We’ve done pretty well with hiring EMTs but paramedics have been more challenging,” Walker said.

There are still four vacancies for paramedics out of the eight total slots in county service, the report shows.

Of the 30 full time EMT positions, just one remains vacant.

Career personnel now are working at every volunteer rescue squad, Walker said, and are answering between 70 to 75 percent of basic life support calls.

Career personnel are responding to between 80 to 85 percent of advanced life support calls, Walker said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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No Shootings Since Mid-October

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

In the spring and summer months in St. Mary’s the streets of Lexington Park, and in some cases those of communities as far north as Hollywood, shootings were occurring regularly.

Sometimes the victims were shot dead, other times they were wounded.

On some occasions the shootings struck homes and vehicles.

But the county has been without a shooting investigation since last month, sheriff’s officials said, marking a period of relative calm.

The last shooting occurred Oct. 18, sheriff’s office spokesman Jason Babcock said, at Patuxent Crossing Shopping Center in California.

In that shooting most of the rounds fired from the street struck a barber shop but they also shattered the front window of the Dollar Tree store as well, Babcock said.

There have been no arrests in that shooting, Babcock said.

The month prior, in Lexington Park, police investigated a home invasion in which a 9-year-old was shot; there have been no arrests in that incident, either.

There was one other shooting that month that involved a home being struck by gunfire, though there were

no injuries reported in that incident.

There were four shootings in September, including the incident involving the child being shot.

The violence in St. Mary’s County this year has been among the worst in recent history.

One shooting in August resulted in death with a suspect arrested; the same occurred in July when a young man was arrested in the shooting death of another at the Hollywood fire department carnival.

June and May both saw two shootings each and April by far saw the most shootings with a total of seven, according to sheriff’s office records.

In March there was one shooting but that also resulted in a homicide with an arrest.

guyleonard@countytimes.net



The last shooting in St. Mary’s occurred Oct. 18

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“WE’VE DONE PRETTY WELL WITH HIRING EMTS BUT PARAMEDICS HAVE BEEN MORE CHALLENGING.”
 STEVE WALKER, EMERGENCY SERVICES DIRECTOR, ON HIRING CHALLENGES FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE.



LOCAL 7
Two arrested in Leonardtown for murder in Virginia



LOCAL 7
Development planned for Great Mills Road Corridor



Steve Hall set to take over sheriff's office

9 SHERIFF IN TOWN **ON THE COVER**

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THU 12/1 47° /29° Mostly sunny; breezy, cooler 0%	MON 12/5 50° /40° Times of clouds and sun 22%
FRI 12/2 54° /42° Sunny and milder 1%	TUE 12/6 60° /39° Cloudy with a few showers 60%
SAT 12/3 64° /33° A couple of showers; windy 81%	WED 12/7 55° /29° Cloudy with a passing shower 58%
SUN 12/4 48° /35° More sun than clouds 4%	THU 12/8 49° /31° Partly sunny, showers around 68%

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