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**Commissioners Mull
School Budget**

Rural Legacy Area Grows

**County Responds to
Winery Closure**

CALVERT FALLS FOR PICKLEBALL

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“PICKLEBALL IS AN ADDICTION.”
 PARKS AND RECREATION PICKLEBALL COORDINATOR
 ROBIN MARTIN



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LOCAL 6
 County addresses Running Hare closure



3 ON THE COVER
 Pickleball's popularity surges in Calvert County

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 27 Partly Cloudy Hi: 66° Lo: 54°	FRI, APR 28 Rain Hi: 61° Lo: 57°	SAT, APR 29 Scattered Storms Hi: 71° Lo: 55°	SUN, APR 30 Showers Hi: 71° Lo: 51°
MON, MAY 1 AM Showers Hi: 63° Lo: 45°	TUE, MAY 2 Partly Cloudy Hi: 63° Lo: 42°	WED, MAY 3 Partly Cloudy Hi: 65° Lo: 46°	THU, MAY 4 Mostly Sunny Hi: 70° Lo: 54°



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Pickleball Picks Up Popularity

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Parks and Recreation pickleball coordinator Robin Martin says his sport is growing by leaps and bounds in the county. He estimates around a thousand people are now playing pickleball.

It's a sport for all ages. Martin said, "Anyone on any given day can pick it up. They don't have to be athletic. If they just want to get out and get some exercise, it's very therapeutic mentally and physically. Last week alone in one of the leagues I run, there was an 85-year-old playing with a 20-year-old, and they had a blast and they beat two 50 somethings."

The impression that it's just for older people isn't true anymore, he said. "The average age of a pickleball player nationally is 38. And it's dropping because more and more kids are getting involved. Sooner or later, it's going to be a high school sport. And the younger generation's definitely picking up. The best player in the world is from Maryland and graduated from the University of Maryland last year. He's 23 or 24 now."

Martin is also an ambassador for Southern Maryland for the US Pickleball. He also runs a fast-growing Facebook group called Calvert Legends that has more than 500 members. "I think I had nine new members today alone," he said.

He got involved with pickleball through his father-in-law Chet Lord, who is 85

and lives in Chesapeake Beach. "He's a very accomplished athlete in the county," he said.

"I had an injury. I had a cast on my right wrist," he said. "He (Lord) taught me how to play left-handed. And then when I got out of the wrist cast, I just kept going. It's just kind of overtaking everything. Pickleball is an addiction."

Pickleball has also become a professional sport with its own league, Martin said, adding, "It's owned by a lot of pro athletes, like Tom Brady owns a team. Drew Brees, I think LeBron James owns a team. A lot of professional athletes, Kevin Durant, they're buying these teams."

So, what's it like? Martin explained, "It's a combination of tennis and ping pong. I tell people if you've never seen it to visualize you're playing ping pong and you're standing on the table. There's a paddle that's usually fiberglass or a carbon face paddle. It's a whiffle ball. And you've got a net. The court size is 44 feet long by 20 feet wide with a net in the middle."



State champions Jack Williams (l) of Port Republic and Chet Lord of Chesapeake Beach



State champions (l) Robin Martin of North Beach and Paul Colbert of Upper Marlboro

And because of the growth there's a need for facilities in Calvert. That's why on April 26, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved a state grant for a project that includes five tennis courts, four pickleball courts, parking, lighting, restrooms and related amenities at Dunkirk District Park.

The project was recently bid, and all came in over budget. The giant of \$700,000 from the Local Park and Playground Infrastructure program will allow it to supplement the more than \$3 million project so it can be built.

"We are very, very short on courts in the county," Martin said.

The BOCC at the same meeting approved transitioning basketball courts behind the existing Harriet Elizabeth Brown Community Center on Dares Beach Road into joint use for pickleball. The basketball courts will be reserved for after school and weekend use and the pickleball uses for the rest of the time. The transformation involves just some restriping and a new net at a minimal cost.

But, he said, "The supply at this point does not meet the demand. There's only

one indoor court in the entire county, so we need a facility with probably 12 to 15 indoor courts on top of it, it would be great to have another somewhere between 12 and 20 outdoor courts in the county. But they have to be dedicated pickleball courts, not tennis courts."

Wondering where the name pickleball came from. Martin said it was started in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, WA. by a vacationing family group that included a congressman and a bank president. "They had all these toys they played with and games they played every year. And they took these ping pong paddles and wiffle balls and lowered the badminton net and started hitting it back and forth. And they really enjoyed it. And, they said, what are we going to name this sport? And the dog's name was Pickles. That's where pickleball comes from."

"It's a relatively cheap sport to start," Martin said. Just get a \$25 paddle and fund a game. He teaches classes. The best way to get involved is to join his Facebook group to find out where to go.

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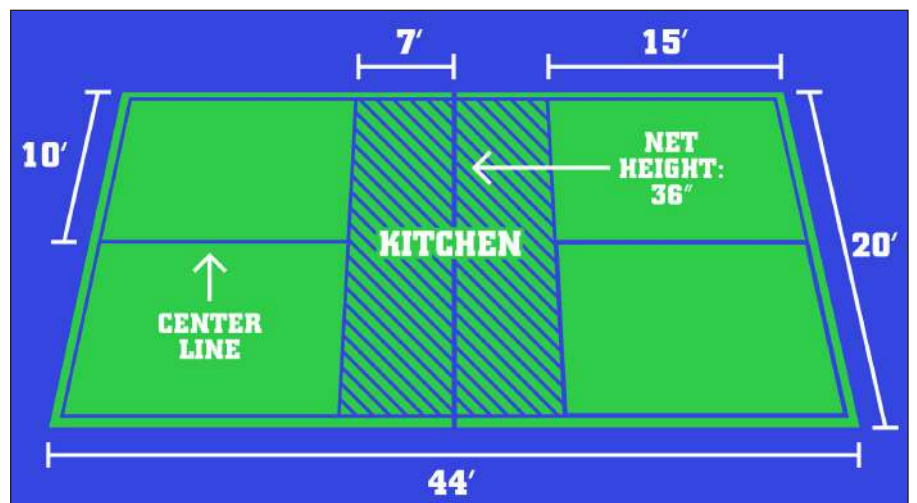
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Typical pickleball court layout

Townsel Reinstates Valedictorians, Salutatorians

School Board President Disagrees

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Superintendent of Schools Dr. Andrae Townsel has reinstated the designations valedictorian and salutatorian for the top two academically achieving graduating seniors in each high school. The decision, however, does not change the system of deciding who will speak at graduations. That will be left up to students in each school who are “distinguished graduates” with an unweighted GPA of 3.9 or more.

Dr. Townsel explained at the school board’s April 20 meeting: “When I came on board as superintendent of Calvert County in July, (I had) the privilege of going through pretty much everything the county had to offer young people. I did a summer school graduation. I conducted it here in this office, and it led me to look into what graduation will look like in the upcoming year, just so I could have my hand on the post. And I noticed that we did not acknowledge a valedictorian or salutatorian, which was new to me as a former high school principal, superintendent, assistant super, assistant principal. In my practice, I’ve always acknowledged a salutatorian and valedictorian. I had the opportunity to learn that it did exist in Calvert County previously. A num-

ber of years ago, it did go away. I had the opportunity to meet with (Student Member of the Board) Maggie (Rathgeb) about it and the Student Government Advisory Council. I had the opportunity to meet with my secondary teacher advisory council, secondary principals, to get everyone’s thoughts and opinions on it. And the ultimate decision was based off of checking in with everybody who ranks our top kids, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, all the way to distinguished graduates. We have a ranking system. The one and two should be acknowledged as valedictorian salutatorian. A lot of benefits came with that. You are already ranked, why not have the title?” He said he administratively implemented the change late last year.

School Board President Inez Claggett disagreed with the decision and asked Townsel to reconsider. She said, “The issue for me is equity. We cannot continue to have equity as number one in our strategic plan and make decisions that are inequitable for our students, for our staff. And I think that when we do that, it sends a resounding message. We clearly have students at CTA (Career and Technology Academy) that will never have equal access or equal opportunity to earn a rank of one or two. And that is important to me, to ensuring that every child has equal access and equal opportunity.”

Claggett added, “I would say to our students, continue to strive to be one or two. It is a competition, and you are free to put on your resume that you are one of 338 students or two of 550 students. Every college in the United States will recognize that you were a valedictorian or salutatorian of your school, that that’s a standard across the United States. So, I don’t think we need to add a title.”

School Board Vice President Antoine White said others had also brought up to him the unfairness of the grading system for CTA students.

Rathgeb said students were generally in favor of using the titles but also questioned the methods of determining the top students. She said the current selection system allows for the selection of students who are the most comfortable at public speaking, which might not necessarily be the first or second in each class.

Board member Dawn Balinski observed that the system of identifying valedictorians and salutatorians was changed after “we had the four principles come to us and said that it’s just gotten to be such a high stress thing for our students where only two people we’re going to be chosen out of an entire population. And the differences sometimes were 0.00002. It just caused such strife.”



School Superintendent Dr. Andrae Townsel

Board member Lisa Grenis said, “I think that Calvert County Public Schools should acknowledge academic success and students deserve the college awards and scholarships that come with it”

Board member Jana Post said, “I think it’s an awesome way to acknowledge kids that have gone above and beyond and have worked very hard. I also think that a little competition can be healthy.”

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Planners Okay Townhouse Concept Plan

Approved on Split 3-2 Vote

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Planning Commission has approved a concept site plan for 79 town homes in Prince Frederick on 26.3 acres. The project known as Magnolia Ridge West is off the unbuilt Fox Run Blvd. between Calvert High School and Calvert Middle School.

The project was controversial and passed the commission on a 3-2 vote at their April 19 meeting. The controversy surrounded the steep slopes in the development and the number of unresolved issues in the staff report presented to the commission. The deadline for approval of the concept plan was April 27, at which time it would have expired.

One of the outstanding issues related to the steep slopes was a retaining wall being proposed behind some of the townhouses. The staff report presented by Principal Planner Christine Finamore said, “The retaining wall as shown, is too close to the townhouse lots. The geo-grid will conflict with building foundations. The retaining wall or townhouse lot layout must be redesigned to meet minimum construction standards.”

Builder/developer Rodney Gertz and his consulting engineer Anthony Olekson insisted that all of the issues presented by staff could be resolved before the next stage of the process, the preliminary site plan. They have a year to finish that process.

But new commission member Chris

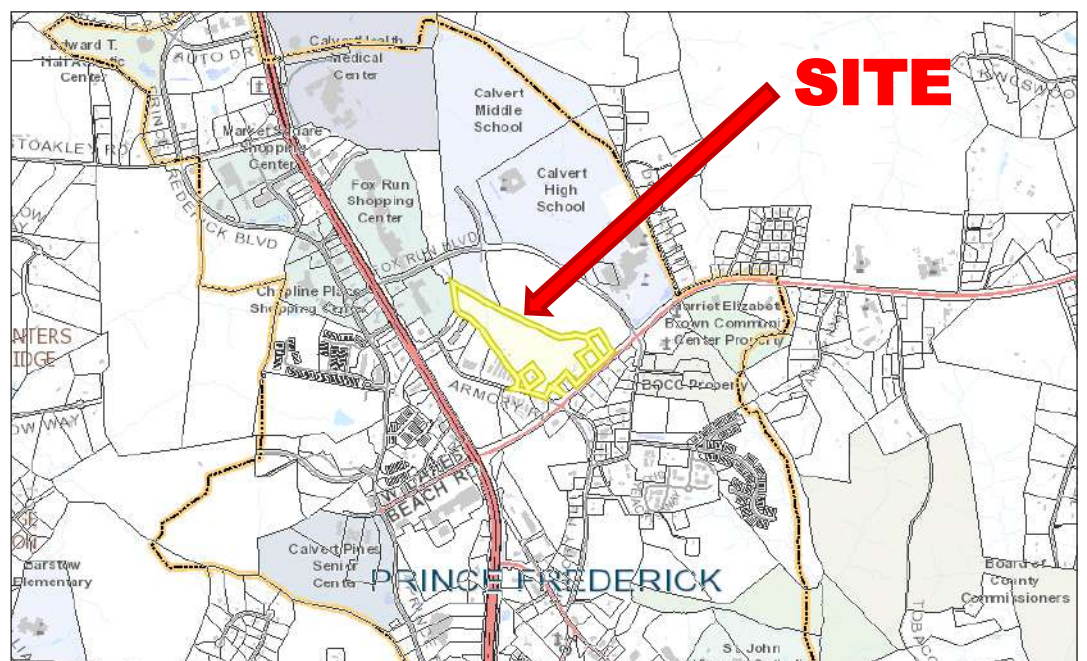
Gadway, a former county commissioner, pressed the project representatives on the unresolved issues and the steep slopes.

But Olekson responded that they weren’t that steep when considered from above.

Olekson explained, “What I’m saying is if tonight if this is approved with the conditions that are there, I can with confidence tell you that whatever that plan is, if eventually gets built, if you’re looking at it from an aerial perspective, you’re not going to be able to see any differences between them. We’re going to try to do our best to respect all of those environmentally sensitive areas, stay out of steep slopes where we can and use other obstruction techniques to, to help us well.”

But Gadway responded, “I get what you’re saying with the aerial perspective view. That’s where the rain comes from. But when it hits ground, it has to flow on a perspective on the ground. That’s why I was asking the questions.”

The planners were told the subdivision roads would be private and maintenance would be turned over to a homeown-



er’s association (HOA) after the project was complete. Gertz said, “That’s common. That’s what’s done all the time. And basically anything, whether you’re a single-family subdivision or whatever, all your stormwater management facilities go over to the HOA’s. And the HOA is responsible for the general care of them, the mowing, keeping trees off the sidewalks and all for years to come.”

After the meeting, Susan Dzurec of the advocacy group Calvert Citizens United,

expressed concern about that. “As a former president of an HOA, I am shocked at the amount of homeowner responsibility the buyers will be left with. It sounds like the builder plans to turn over the ownership obligations to the HOA when they reach an 80 percent completion rate of the 79 townhouses.”

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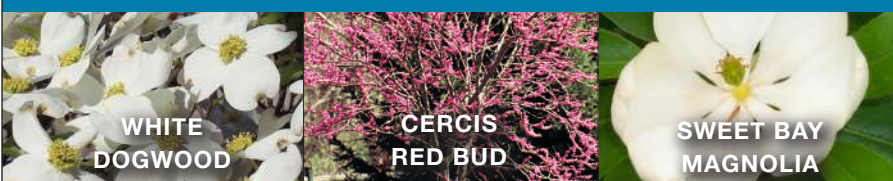


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Commissioners Mull Over School Budget 'Challenge'

By Dick Myers
 Staff Writer

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said, "I know where we are, and I know where we've got to get. I just don't know how we're going to get there today. We are going to get there. I'll just sleep a little less until we get there."

Hance was speaking of the difficult decision facing them about what to do with the school board budget request asking the county for more than \$22 million more than they funded this year.

Hance observed, "It's a challenge for us and there's more information we have to gather. And I'm not sure we're going to get there by June 6th (the date established for the commissioners to adopt next fiscal year's budget), but we're going to, we're going to balance our budget, but we are not going to let this school system fail in the future. And so, we're going to work together and work through this, but I just can't get answers to some of the questions that I have. No matter how many discussions we have, I just can't get my head wrapped around this."

Hance said he was perplexed that the St. Mary's County Commissioners were offering their school board just \$3 million more, and Charles was in a similar position.

Hance noted that just to fund the negotiated agreements with employee unions would cost more than \$4 million more, and that doesn't include state-mandated additional teacher salary increases and the cost of pre-kindergarten.

He concluded, "For us to get through this budget, I think at the end of the day we may end up where six months from now we may revisit your budget because we want to make sure you have what you need, but I'm not sure we're going to write you a check for \$23,200,000 on July 1 in additional funding."

The comments came at the end of an hour-long work session with Superintendent of Schools Dr. Andrae Townsel.

The superintendent, who is going

through his first budget cycle, said, "The proposed fiscal 2024 budget includes new cost pressures on multiple fronts. First, there's inflation that's approaching 40-year highs. Inflation is increasing the cost pressures across the board in every school and in every department. Second, student transportation costs are increasing at an unprecedented rate. Third, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future requires additional salary adjustments for teachers. Teachers are required to receive a 10-percent salary increase occurring between June 30th and July 1st, 2024. The proposed budget includes salary increases needed to meet this Blueprint mandate. Lastly, the proposed FY 24 budget includes funding for comparable wage increases for support staff and other employee groups and teachers not defined in the blueprint. These increases are included in the proposed budget to assure efficient operation of the school system and to provide equitable pay for our employees."

The commissioners have repeatedly also expressed a desire for support staff to receive increases similar to the teachers.

During the discussion, Commissioner Todd Ireland echoed an earlier call from school board member Lisa Grenis for an audit of school board operations to see if any savings can be fund.

Hance noted concurrence with the idea but said that could not be done in time to help this year's budget deliberations.

Commissioner Mike Hart concurred with the need for a review. "If somebody outside that's not sitting here with no pressures from anything can look at it objectively and say, 'Why are you doing this?' or 'Why aren't you doing that?' Just somebody, that's what they do for a living."

The majority of the school board did reject the motion by Grenis for an audit.

The issue of school funding is likely not to be resolved before the commissioners' budget hearing scheduled for May 16.

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Rural Legacy Areas Expanded

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved the expansion of the county's two Rural Legacy Areas (RLA), known as North Calvert and Calvert Creeks. The approval came after an April 19 joint public hearing with the planning commission.

Before the hearing, Rural Planner II Jennifer David explained, "The BOCC requested to reconvene the original Transferrable Development Right (TDR) Committee established in 2015 to review the county's preservation efforts and the TDR program and make recommendations for BOCC consideration. Meeting over several months in 2020 the committee developed a package of recommendations designed to improve the TDR program and increase opportunities for land preservation in Calvert County. One of those recommendations was to expand the North Calvert and Calvert Creeks Rural Legacy Areas with the goal of increasing the number of properties eligible to participate in the program. The expansion focused on properties within the Priority Preservation Area contiguous with the existing RLAs. The proposed expansion received Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board approval on December 6, 2021."

David said, "The Rural Legacy Area expansion proposal was included as part of the Fiscal Year 2023 Rural Legacy program grant application submitted to the

Maryland Department of Natural Resources for review with BOCC approval. The RLA expansion proposal received approval from the Maryland Board of Public Works on October 8, 2022."

According to the presentation at the meeting "The Rural Legacy Program is a State of Maryland land preservation easement program overseen by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and administered by the counties. It:

- Provides funding to preserve large, continuous tracts of land to enhance natural resource, agricultural, forestry and environmental protection;
- Supports a sustainable land base for natural resource-dependent industries;
- Creates public-private partnerships between local land trusts and local government;
- Protects working landscapes critical to the environment and local economies;
- Targets the most ecologically valuable properties impacting local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay

Admission into the program is purely voluntary on the part of the landowner, David explained.

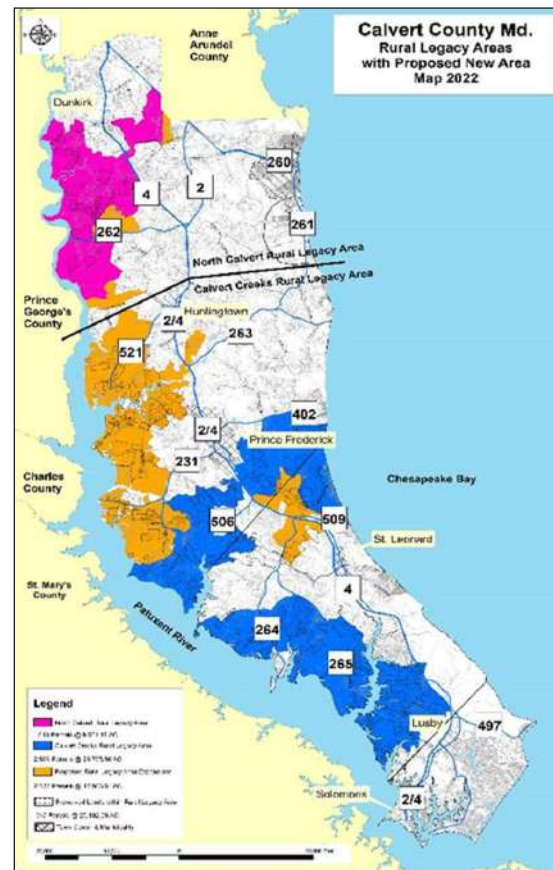
She said the proposal expanded the amount of Rural Legacy land in the county by 50 percent

At the public hearing Frank Phillips of Friends of Hunting Creek and Greg Bowen, former county planning director, spoke in support of the expansion. "Rural Legacy is a very good tool for land preservation,"

Bowen said.

After a separate joint public hearing, the commissioners approved adding an Historic District for the Vail House in Solomons.

The Maryland Historic Trust said of the Vail House, also known as the John R. Lankford House, "This extraordinary house faces west onto Solomons Island Road. It is a late-nineteenth-century two-story framed Queen Anne house, the most architecturally pretentious house to survive from the Victorian era in Solomons. Set on a brick foundation, it is a two-story framed and weatherboarded structure with a wood-shingled steep pyramidal roof. It is square in plan and has a brick chimney located at its center. Asymmetrical architectural elements include a half-round stair bay set onto the north side of the house, a second story bowed window sheltered by a front-facing gable that is embellished with sawn and turned woodwork and -- most prominently -- a cylindrical southwest corner tower with a conical wood-shingled roof. The west and south sides of the house are sheltered by a one-story hipped-roof porch supported on Doric columns with rails and balusters



between them. The front center of the porch is emphasized by a front-facing gable. A wooden picket fence encompasses the lot."

dickmyers@countytimes.net

County Explains Running Hare Closure

Calvert County government has released the following statement at the request of The County Times as an explanation for the closing of the public of Running Hare Vineyard in Prince Frederick:



"Running Hare Vineyard is located on property that was voluntarily submitted to be permanently preserved as an Agricultural Preservation District in 1983. Agricultural Preservation Districts earn money upon the sale of TDRs and receive tax benefits because they are important to maintain the county's agricultural character and heritage. In exchange, allowed uses and public events must keep with the county's agricultural heritage.

"Running Hare Vineyard is currently not compliant with zoning requirements. There have been multiple structures and electrical work installed without permits or inspections. Additionally, it no longer meets the requirements of a farm winery designation, since all wine is not being produced on the property. Without this designation, no ticketed public events of any kind are permitted; only private events held in the property's event building are allowed at this time.

"County staff and the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board (APAB) have made extensive efforts since June 2020 to

work with the property owners to allow for events to be held that comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and agricultural preservation covenants.

"Beginning in May 2021, staff held numerous meetings with the owners to discuss outstanding permit and inspection requirements. On Nov. 13, 2022, final approval was given for the red-lined site plan; another meeting was held on Feb. 8, 2023 however, by March 2023, required permits and inspections had not been completed. Permits and inspections are necessary to protect the safety and welfare of the public who visit the site.

"On March 9, 2023, zoning enforcement posted a stop work order for hosting public events without zoning compliance and APAB approval. A second stop work order was posted for the wine tasting pavilion and beer garden since all wine and beer are not being produced onsite as required by the zoning regulations."

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Zoning Update Public Process Set to Begin

Text Amendment Moratorium Proposed

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Public involvement is set to begin soon on the update of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance. The last comprehensive rezoning occurred in May of 2006, although “many text amendments have been adopted amending the Zoning Ordinance since,” according to Zoning Planner Rachel O’Shea.

The zoning ordinance update will implement the updated master plan adopted in 2019 and amended late last year. The zoning ordinance must be consistent with the master plan. Planner Will Hager said those who followed the master plan update process will be familiar with the zoning ordinance being unveiled.

According to a staff briefing to a joint session of the county commissioners and planning commission on April 18, zoning ordinances are:

- A set of regulations and standards regarding the use and development of land and structures
- Describes zoning districts, the types of land uses allowed in each district, and the conditions by which those uses can be permitted
- Includes a map of zoning districts
- Includes regulations regarding the subdivision of land, site development and design, protection of natural resources, floodplain, parking, landscaping, signs, Transferable Development Rights (TDRs)

O’Shea said the first draft prepared by staff is now under review by the county attorney and the first public meetings in the process will begin in June.

She said, “County staff and the Comprehensive Plan consultant conducted a zoning analysis of existing conditions. Through the confirmation of the county’s vision through the Comprehensive Plan adoption – Calvert 2040, staff began working on developing zoning recommendations

and a draft ordinance that would bring the zoning ordinance into compliance with the new comprehensive plan.”

O’Shea listed some of the hot button issues to be considered:

- Accessory Apartments
- Short Terms Rentals
- Planned Unit Developments
- Inclusionary Zoning
- Utility Scale Solar Energy Generating Systems
- Electronic Signs
- Density

During the joint meeting staff proposed a moratorium on zoning ordinance text amendments until the update process is complete. The commissioners, who have that decision, agreed to discuss it at a future meeting.

Planning Director Mary Beth Cook said, “We want to be able to devote our time to processing and putting together the information for the board’s consideration. And if taking time away from that to put together text amendments that are then going to conflict with the draft, we just feel it would be best to put a stop on it during this time as we go through this schedule.”

She added, “If someone wants to suggest a change, we’ll take that change through the process. It just won’t happen until the new ordinance is adopted.”

During the discussion planning commission member Lisa Williams strongly disagreed with such a moratorium.

The first of four public forums on the update would be June 22 on zoning districts and the zoning map.

Zoning Ordinance Update Information is available at: www.calvertcountymd.gov/ZoningOrdinanceUpdate/

Public comments can be submitted to PZ@calvertcountymd.gov or Attn: ZO Update, 205 Main Street, Prince Frederick, MD 20678.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Letter to the Editor:

How inappropriate! Why would our local newspaper print a photo of Deputy Sheriff Whalgren in a naval uniform when he committed his indiscretion as a deputy sheriff? Please use common sense when providing pictures accompanying your news articles.

A concerned citizen,
Debbie Berens

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CALVERT SHERIFF'S CRIME BLOTTER

During the week of April 10 – April 16, 2023, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,861 calls for service throughout the community.

Damaged Property: 23-26668

On April 16, 2023, DFC Savick responded to the 4100 block of Mears Ave. (Rod N Reel Parking Garage) in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of damaged property. Investigation revealed the victim's vehicle had been damaged as a result of a chemical matter from a fire extinguisher. A fire extinguisher was observed laying on the ground 10 feet from the victim's vehicle. The vehicle sustained approximately \$750.00 in damage to the front end as a result of the fire extinguishers ammonium phosphate (a chemical that ruins paint on vehicles).

Theft: 23-24966

On April 10, 2023, DFC Wilder responded to a lot used as a dry dock/marina in the 13800 block of Solomons Island Road in Solomons, for the report of a theft. Investigation revealed an unknown suspect (s) entered the victim's 36 ft. trawler style vessel and syphoned 200 gallons of fuel, stole a Garmin GPS/chart plotter, and a power inverter. The estimated value of stolen property is \$2,200.00.

Theft: 23-25279

On April 11, 2023, Deputy Huy responded to the 9600 block of Sam Owings Drive in Chesapeake Beach, for a report of a theft. The complainant advised his wallet and its contents (\$700 in cash, two credit cards, a MD Driver's License and a few other items) were stolen from his bedroom closet. The estimated value of stolen property is \$760.00.

ARRESTS

On April 16, 2023, Deputy Sylver responded to the Walmart located at 150 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a disorderly subject. Upon arrival, deputies made contact with **Stephen Michael Kinnison**, 48 of Lusby, who was attempting to return merchandise he did not originally pay for. Kinnison became very



Stephen Kinnison

loud and aggressive drawing attention to his self from other customers walking into the Walmart. Kinnison was asked several times to calm down and lower his voice. Store surveillance provided Kinnison did not pay for the stolen merchandise and walked out of the store. Kinnison was arrested and charged with Theft: Less than \$100 and Disorderly Conduct.



Elmer Reyes

On April 13, 2023, Deputy Claggett was conducting a patrol check Abners Crab House located at 3748 Harbor Road in Chesapeake Beach, when he was approached by an intoxicated male identified as **Elmer Aristides Reyes**, 34 of Gaithersburg. Reyes began yelling profanities at the deputies drawing the attention of the patrons inside. Reyes was escorted out of the establishment where he used a closed fist and struck the hood of a vehicle in the parking lot causing a dent in the hood. Reyes was advised he was being placed under arrest and began to resist. Reyes was taken into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Malicious Destruction of Property Less Than \$1,000 and Disorderly Conduct.

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

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

D.C. Man Convicted of Manslaughter in Calvert



Terrance Yancey

Following a week-long trial, a Calvert County jury on April 17, 2023, convicted Terrance Kenneth Yancey, of Washington, D.C., of voluntary manslaughter in the shooting death of Tyree Richardson of Dunkirk. The jury also convicted Yancey of two firearms violations, four counts of reckless endangerment and 1 count of destruction of evidence. He faces a total of over 40 years incarceration.

Evidence revealed that Richardson entered a home in the early morning hours of June 13, 2022, to attempt a reconciliation with his ex-girlfriend. When he entered her bed-

room, he was met with a hail of gunfire from Yancey. All told, Yancey fired 16 shots and then fled the residence. A massive manhunt ensued and Yancey was ultimately captured 24 hours later in a wooded area in Dunkirk.

Commenting on the verdict, Calvert County State's Attorney Robert Harvey stated: "This was a well-tryed case. In addition to witness testimony, the State presented over 300 pieces of physical evidence for the jury's consideration. I am pleased that we were able to bring justice to the family of the victim."

Sentencing is scheduled for July 28, 2023, before the Honorable Mark S. Chandlee. The case is being prosecuted by Senior Assistant State's Attorney Christopher J. Monte.

Press Release from Calvert County State's Attorney.

Second-Degree Assault Sentence Affirmed



Joseph Blankenship

A three-judge panel sitting in Upper Marlboro affirmed the 10-year sentence imposed on Joseph Martin Blankenship of Lusby for the crime of second degree assault. Blankenship was convicted in 2021 by a Calvert County jury and sentenced to the maximum possible sentence by Judge Andrew S. Rappaport. A Maryland appellate court previously upheld

Blankenship's conviction.

Blankenship was convicted of the unprovoked attack on a 19-year old victim. When the victim asked Blankenship to refrain from using profanity in front of children, Blankenship pulled the victim from a car and punched her in the face. The victim required medical attention.

Blankenship is also serving a 10-year consecutive sentence in an unrelated burglary and assault case.

Press Release from Calvert County State's Attorney



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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Apr 27

JobSource Mobile Career Center

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

Get job counseling and resume help, search for jobs and connect with Southern Maryland JobSource. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Mobile Health Center from CalvertHealth

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

Come talk about your healthcare questions or needs because a simple change can make a difference in you or your family's life. We are here to support you! The Mobile Health Center travels to areas of the community to bring free health services and education. For more information to view the full schedule or view an online tour of the vehicle, visit them online. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862 <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tween/Teen Anime Night

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

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

Reading Buddies

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

Children that need some extra help with reading build confidence by reading with teens! With snacks, games, and reading incentives! A program for K-5 graders to practice reading in a relaxed and welcoming group space! A fun event that inspires a love of reading, offers great social activities for shy or anxious children and teens, and promotes positive interactions between children of all ages. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Apr 28

Maritime Performance Series: Lulu's Fate

Calvert Marine Museum, 6-9 p.m.

Lulu's Fate performs a mix of music from the Appalachian, southern string band and country blues traditions, as well as early swing, gospel, original tunes and covers ranging from Hank Williams to Tom Waits. Performance is in the museum's Harms Gallery starting at 7 p.m.; doors open at 6 p.m. with beer and wine for sale. Tickets are \$20 online and \$25 at the door.

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Sat, Apr 29

Annual Plant Sale

Christ Church
3100 Broomes Island Rd, Port Republic
9 a.m. – Noon, Rain or Shine

Calvert Garden Club will be selling locally grown plants dug and potted by members of the club, "from our garden to yours". In addition, plants from several local nurseries will be at the sale. A wide variety of plants, trees, and shrubs will be available for purchase including native and pollinator perennials and annuals, hanging baskets, vegetable plants, herbs, and house plants. Friendly knowledgeable club members will be available to answer questions including a display and information on pollinators. A Raffle table, Bake table, grilled concessions, and yard sale treasures will also be at the sale. Proceeds from the Plant Sale benefit community projects and Calvert Garden Club's Grant program. For additional information visit our website www.calvertgardenclub.com.

Southern Maryland Celtic Festival.

Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

43rd annual festival features bag pipe competitions; Scottish Highland Dance competitions; a Celtic Market Place with Celtic foods and one-of-a-kind items; Celtic dance demonstrations; Genealogy information; Celtic Crafters demonstrations; Children's Highland Games; Rugby, Heavy Weight Highland Athletic competitions are just some of the wonders that make a day long family adventure possible.

Advance tickets available at Ticket Leap through CSSM.org must be purchased in advance. Cash is not accepted at the gate.

Free parking and free shuttle service on the grounds and parking lot.

Parenting Again Resource Conference

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
10:00am-1:00pm.

Stepping in for Families Who Can't. Are you parenting again? Join us to celebrate those who step in for families who can't. Local agencies and presenters will share helpful resources on bullying, online safety, social opportunities, respite ideas, asset development, legal topics and more. In partnership w/ Office on Aging, Calvert Alliance Against Substance Abuse, Calvert County Public Schools, Maryland Coalition for Families, Department of Social Services and Department of Juvenile Services. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, Apr 30

Southern Maryland Annual Firemen's Parade

Prince Frederick (Main Street)
12 Noon

Join the Prince Frederick Volunteer Fire Department—hosting the Southern Maryland annual Firemen's convention.

Thu, May 4

Sea Squirts: Mamas and Babies

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

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 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.

Ongoing

Disney's Beauty and the Beast: The Broadway Musical

Huntingtown High School
4125 Solomons Island Rd, Huntingtown
Friday, April 28 at 7 p.m.; and Saturday and Sunday April 29 and 30 at 2 p.m.

Presented by the Children's Theatre of Southern Maryland. This show features the talents of students spanning across Calvert, St Mary's and Charles counties. Come and bring the family and enjoy this Tale As Old

As Time. For ticket information, visit us on Facebook, Instagram, or visit our website at www.ctsmd.org

Exclusive Jewelry Trunk Show

Calvert Marine Museum Store
Friday through Sunday, April 28-30
11 a.m. to 4 p.m., daily.

Unique and One-Of-A-Kind Jewelry Styles. Shoppers will have the opportunity to see and try on pieces in-person that they might not have access to otherwise. For more information, contact the Museum Store at 410-326-2750.

Upcoming

Women's Health EXPO

CalvertHealth Medical Center and Farmers Market
130 Hospital Road, Prince Frederick,
Tue, May 9, 2:30-6:30 p.m.

Celebrate Mothers Day Week at the 8th Annual Women's Health EXPO for FREE. Over 40 booths and medical vans with fun gifts and handouts. Women of all ages are welcome: Teenagers, pregnant and new moms (and babies), adults, and aging women.

Catch up on the newest Covid screenings, diabetes treatments and prevention, and learn about heart versus stroke symptoms. Heart and hearing exams available, with hearing devices on display. Nutrition is key for our health and fresh fruits and healthy food are for sale from popular vendors. Learn about mental wellness and reduce stress through message and low impact exercise like swimming.

This landmark event is sponsored by CalvertHealth Community Wellness, Calvert County Maryland Commission for Women, Calvert County HEALTH Department, The Calvert Library, and Calvert County Parks and Recreation. CONTACT :

erin.farley@calverthealthmed.org
(410) 414-4573.

Annmarie After Hours

Annmarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center, Solomons,
Friday, May 5, 5-7 p.m.

Enjoy extended hours in the garden in celebration of the opening of a new exhibit in the Kay Daugherty Gallery. Both galleries in the Arts Building will be open until 7:00pm, along with the sculpture garden and walking trails. Enjoy live music, tour the new exhibit, take a walk, and appreciate an evening of art and nature. You'll find a cash bar and food truck as well. Admission is \$5/person; members free; reservations are not required, just come. Details: www.annmariegarden.org



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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. It's all over the beach
- 5. A cirque
- 8. Corpuscle count (abbr.)
- 11. Influential report author
- 13. Satisfaction
- 14. Recurring only at long intervals
- 15. Islamic calendar month
- 16. Neither
- 17. Gelatinous substance
- 18. American electronic music producer
- 20. Old computer system
- 21. Professional organization
- 22. Malaria mosquitoes
- 25. Not composed of matter
- 30. It's in the ocean
- 31. Peyton's little brother
- 32. French commune
- 33. Eyelashes
- 38. Equal (prefix)
- 41. Quality of little or no rain
- 43. One who beheads
- 45. Sung to
- 48. Influential punk artist
- 49. Amount of time
- 50. Polio vaccine developer
- 55. Abba __, Israeli politician
- 56. Job
- 57. Flat-bottomed sailboat
- 59. Japanese wooden clog
- 60. Folk singer DiFranco
- 61. FL city
- 62. Naturally occurring solid
- 63. Language of indigenous Asian people
- 64. Dark brown

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 2. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire
- 3. Venomous snake genus
- 4. Uninteresting
- 5. Straightforwardness
- 6. Expression of wild excitement
- 7. Arrange in order
- 8. East Indian cereal grass
- 9. Hillsides
- 10. Bird beak covering
- 12. Baseball stat
- 14. Edge of a surfboard
- 19. Wrapping accessory
- 23. Express approval
- 24. Deduce
- 25. Similar
- 26. Born of
- 27. Automobile
- 28. Obligated to repay
- 29. Live in
- 34. Influential journalist Tarbell
- 35. Set aflame
- 36. OJ trial judge
- 37. Scottish town
- 39. African nation
- 40. Egg-shaped wind instrument
- 41. Mimic
- 42. Frees
- 44. In slow tempo
- 45. Sword
- 46. Related on the mother's side
- 47. Mars crater
- 48. Plant of the lily family
- 51. Suitable in the circumstances
- 52. Hillside
- 53. Metrical foot
- 54. Amazon river tributary
- 58. Adult male human

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LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Fri, Apr 28

SMTMD Acoustic Open Mic

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

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

Sat, Apr 29

Historic Sotterley Plantation Plant Sale

Sotterley Plantation
44300 Sotterley Lane, Hollywood
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sotterley Garden Guild will have annu-

als, perennials and bulbs for sale. Proceeds benefit Historic Sotterley and the Colonial Revival Garden.

On the Water's Edge Latin Concert—Leonardo Garcia

Leonardtown Wharf
Washington Street, Leonardtown
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Series kickoff/Latin Night Celebration for the On the Water's Edge Concert Series at the Leonardtown Wharf (sponsored by Jimmy Hayden of RE-Max 100 and Homes for Heroes) in honor of International Dance [and Music] Day and Cinco DeMayo. The evening includes Leonardo Garcia Y Son Horizonte in concert and Latin Dance instruction.

For more information about this special event or other music festival concerts visit: www.visitleonardtownmd.com/leonardtownmusicfest.

USCG Auxiliary Intro to Boating Safety

Lexington Park Library
21677 FDR Blvd, Lexington Park

10 a.m. to Noon

This free seminar is for boaters with little to no background or training in boating safety, as well as a refresher for more experienced boaters. It covers the most critical components of boating safety a new boater needs to know immediately. The seminar includes the importance of life jackets, fire extinguishers and their use, how to get a free boat safety check, navigating on the water, navigation rules, safe fueling, anchoring and knots. This is a classroom seminar presented by a certified USCG Auxiliary instructor. It is not an on-the-water course. It covers the things that you should know but does not give you actual underway experience. This course does not provide you with the Maryland Boating Certificate.

Register at: stmalib.libnet.info/event/7889784?registration=true

Sun, Apr 30

Line Dancing & Fried Chicken Dinner

Mechanicsville Moose Lodge
27636 Mechanicsville Rd.

Mechanicsville
1p.m. to 6p.m.

Benefit for Girl Scout Troop 4946
Line Dancing Workshop- Instructor Geneva Leon and DJ B Good

Donation includes Fried Chicken Dinner, sides, desserts & loads of fun. Grab your friends and family and dance your Sunday away, enjoy a great meal and support a local Girl Scout Troop as they raise money for a high adventure camping event in West VA.

For reservations please contact Lisa Bradford @ bradford.lisa951@gmail.com or text 301-672-1623. This event will fill up fast so don't wait.

Upcoming

Hughesville Baptist Church Craft Fair, Bake Sale and Plant Sale

Hughesville Baptist Church
8505 Old Leonardtown Rd, Hughesville
Saturday, May 6th
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

SOUTHERN MARYLAND

Summer Camps

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St. Mary's County • Calvert County

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St. Mary's Department of Aging & Human Services

Programs and Activities

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

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

April Fool's Bingo

Attention jokesters and those who enjoy lighthearted fun: let's play a silly April Fool's themed Bingo. Join us at the Northern Senior Activity Center on Friday, April 28, from 9:45-11:15 a.m. There will be wacky prizes and decorations so imagine the unexpected -- including fun in the last week of April, not just on the 1st. Walk-ins only. Please arrive early to get your seat or to complete membership paperwork if 50 years-of-age and visiting for the first time.

Matter of Balance

Many older adults experience concerns about falling and restrict their activities. A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels. This program emphasizes practical strategies to manage falls. You will learn to view falls as controllable and make changes to reduce the risk of falls at home. Who should attend this course? Anyone who is concerned about falls, anyone interested in improving balance, flexibility, and strength, anyone who has fallen in the past, or anyone who has restricted activities because of falling concerns. Class will be held on Mondays and Thursdays each week beginning on Mondays, May 1-25, at the Garvey Senior Activity Center from 5:30-7:30 p.m. There is no charge for the class, however, advanced Registration is required. A commitment to attending all class sessions is required. Register at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs" and then "Garvey Senior Activity Center". Call the Reservation Request Line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1075, if you need assistance with registration.

scoutymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs" and then "Garvey Senior Activity Center". Call the Reservation Request Line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1075, if you need assistance with registration.

Supporting the Men & Women in Law Enforcement

The community is invited to join the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, the Department of Aging & Human Services, and the Triad/SALT Council to thank this year's Law Enforcement Officers of the Year and remember the men and women who gave their lives in service to their community.

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day will be held on Tuesday, May 2, 11:30 a.m. at The White Rose, located at 21030 Point Lookout Road in Callaway, MD. The community is invited to stay for lunch, free of charge, following the ceremony. This event is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Sarah Miller at 301-475-4200, ext. 1073, or at sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov.

New Collage Group

In this drop-in class you will learn how to make collages on postcards to send out to your friends and family. Collage involves cutting pictures and words from magazines or books and gluing them to any surface such as paper. The pictures overlap to cre-

ate a finished image. The group will meet Tuesdays, May 2 & 16, at 6 p.m. Advance registration is not required. Materials will be provided. There is no fee for the class. Collage Group is a beginner friendly arts and crafts where you can also socialize with others! To learn more call 301-475-4200, ext. 1050.

Beaded Sun Catchers

In this beginner friendly craft class, we will make beaded sun catchers for you to hang on your porch! No prior experience is required, and you will be able to take home your work of art. We will use wire and beads to create the sun catcher. The beads will sparkle in the sunlight! Class will be held at the Garvey Senior Activity Center on Wednesday, May 3, at 6 p.m. The cost for the class is \$15. Advanced Registration is required. Register at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs" and then "Garvey Senior Activity Center". Call the Reservation Request Line at 301-475-4200, ext. 1075, if you need assistance with registration.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration

Let's have a Friday fiesta on Friday, May 5, from 9-11:15 a.m. at the Northern Senior Activity Center! Join us for a fun game of Loteria -- a traditional Mexican game of chance, similar to bingo, with images relative to folk tales and general culture. Each

winner will pick a prize from the table and get one whack at the piñata. Start your morning with coffee and churros -- a popular Mexican pastry. Be sure to wear bright colors: red, white, & green - the colors of the Mexican flag and enjoy our Mexican culture display. Register and pay the \$3 activity fee by visiting www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging and click "View & Sign Up for Activities & Programs."

Lunch is not included in this event. If you wish to extend your day, reserve a meal by contacting the kitchen at 301-475-4200, ext. 3105.

Law Day

Do you have an Advance Healthcare Directive filled out? Is your document up to date? If your answer to either question is no, sign up for Law Day! Make an appointment with an attorney to fill out an Advance Healthcare Directive, completely free of charge, at the Northern, Garvey, or Loffler Senior Activity Center on Friday, May 5, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

All attorneys are members of the St. Mary's County Bar Association and are donating their time for Law Day to fill out Advance Care Directives ONLY. This is a free service.

Registration is required. For more information, please contact Sarah Miller at Sarah.Miller@stmaryscountymd.gov or 301-475-4200, ext. 1073.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library



How to Preserve Your Family History

Learn how to appropriately handle and preserve your family's documents at Leonardtown Library on Tuesday, May 2 from 6 - 7:30 p.m. If you have ever wondered what the best way to preserve a photograph, a book, or any paper documents, this session will cover all of that, in addition to discussing how to digitize your items to give them even more longevity. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Spring Stations Spectacular!

Celebrate Spring with us as little learners explore various spring themed activities and play centers at Lexington Park Library on Friday, May 5 from 10 - 11 a.m. Pre-school to age 5 will have fun moving between stations where they can pretend to plant flowers, feed birds and play in our duck pond all without getting wet or dirty! Register on www.stmalib.org.

Embroidery for Beginners: With Jill Nedeau

Embroidery has been a well-loved art form since around 30,000 BC. This class

will teach you the basics so that you too can learn to master this versatile medium at Leonardtown Library on Saturday, May 6 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. Jill Nedeau of the Embroiderers' Guild of America will be leading this introductory course all about the art of embroidery. We will go over materials, designs, and stitching. Participants will make their own project, designed by Jill, to take home and show off to friends and family. Hand-sewing skills are not required, though they are encouraged. We will provide the fabric, hoops, needles, and embroidery floss. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Intermediate 3D Printing

Interested in designing 3D models and 3D printing? Join us at Leonardtown Library on Tuesday, May 9 from 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. as we cover the browser-based 3D modeling program, TinkerCAD, as well as how to use PrusaSlicer to prepare files for 3D printing. Some experience with 3D print technologies is recommended, but not required. This is an in-person class held in the Computer Lab and Maker-space. Register on www.stmalib.org

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

In Remembrance

Gary Arbaugh, 63



Gary Scott Arbaugh, Sr., 63, of Callaway, MD, peacefully passed away on April 19, 2023, surrounded by loved ones.

Gary was born on November 3, 1959, to Robert and Dorothy Arbaugh in Maryland.

After graduation, he worked as a truck driver for most of his life. Gary loved to travel around and enjoyed what he did for a living.

In the 1980s, he met his future wife, Cora Foy. Gary and Cora were later married on January 1st, 1985, and had one son, Gary Arbaugh, Jr.

Gary retired around 2017 after many years in the field. While retired, Gary had time to pursue his love of listening to bluegrass music, antiques, playing poker, and playing his guitar. Above all, he was always willing to help a friend or family member whenever they needed him.

Gary was predeceased by his parents, Robert and Dorothy Arbaugh, and his brothers, Dale Arbaugh and Alan Arbaugh, sister Judy McDonaldson and brother-in-law Jerry, and sister-in-law Kathy Arbaugh. He is survived by his loving wife, Cora Arbaugh, his son Gary Arbaugh, Jr., brother Rocky Arbaugh and sister-in-law Lynn of Owings Mills, MD, brother Larry Arbaugh of Kentucky, sister Carolyn and brother-in-law Chuck Stevens, sister-in-law Donna Arbaugh (Dale) of St. Leonard, MD, and in-laws Janet and James Futchko, of Mt. Bethel, PA. As well as many nieces and nephews across Maryland, and Virginia.

On Friday, April 28, 2023, the family will receive friends or the memorial gathering from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm at Brinsfield Funeral Home & Crematory, P.A., 30195 Three Notch Road, Charlotte Hall, MD

20622. On April 29, 2023, there will be another memorial gathering from 10:00 am to 11:00 am at the funeral home. The memorial service will begin at 11:00 am. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to Hospice House of St. Mary's.

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

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

Wes Leshner, 75



Charles Wesley Leshner, "Wes" 75, of Leonardtown, MD, passed away on April 20, 2023 in Callaway, MD. Charles was born on March 19, 1948 in Springfield, MA to

the late Charles Abram Leshner and Marion Irene Hepfer. Charles is survived by his son; Timothy Charles Leshner, his brother; David Leshner, and his companion Mary Burgess.

Wes was an avid musician and playing the piano was his life. He owned his own business, Accurate Piano Tuning. Wes played piano during services for local churches, and he also tuned, repaired, and gave lessons. Wes began playing at the age of 5 years old and secured his Bachelor's Degree in music from the University of Maryland.

Wes' favorite thing to do was fishing, his nickname was "The Bass Man", he had a very easy-going personality, and a wonderful sense of humor. He was loved by all who knew him and will be gravely missed.

All services are 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.

Steve James, 77



Stephen Patrick "Steve" James, 77, of Lexington Park, MD passed away peacefully on April 19, 2023, with his loving wife at his side.

He was born on January 30, 1946, in Quantico, VA to the late James Hugh James and Mae Hall James.

On January 26, 1965, Steven enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and proudly served his country until his honorable discharge on November 4, 1968. During his service he earned the National Defense Service Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. He spent his 26-year career working as a skilled welder for the federal government in Annapolis, MD until his retirement. On July 18, 1997, he married his beloved wife, Jackie James. Together they celebrated over 25 wonderful years of marriage. He enjoyed racing motorcycles when his sons were growing up. He collected model cars and enjoyed car shows. He was a collector of many antiques and enjoyed fixing things, especially lawnmowers. He and his wife enjoyed vacationing in Ocean City, Myrtle Beach, and Florida. He is a proud long-time member of AA with

over 40 years of sobriety. You would find Steve at an AA meeting several times a week when he was able to. Sponsoring new members and just being a support to others. Steve made friends wherever he went. He enjoyed making conversation and making everyone feel comfortable. Steve always had a joke to make you smile or laugh. He loved spending time and doing things with his grandchildren. He always made sure they were able to get to special events and enjoyed attending their plays and programs.

In addition to his beloved wife, Jackie, Steve is also survived by his son, Michael James and stepdaughter, Tobie Pulliam (Chris); his sister, Susan Kirkpatrick (John); his grandchildren: Keith James, Arielle Turley, Taylor Berry, and Kendall Pulliam; and many extended family and friends. In addition to his parents, Steve is also preceded in death by his son, Daniel James and his stepdaughter, Shannon Berry.

A Memorial Mass will be celebrated by Reverend Edward Hegnauer on Saturday, April 29, 2023, at 10:30 a.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church, 22375 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653. Inurnment will follow the Mass in the church cemetery.

Condolences to the family may be made to www.brinsfieldfuneral.com. Arrangements by Brinsfield Funeral Home.

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*A Tribute to the Loved One
Whose Memory Lives
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Honor the memory of your cherished one by sharing the story of their life with friends, neighbors and associates here in the community.

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

REMEMBRANCES
IN PRINT & ONLINE

County Times
St. Mary's County • Calvert County

The Tackle Box Fishing Report

By Ken Lamb
Contributing Writer

There are plenty of catfish ready to take your bait in both the Potomac and Patuxent.

There were catfish caught in Cuckold Creek off the Patuxent this week on cut alewife.

The catfish bit just at dusk and were in the two-to-four-pound range off a private pier. Many are unaware that these tasty, hard fighting fish are in the creeks in the lower Patuxent. Further up the Patuxent at Benedict, specifically at Harrowing Point, there were bigger fish in the five-to-twelve-pound range. These fish were caught at the public beach next to the boat ramp behind the old DNR building on the Calvert County side. A total of eighteen were caught by a couple of shore fishermen in a couple of hours last Friday. Here again the fish wanted fresh cut alewife.

The Potomac is loaded with catfish in the deeper holes from Swann Point to the District. The end and beginning of the tide flow is best as rapidly moving water makes holding the bottom difficult. The cats seem to bite better on slack tides.

Perch are in the early stages of returning to summertime locations as the water warms.

The spring Striped Bass season begins Monday, May 1 in the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake bay with a creel limit of one per person per day with a slot limit



of a minimum of 28 inches and maximum of 35 inches.

The Potomac spring Striped Bass season begins May 1 also, with a simple 35 inch minimum, also one per day.

Fresh water fishing is excellent in ponds and lakes with all species hitting lures and bait. There were good sized crappie caught in the upper regions of St. Mary's Lake on cast marabou jigs in four to eight feet of water. Shore fishermen can find crappie eager to take live minnows fished under a bobber. Throw out the bobber and minnow as far as possible and reel in slowly.

A View From The BLEACHERS



PLAY BALL!

By Ronald N. Guy Jr.
Contributing Writer

In 1989, Ray Kinsella was struggling to keep his farm. The bankers breathing down his neck should have been his priority, not using precious acreage to build a baseball field. But Kinsella was taking direction from something beyond this realm, something he heard - something only he heard. The ethereal message prompted him to travel east to Boston to encounter an emotionally broken writer, who had long since stopped giving a damn about the world, and coax him into attending a Red Sox game. It included a time-traveling search for a non-descript minor-leaguer-turned-physician and to pick up a random hitchhiker on his way back to Iowa. Why? This was, by all rational accounts, madness born from the strain of losing one's livelihood.

Kinsella was undeterred. He collected the characters along this mystical crumb trail and built the baseball field, and what the voice had promised - that if he built it "they will come" - came true. The 1919 Black Sox came. Kinsella's father came. Then people came to watch to them all. Kinsella's "Field of Dreams" had saved his farm.

And now, emboldened by Kinsella and an iconic baseball flick, a statement: I believe old softball fields talk. Games continue to be played on them, whether they exist in this dimension or not. I am convinced of this. I drive through our beautiful county and I see them - some still in use, others repurposed in the name of economic growth and still others reclaimed by nature. No matter - they are all still alive.

Heading down Newtowne Neck Road and turning right on Bayside, I see them: The Hobos are out there, locked in a magnificent tussle against an arch rival. It's hot, the sun is low on the horizon and the stands are packed. It is...perfect.

Cruising north on 235, there's more. I hear the roar of the crowd as I pass the Hollywood Stars' field and recall epic struggles of yesteryear on the now vanished Hill's Club diamond. The most poignant, perhaps because I pass it daily or that it was once the epicenter of county softball, are drives past the old Pennie's ballfield. The sandlot, overwhelmed by nature, is no longer visible and the bar is a rotting shell, but I still see both in all their glory. Games are being played under the lights while broadcast on local radio and cars are stuffed into the parking lot right up to the edge of Route 5.

These memories bend time. I look at these fields, where they are or were, and I'm 10-years-old again. At Kinsella's Iowa field, players had nicknames like Shoeless Joe (Joe Jackson) and Moonlight (Archie Graham). The softball giants I watched had names like Hondo, Whale Bone, Guts, Smurf, Harper, Dirt, Snake, Dinks, Boogie Man and Cakes - all characters with character. I was just as starstruck as Kinsella was when he was watching his "ghosts."

It being spring again, the great local softball cycle is poised to start anew. Some of the old fields remain; new ones now exist. Player nicknames are different and uniforms and equipment have evolved. But the game remains fundamentally unchanged. Somewhere in the crowds this season there will be a 10-year-old kid completely mesmerized by it all - the competition, the effort, the spilled blood, the sound of ball meeting bat, the thrill of a double play, the naughty words that flow freely in dugouts and the fabulous smell of sweat and beer after games end.

This will all seep into the kid's bones; it will become part of the youngster's DNA. Carrying these memories like untouchable software code, the lad will play the game later in life with the same joy and fervor. And one day that little kid will reach middle age and ponder it all with a smile, without hardly noticing the words being typed for a soon-to-be-published story in the local paper. It's magic - and not much different than players emerging from a corn field to play a game on a diamond in Iowa.

It's time to play softball. Enjoy the games. But above all, file away the memories.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

Sell it - Buy it at Auction

Tri County Livestock Auction
1st & 3rd Wednesdays of the Month - Auction begins at 4 PM
Located Off MD Rt. 6 West - Charlotte Hall, MD

Loveville Produce Auction
Spring Flower & Craft Auction
Loveville Produce Auction Facility - Loveville, MD
Saturday, May 6, 2023 - 9 am
Selling with 2 Auctioneers throughout the day!

So. Md. Spring Auction
Saturday, May 13, 4 pm
Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn - Mechanicsville, MD
Flowers, Bedding Plants, Combo Planters, Vegetable Plants, Mother's Day Flowers/Items, Outdoor Furniture, Lawn/Garden Items, Tools, Toys, Handcrafted Quilts, Concrete Lawn/Garden Statuary/Items; Misc. Tack

NOTE: This is one of several auctions we have each year that focuses on our local farmers, growers & producers.
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Leonardtown's Summer Music Festival Kicks Off April 29



The Town of Leonardtown, the Leonardtown Business Association and the St. Mary's County Arts Council are proud to announce the return of the Leonardtown Summer Music Festival! Leonardtown will host a summer of FREE, live outdoor concerts featuring an exciting lineup of artists including Doc Martin & the Flannels, Latrice Carr, Leonardo Garcia Y Son Horizonte, Phillip Michael Parsons, Vertigo Red and more throughout the Town from April – October 2023.

We're excited to announce the continuation of the thrilling On the Water's Edge music series, sponsored by Jimmy Hayden of Re/Max 100 and Homes for Heroes. Attendees will once again be able to join in the fun by land or water – catch FREE shuttle rides from the Leonardtown Trolley provided by Patuxent Transportation (courtesy of the Town of Leonardtown) from around Town to the Wharf or pull up to the Town's slips and enjoy the music with friends right from your boat. For trolley route info (including new stops), hours and tracking details visit: visitleonardtownmd.com/leonardtowntrolley.

The music festival kicks off on Saturday, April 29th when Leonardo Garcia Y Son Horizonte performs at the Leonardtown Wharf from 6 PM – 8 PM during the Leonardtown Music and Dance Appreciation Day, an all-day event filled with music and dance performances throughout Leonardtown being held in honor of International Day of Dance. The event is also an early celebration for Cinco De Mayo. This award-winning ensemble

performs a wide variety of original compositions and arrangements from traditional Salsa music to Salsa Jazz. Talented Latin Dance Instructors, Elajiah Hurtt (formerly Tracy Hurtt) and Robin Santiago will be on hand to teach attendees who wish to learn Salsa and Kizomba dancing.

In addition to live music and dancing, attendees will be able to purchase and enjoy tasty eats from The Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary and the Gato Tacos food truck, award-winning wine from the Port of Leonardtown Winery, beer from the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department and sweet treats from the Frog Town Ice Cream Shop.

We hope you'll join us for a wonderful evening of Salsa music, dancing and fun – not to mention a spectacular Wharf sunset! Then look for other exciting concerts around Town from the Leonardtown Square to the Port of Leonardtown Winery from April 'til October 2023 and be sure to join us for a fabulous summer of music in Leonardtown!

For a complete list of music in Leonardtown visit: visitleonardtownmd.com/leonardtownmusicfest.

Other concerts around Leonardtown, including the Leonardtown Square and Port of Leonardtown Winery, are presented by the Leonardtown Arts & Entertainment District, Marrick Homes, Quality Built Homes, the County Times, The Rex Restaurant & Bar, the Port of Leonardtown Winery and other valued sponsors. To view a full list of sponsors for the Leonardtown Summer Music Festival go to: visitleonardtownmd.com/leonardtownmusicfest.

FOLK LIFE 2023



SUMMER WORKSHOPS

MAY 20 & 21, 2023

St. Mary's College of Maryland


Join us to celebrate the 3rd annual Folklife Summer Workshops! The Center supports community-based living and the cultural traditions of Southern Maryland.

Scheduled workshops include:

Making Stuffed Ham
Quilting
Piñata Making
Paleontology
Natural Dyeing
Documenting Oral Histories

Writing Poetry
Life of the Watermen
Youth Workshop
Umfundalai:
African Dance
Making Batik

Telling the History of Lexington Park's Tulagi Place
Telling Ghost Stories
SMCM Arboretum Tour

Funding provided by 



FOR INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION, go to smdfolklife.org or scan the QR code



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28297 Old Village Dr. Mechanicsville, MD



Pick up is at the Parish Center located behind the church.

on

Sunday, May 7th, 2023

from 12:00 noon until 3:00 pm

Menu

Fried Chicken, Steamed Ship Round (Beef), Shrimp Salad, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Green Beans, Coleslaw, and Applesauce.

\$25.00 per dinner

Please visit ICChurchMD.org

Click on "Parish Dinner" to order and pay for your dinner by Wednesday, May 3rd, 2023. Call 301-884-3123

Questions? Call 301-904-0796



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St. Clement's Island Museum Offers Summer Art Classes



Young artists are invited to join art instructor, Ms. Ellen Duke Wilson, this summer to explore fine arts through St. Clement's Island Museum Art Kids classes. Young artists will expand their understanding of art and history while learning to sketch, paint, and sculpt. Students will also reflect on how making art can impact society in positives way for future generations.

"We are so grateful to have the very talented Elle Duke Wilson back for a fourth year to teach these popular classes," says Christina Barbour, Site Manager at St. Clement's Island Museum. "The children have loved coming to each class here at the museum and learning something new in a fun, creative way."

At the end of each session, all partici-

pants create an individualized work of art to share with their family and community. These classes are geared towards children ages 7 to 17. Preregistration is required and the cost is \$5 per child. All materials are provided; however, participants are asked to bring a light snack. Parents are encouraged to sign up soon as slots fill up quickly.

The 2023 class schedule is as follows: June 20 - 22; July 11 - 13; July 25 - 27; and August 8 - 10.

For more information regarding St. Clement's Island Museum Art Kids, or to sign up your child, please call Christina Barbour at (301) 769-4723. For more information on this or other events, visit [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum).

More Primary Care Services at St. Mary's County Health Hub



Greater Baden Medical Services, in partnership with the St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD), is expanding hours for primary care services at the St. Mary's County Health Hub.

Community members 14 years of age and older may now receive primary care services on the following days and hours, by appointment:

Monday (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Wednesday (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Thursday (8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.)

Primary care health services include routine preventative care, immunizations, health screenings, and diagnosis/treatment. Greater Baden Medical Services is a Federally Qualified Health Center that operates community-based health clinics in Maryland. Greater Baden accepts private insurance, Medicaid, Medicare and offers a sliding fee scale for those who do not have health insurance. Appointments can be made by calling 301-888-2233 during regular business hours.

"The Health Hub is a remarkable resource to support the health and wellness of our community members," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "Our health department team appreciates all the community partners who work together for the Hub, including our partners at Greater Baden Medical Services who are strengthening primary care access for St. Mary's County."

"Greater Baden Medical Services is grateful for its partnership with the St. Mary's County Health Hub. We are excited to add capacity that will increase access to primary preventive medical care for all community members who would like to make an appointment for a visit," said Dr. Chris DeMarco, CEO of Greater Baden Medical Services.

To learn more about Greater Baden Medical Services, please visit www.gbms.org.

To learn more services provided at the St. Mary's County Health Hub, visit smchd.org/hub.

St. Mary's Schools Honored for Excellence in Music Education

For the second consecutive year, St. Mary's County Public Schools (SMCPS) has been honored with the Best Communities for Music Education designation from The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) Foundation for its outstanding commitment to music education. The Best Communities for Music Education designation is awarded to districts that demonstrate outstanding achievement in efforts to provide music access and education to all students.

To qualify for the Best Communities designation, SMCPS answered detailed questions about funding, graduation requirements, music class participation, instruction time, facilities, support for the music program, and community music-making programs. Responses were verified by school officials and reviewed by The Music Research Institute at the University of Kansas.

"We are so proud to support the arts in

our schools, and this recognition speaks to the commitment our Board and community have for the arts. We are tremendously grateful to the incredible dedication of our amazing educators of the fine and performing arts who bring out the very best of our talented students," said Dr. J. Scott Smith, Superintendent of Schools.

The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its 15,000 member companies and individual professionals. The foundation advances active participation in music-making across the lifespan by supporting scientific research, philanthropic giving, and public service programs. For more information about The NAMM Foundation, please visit www.nammfoundation.org.

For additional information, please contact Todd Burroughs, Supervisor of Instruction for Fine Arts, at 301-475-5511, x32246.

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Celebrate National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day on April 30



St. Mary's Animal Adoption and Resource Center

Did you know that every year in the U.S., nearly 7 million animals go into animal shelters? National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day is celebrated annually on April 30th to raise awareness of these pets in need of adoption.

The St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resources Center encourages community members to celebrate National Adopt a Shelter Pet Day! Suggested ways to celebrate include:

Visit an animal shelter, learn about the needs of adopted pets, and consider adopting.

Spay and neuter your pets to help reduce the number of unwanted pets in the population.

Share pictures of your adopted pet on social media using #AdoptAShelterPetDay

If you adopted from the St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resources Center, we would love for you to tag us in your post!

Check out the shelter's donation needs

list and donate if you can.

Volunteer your time at a local shelter or animal welfare organization.

The shelter is open to the public on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from noon – 6 p.m., and on Saturdays and Sundays from noon – 4 p.m. Walk-ins are welcome, no appointment necessary. The Animal Adoption & Resource Center takes in and oversees adoptions for a variety of animals, including dogs, cats, reptiles, small mammals, birds, and more.

Residents can learn more about the Center, view animals available for adoption, and watch the live kitty cam online at: stmaryscountymd.gov/animalshelter; or follow the Center on Facebook at: facebook.com/smcanimalservices. For additional information, call the St. Mary's County Animal Adoption & Resources Center at (301) 475-8018.

Fill Out an Advance Health Care Directive at Law Day

Do you have an Advance Healthcare Directive? Is your document up to date? If your answer to either question is no, sign up for Law Day to meet with an attorney and fill one out, free of charge!

Law Day will be held on Friday, May 5, 2023, from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Loffler, Garvey, and Northern Senior Activity Centers. Registration is required for this event.

All participating attorneys are members of the St. Mary's County Bar Association and are donating their time for Law Day. Please note legal support provided at this event is limited to Advance Care Directives ONLY.

An Advance Health Care Directive:

- Identifies your Health Care Agent, the person or persons who will make your health care decisions.
- Decides when your Agent's power becomes effective.
- States your desires concerning the administration or withholding of life sustaining procedures if you are unable

to give instructions regarding your care due to an end-of-life condition.

- Can be customized with your personal instructions and statements.
- Determines pain relief measures to relieve pain and suffering.
- States your wishes concerning organ donation or the donation of your body.
- States your desires and preferences regarding funeral and burial, cremation, memorial service, or other final instructions.

For more information or to register for this event, please contact Sarah Miller at Sarah.Miller@stmaryscountymd.gov or (301) 475-4200, ext. 1073.

For more information on the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services, including the three Senior Activity Center locations and other programs, please visit stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or follow us on social media at [Facebook.com/SMCDAHS](https://facebook.com/SMCDAHS).

Pet OF THE WEEK

MEET BOBO



Love is all that I can give you. But you will find it's all that you will need!

Hi, my name is BoBo. My lovin' Shelter Pals want YOU to know that I'm a REALLY COOL HOUND! I'm the type of hound who just wants to be near you soaking up all the attention. I really LOVE being petted and you will LAUGH when I roll over for some belly rubs. I'm about 3 YEARS OLD and I definitely seem to LOVE EVERYONE including other dogs. If you're LOOKING FOR LOVE, then stop by to meet me during adoption hours Monday-Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday 10am-3pm or email animalshelter@charlescountymd.gov. BE MY MIRACLE AND PLEASE CHOOSE ME! And always remember, opt to ADOPT, please don't shop!

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



Spring into Spring Auction

May 6 | Sales begin at 9am

2023

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Letters to the Editor

Don't Let the St. Mary's County Commissioners Raise Taxes

As the St. Mary's County Commissioners transition from an impact fee to a much larger excise tax, and debate raising property taxes, they should consider the ramifications such tax increases will have on their constituents.

The commissioners are currently mulling a roughly 367% increase to what will be a newly established excise tax, and a 3.5% increase in property tax revenues collected by deviating from the constant yield tax rate. While the two are not directly related, these taxes on real estate development and homeowners will have a chilling effect on the local economy.

These additional taxes will be transferred directly to buyers, placing the American Dream out of reach for more people. At a time of economic strain and inflation, the residents of St. Mary's will feel the pain of these tax increases.

The Southern Maryland Association of REALTORS® would request that the commissioners consider acting on several items.

We would ask that the commissioners maintain the proposed constant yield tax rate of \$.8023. Constant yield is designed to offset the tax burden when property assessments see large jumps as we have seen over the past year.

The county should remain revenue neutral as the county transitions from an impact fee to an excise tax. Raising the excise tax will create more difficulty for homebuyers to afford a place to live and will disincentivize development in the county. Encouraging people to build smaller homes for a smaller one-time up-front fee will harm the county's potentially taxable base over the life of the home.

The county should consider strategies to mitigate any harm caused by the excise tax and minimize any collection of an excise

tax on non-residential development. Several other jurisdictions have found success in allowing the cost of a development excise tax to distribute over a certain period, such as 10 years. We would also ask the commissioners to exclude collecting any excise taxes on major home renovations. We would further recommend removing any excise tax on industrial or office space, specifically if it would further the goals of St. Mary's County Economic Development (SMCED). The commissioners should work with SMCED to develop an exemption to the non-residential excise tax for a business if the development helps expand one of the county's targeted industries.

The state of Maryland, like much of the country, is currently facing an unprecedented housing shortage. A survey by American Strategies earlier this year found that 76% of Maryland voters think the cost to buy a home in Maryland is too high, and almost one out of every three people would consider leaving the state due to high housing costs.

This is a shortage that experts across the world have been trying to develop policies on for years. However, it doesn't take an expert to know that these higher taxes will make it more difficult for people to purchase homes.

We understand that it is expensive to maintain growing public facilities. Many people look to St. Mary's County now to find a safe, pleasant, and expanding community. We don't want to see that change.

We want to see the county grow smartly and responsibly, but large tax increases will stand in the way of that.

*Michael Funk
President of the Southern Maryland
Association of REALTORS®*

To the Editor:

This is about all the humanitarianism in St. Mary's County. As someone that has to frequent various food pantries here, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation to all those that give their time and compassion to those of us who have to rely on the altruism of others.

There are people in St. Mary's County that have good loving hearts when it comes down to food insufficiency and the temporary soup kitchen serves very good and

nutritional lunches.

It's my understanding that a building owned by Mr. Knott was donated to be the new soup kitchen to open very soon.

Thank you, Mr. Knott for your philanthropy and to all who give of themselves for the welfare of all the less fortunate.

*Anna Poe
Lexington Park*

Christmas In April Forges Ahead



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The beneficent, volunteer organization St. Mary's Christmas in April (CIA), which for decades has helped the needy repair their homes with sometimes critical safety upgrades, has its work cut out for as it will send volunteer teams to work on projects this weekend.

Howard Thompson, the public face of the local CIA and its president, said this is the 33rd year the organization has helped out their fellow county residents but it gets more difficult every year.

Whereas the group will tackle 13 homes this year in years past it repaired between 25 to 30 in a weekend.

Volunteers will also be working on The Mission in Lexington Park as well as its perennial maintenance work on the county fairgrounds in Leonardtown.

Many of the smaller construction contractors who once pitched in to help over the years are no longer here, Thompson said, while CIA has had to deal with much lower levels of donations.

Thompson told local elected leaders this week that over the years CIA volunteers have completed \$8 million in repairs and "utilizing almost 45,000 volunteers."

"We stay busy," Thompson said. "The same volunteers come back every year."

In the "boom years," according to Thompson, corporate sponsors gave generously to CIA's efforts, but tough times have led to more cutbacks.

Darene Kleinsorgen, CEO of the group, said COVID-19 took much from the group.

"We lost a lot of volunteers," she said. "We would have between 1,000 and 1,500 every year."

"It dropped down to zip and now we're starting to build it back up again."

She said leadership on the work sites — provided by house captains — is critical but some of them who have been with the organization since its inception are bowing out.

"Some of them are 74, 76 years old," Kleinsorgen said. "And they're saying 'I think we're done now.'"

"We're trying to get the young people to come in and volunteer; it's a big responsibility."

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County voted unanimously to waive the landfill dumping fees to dispose of the trash that CIA collects from homes as a result of their renovations.

"We collect about 100 tons of trash from these homes," Thompson said. "We can't really get to the houses sometimes until that's moved out of there."

"It's a big push at the beginning of the day."

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New Protective Headgear for Marine Corps Maintainers



The Naval Aircrew Systems program office (PMA-202) is fielding new headgear, the Head Gear Unit Number 98/Personal Use (HGU-98P), that improves both head and hearing protection for fleet Marine Corps aviation maintainers.

PMA-202 incorporated the latest advancements and information gained from market research, lab testing and fleet assessments to select the new Marine Corps maintenance cranial, the Team Wendy Exfil Light Tactical Polymer helmet, which is a Commercial-off-the-Shelf solution.

"The HGU-98/P provides improved impact protection and increased hearing protection, which are long overdue improvements that our maintainers deserve," said Capt. Carey Castelein, PMA-202 program manager.

Since the inception of protective headgear in the 1950s, a major challenge has been to design helmets that offer the required impact and hearing protection while providing a system that provides a comfortable

fit. Because flight lines and flight decks are notoriously loud, a safe and comfortable helmet is mission critical.

The new cranial comes in two sizes and an alternate H-shaped back retention system to accommodate a hair bun. The HGU-98/P also features two different styles of hearing protection, both rail mounted to the helmet, with either X4 ear cups for a slimmer fit or X5 with larger ear cups but with better sound attenuation.

"Through research, test and fleet assessments, our team was able to determine the best possible solution for improved head and hearing protection, taking into account cost, performance and user feedback," said Jennifer Bartnick, PMA-202 team lead.

Squadrons that began receiving the HGU-98/P flight deck helmet system in October 2022 have given favorable feedback. Fielding to Marine Corps aviation units will continue through the end of the year, and the cranial with additional capability will begin delivery next year.

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Meet Cpl. Holdsworth, Sheriff's Deputy of the Year for 2022

Corporal Daniel Holdsworth was chosen by the Command Staff as the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Deputy of the Year for his outstanding work in 2022.

Cpl. Holdsworth grew up in Lothian in Anne Arundel County until he left to attend college at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. After a year, he came back home and continued to study Criminal Justice at Anne Arundel Community College. He then started working full-time in the construction industry until the housing market crash of 2008 changed his plans.

He decided to pursue a career in law enforcement and began applying to agencies in Southern Maryland. Holdsworth joined the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office as a Corrections Officer in 2010. After being promoted to Corrections Officer First Class, Holdsworth successfully applied to become a Deputy Sheriff in 2014.

"My father, Lee Holdsworth, was a police officer with the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia and he is the reason I became interested in a career in law enforcement," Cpl. Holdsworth said. "Although he retired when I was very young, I grew up hearing stories about policework and it seemed like an exciting line of work, and it is," he said.

Last week, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office held its annual Awards Banquet and recognized Cpl. Holdsworth

for his noteworthy work in 2022. A member of the Lexington Park COPs Unit since Aug. 7, 2021, Cpl. Holdsworth was selected as the Deputy Sheriff of the Year for 2022 for his proactive police work and positive interactions with the community he serves.

During a traffic stop last year, the driver asked Cpl. Holdsworth to speak to her children about police work and he invited the family to visit the Sheriff's Office District 4 Station in Lexington Park for a tour. In April 2022, Cpl. Holdsworth assisted the members of the Church of the Ascension in Lexington Park with installing a new refrigerator for their food pantry. In the same month, Cpl. Holdsworth responded to a local business for the report of a man with a gun. He located and apprehended the armed subject, who was prohibited from owning the firearm by state law.

Cpl. Holdsworth said he is honored to be named as the Deputy Sheriff of the Year but was quick to share accolades with the Sheriff's Office's COPs Unit for their work as well. "To be selected as Deputy of the Year means a lot to me," he said. "The COPs Unit has had a very busy year and I believe everyone in the unit deserves the same recognition. From attending countless community events to making gun and drug arrests, we have been busy. While it doesn't change the performance of our work, I am appreciative of the recognition and for the Team



Commissioner President Randy Guy, Cpl. Daniel Holdsworth, Sheriff Steve Hall and Commissioner Mike Alderson

Award the COPs Unit received," he said.

Cpl. Holdsworth said his favorite part of the job is meeting and getting to know members of the St. Mary's County community. The COPs Unit attended a community event last weekend, "and it was enjoyable to talk to people, answer questions and show off our equipment. The kids always love sitting in the car and seeing the lights," he said.

The most challenging part of the job is the schedule, he said. "Police work is 24/7 so we are going to be working some nights and weekends, which means I miss out on

some family events. Depending on events or crime trends, our schedule can change at a moment's notice."

If you are interested in a career with the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, Cpl. Holdsworth advised, "Stop thinking about it and apply today. Submit your application and take advantage of our \$15,000 sign-on bonus. This is a very rewarding career and it's true – no day is ever the same."

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New Simplified Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations

In accordance with amended authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) will follow the new bivalent COVID-19 vaccine recommendations for the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines to simplify the vaccination schedule for most individuals.

The updated booster is a formula that both boosts immunity against the original coronavirus strain and also protects against the newer Omicron variants that account for most of the current cases.

What has changed:

Adults age 65 and older and immunocompromised people can get an additional COVID-19 vaccine dose.

Monovalent (original) COVID-19 mRNA vaccines will no longer be recommended for use in the U.S.

Individuals 5 years of age and older who are not yet vaccinated are eligible to receive a single dose of the bivalent vaccine as the primary series.

What has not changed:

Everyone ages 6 years and older are recommended to receive an updated (bivalent) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Individuals

ages 6 years and older who have already received an updated mRNA vaccine do not need to take any action unless they are 65 years or older or immunocompromised.

For young children, multiple doses continue to be recommended and will vary by age, vaccine, and which vaccines were previously received.

"These updated recommendations will simplify the vaccine schedule and hopefully encourage community members to stay up-to-date with their vaccine," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "Moving forward we expect that vaccines may be periodically updated similarly to how we update the flu vaccine annually. This should help community members better protect themselves from the circulating strains of COVID-19."

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be available at the SMCHD Health Clinic in Leonardtown on Tuesdays and Fridays from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. by appointment only. To make a vaccine appointment, please call SMCHD at 301-475-4330. COVID-19 vaccines are also available through primary care offices and local pharmacies.

For more information about COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, please visit smchd.org/coronavirus

Softball Still Thrives in St. Mary's

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Leonardtown attorney J. Ernest "Ernie" Bell has played softball for decades. Now 82, he doesn't play anymore but he still loves the sport.

He played as a young man in his 20s and 30s and when he got a little older, he and his friends found a way to keep playing.

"It was 20 or 30 of us and when we turned 40, we were playing all the younger guys," Bell said. "They were all in their 20s."

About two decades go by and that group of dedicated and venerable players decided to form what is now known as the 50 and Over Softball League in St. Mary's.

"After 20 years pass, now we're 60 and still playing younger guys," Bell said. "That's how the over-50 league started."

Reminiscing about playing softball with all of his friends for all of those years, brings back images of an era when softball was more than a fun sport.

It was a major social event that took place every week at ball fields throughout the county; there were dozens of teams for both men and women.

"The heyday was probably in the 70s and 80s," Bell said.

But as time went on the softball fields weren't quite as active but there are still dedicated players of all age groups that still love to play.

"Softball is alive and well," said Bell.



2022 50-and-over tournament champions Senior Moments, back row l to r: Cornell Barnes, Frank King, Kenny King, Teddy Adams (player/manager), Terry Thompson, Lamont Young, and Billy Grisby. Front row l to r: Charlie Johnson, Rodney Adams, and Ronnie Young.

"There's at least three men's leagues and there are a couple of women's leagues."

The sport is easier to play than baseball, Bell said, and therefore open to more players; the games are slow pitch or fast pitch and thrown underhand in an arc.

There are also fewer innings and games therefore conclude faster.

Some teams are highly competitive and keep close records of their performance while others, said John "Junior" Knott, who is the current president of the over-50 league, "are just happy to be able to get out and play."

Knott is widely regarded as a top player in the older age range and he also plays in a travel league.

"I can still hit pretty hard," Knott, 75, said. "We've got nine teams in two divisions."

Players who are aged 50 to 69 use wooden bats in the "A" division and those over 70 are allowed to use composite bats.

Knott explained that composite bats allow older players to hit harder and maintain a level of competitiveness with younger players.

"One team has a 90-year-old batter," Knott said. "And believe it or not, he can get a base hit."

"With those composite bats some of these balls go off at 100 miles an hour."

Older players who can still hit but have a problem running to a base have other players run for them, Knott said.

"We want guys to come out and have fun," said Knott.

He can remember when softball games brought hundreds of people out to the fields.

"Not only ball players came out but they brought their whole family," Knott said. "Everybody's neighborhood had a team."

"It was so competitive." The ladies are just as active in the sport as the men.

Debra Bailey said she has been playing softball since she was 8 years old; she's now 61 and playing in the over-30 women's league.

This league is particularly well known for their annual games against the Clements Cuties, male softball players dressed in outrageous drag costumes raising thousands of dollars to help sick children in the community.

"I'm overqualified," she said with a laugh. "The league is great because you can be 30 and you can be that mom with kids who wants to play but can't play two

nights a week [like the more competitive women's league].

"It's a fun league, there's no trophies." But the main focus of the women's league softball is tough competition, Bailey said.

"The younger women all play fast pitch, there's no slow pitch," she said.

Bailey grew up when one of the only sports available to play in St. Mary's for most people was softball.

"That's what you grew up with," Bailey said. "It was only softball."

"It's one of the hallmarks of St. Mary's County."

She can remember the glory days of the softball in the county and playing at Penny's Bar in Leonardtown.

"That was where the championship softball game was always played," Bailey said. "Thousands of people would show up to that game."

"It was big." She continues to play the sport and loves to watch it, too.

"I'm sorry people playing now can't experience what we did in the 70s and the 80s."

Knott said the beauty of the game is you often start playing just to be with your friends more, but you make new friends along the way.

"I like the camaraderie," Knott said. "You make friends for the rest of your life; you're friends forever."

"It keeps you young at heart."

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St. Mary's Library Taking to the Road



A similar mobile library already in use in Calvert County

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Residents who want to check out a book or use some of the services that a local library can afford them, such as computer and internet access, but may not be able to make to the brick-and-mortar facility will soon have another option.

St. Mary's County's library system is catching up with their neighbors in Calvert and Charles counties by building a mobile library vehicle to deliver those services in certain neighborhoods and communities.

"It will have a mix of uses," said Laura Boonchaisri, marketing director for the St. Mary's County Library System. "And it's just for St. Mary's County; we're catching up and getting our own."

The vehicle will be large, Boonchaisri said, about 26 feet long and shaped much like a box truck where there will be books for

check out and computers available for work.

The truck will also be equipped with Wi-Fi internet capability, Boonchaisri said.

There will be regular stops in local communities, she said, but there will be particular emphasis on stops to places like daycares and senior living facilities and local parks.

The mobile library has yet to hit the streets though, Boonchaisri said, because it is still under construction.

"There was a severe aluminum shortage," she told The County Times. "It was supposed to be finished and available already but it was delayed."

The new mobile library should be available by the end of the summer, she said.

The mobile library vehicle will also be accessible to the handicapped and will be equipped with a wheelchair lift.

The three library systems in Southern Maryland have suffered like many other institutions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but visitors are returning.

Mark Volland, communications manager for the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, said that library materials have circulated 719,318 times alone in 2023 between the county systems and the systems have circulated mobile wi-fi hotspots for broadband access for the unserved and underserved 1,888 times this year.

A total of 37,385 people in the tri-county area have used their library cards so far this year.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Citizens Worried Over Westbury Intersection

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Several residents of Great Mills petitioned the Commissioners of St. Mary's County this week to mitigate speeding traffic on Pegg Road near the Westbury community; they want a traffic roundabout placed at the intersection of Westbury Boulevard and Pegg Road.

Raegan Medeiros, a Westbury community resident and home owners' association treasurer, said her researching of St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office statistics showed there is a collision at that intersection an average of once every 60 days.

The intersection and connecting roads are frequently used by pedestrians of all ages, school buses dropping off and picking up students and pet walkers.

These were all in danger of being struck by speeding traffic, she told county commissioners at their Apr. 25 fiscal 2024 budget hearing at Chopticon High School.

"How many will it take?" Medeiros asked. One resident said the fastest clocked speeding vehicle on the road in recent memory was going at 96 miles per hour.

A traffic roundabout would force traffic to slow down near the large neighborhood, they said.

Commissioner Scott Ostrow said he has



The intersection of Pegg Road and Westbury Boulevard

enough support on the commissioner board to move the projected construction of a traffic circle at the intersection from 2029 up to the 2025 fiscal year budget.

"Three of us are on board to push that next budget," Ostrow told The County Times of getting support from Commissioners Eric Colvin and Mike Alderson. "It's too dangerous."

"I don't want to see a fatality there." The Department of Public Works and Transportation is the county office that will handle the traffic project.

In the interim, Ostrow said he would request more traffic enforcement from the sheriff's office to cut down on speeding in the Westbury community.

But the traffic circle would have to wait. "But it won't be a heavy lift to move up," Ostrow said.

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Planning Decision Makes Solar Farm Possible



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A recent decision by the county's planning commission could pave the way for a solar farm to be built on a post-World War II era former munitions storage site in Mechanicsville.

The nearly 620 acres on Friendship School Road is in the county's rural preservation district and is currently owned by PB2 LLC and was under consideration by the planning commission as a possible plot for subdivision.

But county planners said earlier this month at the April 10 meeting that the land is not suitable for building of homes.

Brandy Glenn, senior planner, with the county said activity at the site would produce minimal traffic impacts in the surrounding community.

"The can only do non-residential uses," Glenn said to planning commission chair Howard Thompson. "They'll have to come to you for site plan approval."

The developer has indicated that they would build a major solar farm on the property but that would only be allowed if the Maryland Public Services Commission, which regulates such projects, deemed it appropriate, according to John Houser, assistant county attorney.

"Ultimately, it's the Public Services Commission that decides," Houser said.

Scott Burroughs, with the engineering firm of Lorenzi, Dodd and Gunnill, Inc. based in Waldorf, said the site underwent clean up and remediation in the 1980s when the then-owner, the Thiokol Corporation, razed all of the buildings that had been there since the late 1940s.

"It currently remains undeveloped," Burroughs said of the 619-acre piece of land in question.

The developer wants to use site for "a solar farm... sometime down the road," Burroughs said.

Joe Van Kirk, planning commission member, pointed out that the land would be open to any type of use permitted in the rural preservation district, not just a solar farm.

"You've talked about... utility uses and for solar," Van Kirk said. "But it's not locked into that."

Thompson said the decision by the planning commission opened up several possibilities for the property.

He noted many of the letters coming to the commission concerned about the subdivision process were against any kind of build out of residences.

"We think it might be solar but it could be something else," Thompson said. "This isn't a solar decision tonight."

"We know it's not going to be residential."

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Smith: Best Teachers Going To Lowest Performing Schools

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent absence from in-person learning for almost three years destroyed nearly all the gains made in local education of young people, Superintendent Scott Smith told The County Times this week, and it will take at least three years to bring those achievement levels back to their 2019 baseline.

In that year, Smith said, schools continued to make incremental improvements and test scores were “going in the right direction.”

The extent of the damage wrought by the pandemic can most readily be seen in four schools: George Washington Carver and Lexington Park elementary schools, Spring Ridge Middle School and Great Mills High School, said Smith.

Before the pandemic the graduation rate at Great Mills was 93 percent.

“And there were no gaps between ethnicities of students at that school,” Smith said.

That rate dropped to 85 percent in 2020 and dropped again to 83.4 percent in 2022.

“That school is fed into by the highest number of economically disadvantaged students,” Smith said. “Over 80 percent of the students at George Washington Carver and Lexington Park live at or just above the federal government poverty line.”

Fully 40 percent of all students in the school system of more than 17,000 are eligible for free and reduced meals (FARMS); most of the economically disadvantaged students are concentrated in the Great Mills and Lexington Park communities, Smith said.

This matters, he said, because students in homes without consistent computer and internet access are increasingly at risk of falling behind academically in a learning environment that becomes more dependant on technology access and familiarity each year.

This divide became no more apparent than during the pandemic.

“That is truly the tale of the pandemic,” Smith said. “That is our most intense work.”

To recoup these losses, Smith said, the system will be focusing more resources on these four schools.

That means putting the system’s best teachers at three of these schools: Great Mills High School, Spring Ridge and George Washington Carver.

Lexington Park may come in next year, he said, if the system can afford it in their budget for extra teaching resources.

“If you make a commitment to teach at one of these three schools you can make up to \$20,000 per year more with National Board certification,” Smith said of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

This significant boost in pay is on top of an increase planned for teacher salaries in the fiscal 2024 budget.

George Washington Carver is perhaps the most needful of help, Smith said.

“It’s our only two-star school,” he said.

The star rating is function of the MCAP assessment which rates the achievements of students each year; it is another in a long line of assessments the state has switched to in the past decade.

It measures progress in English language arts and mathematics in the formative grades and more advanced courses in the high school grades.

“That assessment was already in deep transition before the pandemic,” Smith said. “This year it’s adaptive (and entirely computer based),” he said. “It modifies each question based on the preceding answer.

“Everybody has a different test based on their ability to meet the standards.”

It is a test unlike any other given in schools, Smith said.

He hoped it stayed in use for a while.

“We have to say this is going to be the assessment for at least a decade,” he said.

Switching assessments, he said, made it difficult for the system to adequately prepare students to take it successfully.

Focusing resources at the youngest and most needful students is the foundation of the system’s strategy for regaining pre-pandemic levels of achievement, Smith said, which includes full-day pre-kindergarten for eligible students.

There are almost 500 such students in all-day pre-K, Smith said, and there will be more than 500 next year.

This plan mirrors the state’s Blueprint for Education, which mandates hundreds of millions of dollars for education in the next decade.

The next steps are to provide college and career readiness to older students and to establish pre-COVID norms, mainly in-person learning.

This plan is contained in a nearly 200-page document accessible on-line, Smith said.


“We spent two years writing this,” Smith said. “This is not a throw-away document.

“This is what we are doing.”


Despite the challenges the system faces, Smith was optimistic about its current status and its ability to improve.

“For the school system, we’re a solid four-stars,” Smith said. “We’re a good, strong ‘B.’”

guyleonard@countytimes.net



George Washington Carver Elementary
2021 - 2022 School Report Card



2 OUT OF 5 STARS
Percentile Rank: 14 (Elementary)

George Washington Carver Elementary (0805)
Grade Levels: Elementary
County: Saint Mary's County

46155 Carver School Blvd
Great Mills, MD 20634-0000
Phone: 301-863-4076


HOW DID MY SCHOOL DO OVERALL?

Overall school performance is determined by a combination of academic and school quality indicators. The total earned points percent is provided as well as a percentile rank and a star designation.

INDICATOR	POSSIBLE POINTS	EARNED POINTS*	ANNUAL TARGET	IMPROVEMENT
Academic Achievement	20.0	5.7	✘	✘
Academic Progress	35.0	11.5	na	✘
Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency	10.0	4.4	✘	✘
School Quality and Student Success	35.0	21.2	na	✘
TOTAL POINTS:	100.0	42.7		


Total Earned Points: **42.7**
Total Points Possible: **100.0** = **42.7%**
TOTAL EARNED PERCENT

* Earned points may not equal total points due to rounding. ✔ =Met ✘ =Not Met



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Citizens Call For Tax Relief at Budget Hearing



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Approximately 80 people attended the annual county operating budget hearing at Chopticon High School April 25 and only a few spoke out.

There were many more empty seats in the school's auditorium than full ones; it was one of the more sparsely attended such hearings in recent years.

But most of those who did speak called on the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to act to provide more tax relief to citizens.

The fiscal 2024 budget is maintaining the same property tax rate of .8478 cents per \$100 of assessed value but because of state-mandated reassessments of property that have resulted in value increases, the county is set to collect even more in property taxes this year than last.

The county will collect \$6.2 million more in property tax in fiscal 2024 than fiscal 2023 and \$8.8 million in income taxes as well, despite the income tax rate remaining at 3 percent.

County commissioners often state that they have not raised tax rates, but citizens have retorted that they have not reduced rates to provide tax relief.

"I'm disappointed you're keeping the [property tax] rate the same," said Deb Ray of Lexington Park, a former state delegate. "You could at least lower it half-way."

The constant yield tax rate — that which ensures the county would collect as much property tax as the prior year — would be .8203 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

She said the commissioners should work harder to find areas in the budget, especially county departments that got more money than they requested, to find ways to make cuts and provide tax relief.

"You can find money in the budget to bring the rate down to the constant yield," Rey said. "Our tax bill goes up and it's not good."

David Kelsey questioned why the com-

missioners were pushing to move to an excise tax, which many fear could result in the broad increase in tax revenues by as much as three-and-a-half fold if the commissioners determined to that limit, if they were raising far more already in income and property tax revenues.

The total combined increase in revenues from property and income taxes is a proposed \$15 million, according to county budget documents, while the excise tax, which will replace the income tax come July 1, is projected to initially net \$3.8 million based on new residential construction.

"How can five Republicans raise taxes and expect to be reelected," Kelsey asked. "My property tax assessment went up 28 percent this year."

"Why do they need this tax increase?" The total operating budget for the proposed fiscal 2024 operating budget is \$314 million, or \$10 million less than the current budget.

It is based on \$302 million in revenues and the addition of \$11.8 million in fund balance, budget documents show.

Paul Fenton, government affairs director for the Southern Maryland Association of Realtors, said the group opposed increasing property taxes.

"It makes home ownership just that much harder than it already is," Fenton said.

Steve Tuttle, who recently ran as a Democrat for county commissioner, said he could understand higher taxes and government spending if he saw "pristine parks and pristine sports fields" and public services such as law enforcement and the state's attorney's office getting all the funding they needed.

But that was not his experience, he said. "You're in my pocket again and I'm not seeing it," said Tuttle.

Commissioners have two more budget work sessions in May before finally passing a budget on May 23.

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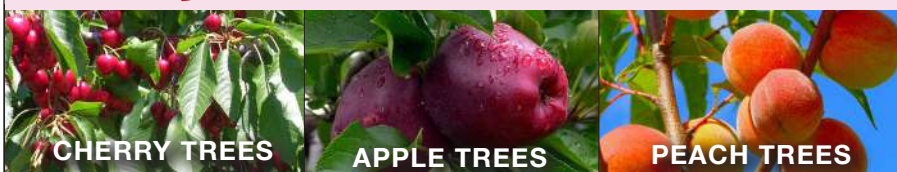
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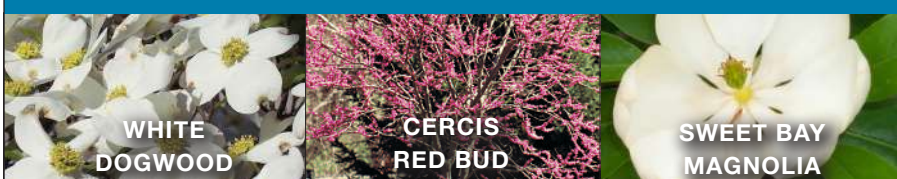


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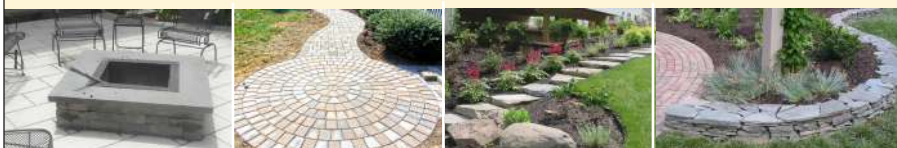
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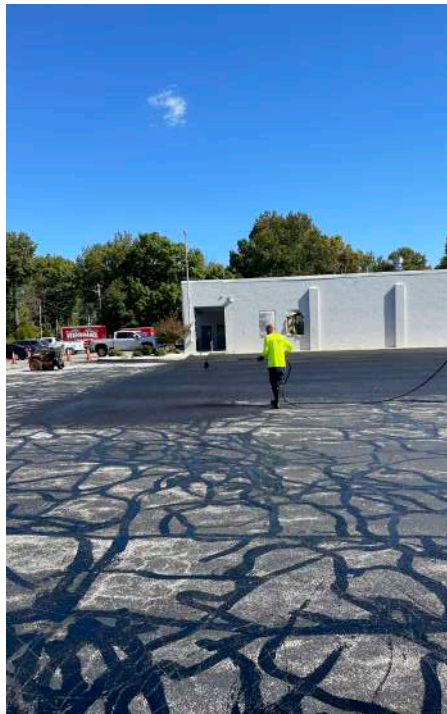
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JUNIOR KNOTT ON SOFTBALL'S BENEFITS FOR OLDER PLAYERS



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MON, MAY 1 AM Showers Hi: 64° Lo: 45°	TUE, MAY 2 Partly Cloudy Hi: 64° Lo: 42°	WED, MAY 3 Mostly Sunny Hi: 65° Lo: 45°	THU, MAY 4 Mostly Sunny Hi: 71° Lo: 53°



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