

Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, MAY 18, 2023

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**Sex Ed Changes
Proposed**

**Schools May Get
More Funding**

**Town Administrator
Mulled for North Beach**

**SCHOOL DRESS CODES:
WHAT'S COVERED?**

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School Dress Code Changes Proposed

It's Not What's Worn, It's What's Exposed

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Public Schools (CCPS) has proposed changes to the school dress policies that put less emphasis on the garment and more emphasis on what that piece of clothing covers or doesn't cover. The policy change in the school system's Code of Conduct will be open for public review for 30 days and then discussed next month by the school board.

Board President Inez Claggett has also proposed that the dress code become a separate policy and removed from the Code of Conduct. That will also be discussed next month.

Claggett said she worked on the policy changes with Student Member of the Board Maggie Rathgeb and other students.

Claggett said, "We're committed to safe, inclusive, and nurturing educational environments for our students. I also wanted to create an equitable way for staff to be able to ensure that students are dressing appropriately, and that every student is treated equally in their dress."

Molly Gearhart, supervisor of Student Services, said the changes were devised by a committee of teachers, parents, school-based administration from elementary, middle, and high school, central office administration, and the Student Member of the Board of Education. She said they also got input from students at one high school.

She explained, "The committee felt that these changes that are being recommended include language that is more inclusive and more focused on what is allowed versus what is not allowed."

She added, "The new language was added to specify that the dress code will be implemented equitably regardless of the noted

characteristics, and that attire contributes to a safe environment conducive to learning. Furthermore, students may wear attire otherwise not prohibited without fear of discipline or discrimination."

Gearhart explained that the new code language says "clothes must be worn in a way such that the chest, naval, pelvic groin area buttocks are covered, and that clothing must not be see-through. And then we have a section that is recommended on clothing that can be worn. And so, students are permitted to wear hats, hoods, and headwear. And what we've changed in this is we've added that student's identity is not concealed. That was a concern of the committee, that hats and hoods will sometimes conceal a student's identity. And administrators and staff members need to be able to identify students in the building."

She said, "We've also added that tank tops are permissible, including ones with spaghetti straps and including halter tops." What is not allowed to be worn, she said, is "visible underwear or bathing suits and headwear that obscures the face, except as a religious obligation observation of a religious holiday or for a school related activity."

Language was added about "attire that contains language or symbols that demean an identifiable person or group or otherwise infringes on the rights of others, attire that causes or is likely to cause a material disruption, a substantial disorder to school activities or the orderly operation of the school, or an invasion of the rights of others."

That prompted a question from board member Lisa Grenis – "Could a student wear a BLM (Black Lives Matter) shirt?"

Gearhart said, "I think that would be something that would be discussed. There could be some students that could wear that. There could be some students that could

wear something that they believe strongly in that another student doesn't. I think that we do have to have respect."

Grenis then asked, "Okay, could a student wear a MAGA (Make American Great Again) shirt?"

Gearhart responded, "I think some of these things have occurred in buildings over the years, and principals have either consulted with student services or other supervisors to ask questions about some of those things."

Grenis then responded, "This is where I'm going with it. If a principal has a political agenda or believes firmly in something at one school, it's permitted. And at another school it's not. It just doesn't make sense to me."

She added, "If a child's wearing a hat with a flag with a gun on it, you know, one principal could say, that's a child looking at the Second Amendment and showing respect. Another could say, whoa, a gun on the flag. That's creating problems with gun violence. It's all in how that one person perceives it. So, it seems to me we're creating some serious political influences based on how the principal perceives it."

Board member Jana Post observed that a piece of clothing may be questionable or not depending on that student's build. "I have four teenagers and my teenager, if she were to wear a halter top or a spaghetti strap, would look very different in that compared to some of her friends."

She noted, "I hear all the time that the dress code isn't enforced. They don't care, they don't do anything anyway," adding, "So how are these changes going to help us help the school and help the administrators and the teachers enforce this dress code?"

Gearhart responded, "The changes that were recommended by the committee were really to clarify language in terms of what

can and cannot be worn in a school building. I think the enforcement of dress code, whether it's policy or what's in the code of conduct, is something that building administration take very seriously and try to align their practices within their building so that there is consistency of on how they handle dress code violations."

Post added, "I'm just saying that it becomes very subjective because a tank top on my chest isn't showing and your chest is, and you get dress coded, and I don't, and how is that fair to me or to you?"

Post said whenever her teenagers wear a hoodie, "It covers a lot of their face, and it covers their ears. So, a lot of what we hear about the ear buds, it's because the hoods are covering the ear buds and the teachers can't see it. None of my children are going to walk around in a hoodie with it tucked behind their ears so that their face can be completely unobstructed."

Gearhart responded, "What school-based administrators shared with us is that students are actually very compliant in pushing the hood behind their ears, because there is the rule that they must do that."

"This is just opening another floodgate to creating problems," Post responded.

Gearhart said the committee had some discussion about cell phones in school. "Student services has subsequently participated in those conversations. And while no decisions have been made, there have been conversations at the elementary, middle, and high school with those principals about having some consistency at each level, which would still fall within the present code of conduct but may, depending on the outcome of those conversations, lead to some recommendations for changes to the 2024-25 Code of Conduct."

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Lusby Man Killed in Motorcycle Crash

Deputies from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Patrol Bureau on May 11 at approximately 8 p.m. responded to a serious crash involving a motorcycle along east-bound Plum Point Road in Huntingtown.

Preliminary investigation revealed, a Calvert County Sheriff's Deputy was travelling westbound on Plum Point Road when he observed two motorcycles travelling eastbound at a high rate of speed. After the deputy safely made a U-turn, the motorcycles accelerated and were observed passing vehicles on the shoulder. Moments later both motorcycles left the deputy's sight due to numerous curves and roadway design. While travelling eastbound on Plum Point Road in attempt to locate the motorcycles, the deputy came upon a crash scene located in the 2200 block of Plum Point Road in the area of Ida's Lane.

Upon arrival at the crash scene, a black Suzuki GSX-R 1000 motorcycle and the

operator were located in the grassy shoulder of the roadway.

Emergency Medical Services responded to the scene and pronounced the driver, Austin M. Harris, 25 of Lusby, deceased.

Further investigation revealed, the second motorcycle, a yellow custom Suzuki sports bike, operated by Tyler G. King, 26 of Huntingtown, remained at the crash site and provided a witness statement.

At this time, speed and driver error appear to be contributing factors in the collision.

Calvert County Sheriff's Office Crash Reconstruction Team is continuing the investigation of this collision. Anyone who may have witnessed this crash or events leading up to it, is asked to please contact Cpl. V. Bortchevsky at vlad.bortchevsky@calvertcountymd.gov or S/DFC J. Hardesty at jeffrey.hardesty@calvert-countymd.gov

Post Proposes School Policy Changes

Affects Sex Education, Library Materials

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Board of Education member Jana Post has proposed comprehensive changes to the school system's policies on selection of library materials and sex education curriculum. The changes, that appear to give parents more say in the decision making, were presented by Post at the May 11 school board meeting. She said she had a lot of community input on the proposed changes. The board delayed any discussion until next month to give staff a chance to respond.

Post said the curriculum changes were intended "to ensure that the Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum and associated instructional librarian materials are high quality, developmentally appropriate and scientifically accurate."

A language change says, "The instructional material used by teachers shall not promote political bias. Teacher resources must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. Parents and legal guardians shall have opt out privileges for the health curricula, Family Life, and Human Sexuality sections specifically."

One of the most sweeping changes is the creation of a Family Life and Human Sexuality Committee. She said "The pur-

pose of this committee shall be to select, review, comment on and approve high quality, developmentally appropriate and scientifically accurate Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum, and all associated instructional materials.

"The family life committee shall be a joint committee of educators and representatives of the community, which will be charged with reviewing, commenting on, and approving if necessary, retiring all primary and supplemental instruction materials related to family life and human sexuality for the district. For each grade, all family life and human sexuality instructional materials approved by the committee shall be made available, districtwide. Family Life and Human Sexuality educators will be required to use the approved primary instructional materials for their grade."

She added that supplemental instruction is not permitted unless approved by the committee.

The committee will serve two-year terms and will consist of three each of elementary, middle, and high school educators and two administrators, and then two health-care professionals and nine community members not affiliated with the school system. That creates a committee equally divided among school and non-school members.

Post said she also incorporated into the changes requirements of state law that are not in the current policies for both library selection and the health curriculum.

Regarding the library selection policy, Post said, "Acknowledging that publishers have a financial interest in recognizing the books that they sell, and that books may be purchased and previewed based on publisher recommendations or awards or other recommendation lists, but that does not replace a duty to read and to curate the books prior to placing them into circulation."

She said, "The mission of CCPS (Calvert County Public Schools) is to work cooperatively with families, students, community colleagues, and other professionals in order to promote each student's success and wellbeing as he or she prepares for future endeavors. Pursuant to the mission, licensed educators and professional librarians from all CCPs schools are encouraged to collaborate with family, students, community colleagues, and other professions on the curation."

A new section says, "Sexually explicit materials are not appropriate for children who are not developmentally ready to take a comprehensive course on human sexuality."

She added, "The board considers sexually explicit library materials to be developmentally inappropriate for elementary and

middle school students, and out of step with the pacing of the Family Life and Human Sexuality curriculum.

In addition to the current committee that reviews complaints about materials, a new committee called the Library Materials Curation and Management Committee, would be appointed by the board.

Post said, "The committee shall be subdivided into three committees, which shall direct the library materials, curation and acquisition processes for elementary school, middle school, and high school. Each sub-committee shall be comprised of at least nine members. Members may serve on more than one committee at a time, and the members shall be drawn from the following areas: ELA specialists, library specialists, experts in child development, unaffiliated trauma specialists, unaffiliated child psychologists, and CCPS parents.

Having the new committee will lessen the need for the existing reconsideration committee, she said. "When educators and librarians collaborate on the curation of librarian materials across the system, Calvert County Public Schools is in a much stronger position to justify its decisions," she said.

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Budget Still a Work in Progress

Hance Suggests \$13.5 Million More for Schools

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) President Buddy Hance says the county still has a lot of work to do before the June 6 deadline to finalize the Fiscal Year 2024 budget. "Seven to 10 days, we should have a much clearer picture on what our revenue stream is going to look like," he said at the beginning of the May 16 budget hearing for one with a lot of unanswered questions, including how much tax revenue the Cove Point LNG plant will be contributing.

The budget process has become a lot more complicated with the proposed school board budget, which is at historic levels, with a request for \$24 million more than the county is currently contributing. Part of that increase is necessitated by mandates from the Blueprint for Maryland's Future, the state's education reform measure.

Hance did, however, give a hint at what the final budget might look like. He said, "I do want to thank Superintendent (Dr. Andrae) Townsel and Mr. Scott Johnson (chief financial officer) from the school system for all their hard work. We've met several times working through the budget, answering questions, trying to figure a path forward."

Hance said, "I think that we've settled on about 13 and a half million dollars for the school system, and that will give all of the employees a three percent pay raise and a

step. The superintendent had asked for a 5.5 percent pay raise in two increments for all employees. And what I promised the superintendent is that in December, when we're halfway through this year, we would take another look at our budget and see how we can get him to where he needs to be."

Hance added, "Everybody knows about Blueprint and the requirements of Blueprint and so, we are going to meet our obligations for Blueprint. We just want to make sure that we are on the right and clear path, and the superintendent and Mr. Johnson are in agreement."

During the public hearing, a half dozen speakers urged the county to fund the whole request. Calvert Education Association President Dona Ostenso said, "There is a national teacher shortage. Calvert County no longer has one of the top starting teacher salaries in the state. According to MSDE (Maryland State Department of Education), Calvert is currently ranked 14th out of 24 in the state. Amongst our neighboring counties, in FY '23, Calvert teachers receive the lowest salary and are projected to still receive the lowest in FY '24. Based upon the Board of County Commissioner's current proposal of a three-percent raise, compared to our four neighboring counties, next year Calvert County will have the lowest starting salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree and have next to the lowest starting salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree and a standard professional certificate."

Ostenso added, "We no longer have applicants coming to us. We must recruit. But from where? According to a recent article in the Washington Post dated May 14th, 2023, in the 2018-2019 school year, colleges and universities awarded about 90,000 undergraduate education degrees compared to over 200,000 in the early 1970s. We must also worry about retention. If we cannot attract teachers, then we must retain the teachers that we have. Since October of this school year, CCPS has had 18 leaves of absences, 48 resignations and 33 retirements."

At the public hearing, former commissioner Pat Nutter spoke in support of the proposed new Harriett Elizabeth Brown Community Center and several speakers urged an accelerated replacement of the Dunkirk Regional Park skateboard facility and a new one in the southern part of the county.

Before the public hearing, Calvert County Budget Officer Dawn Wood explained the proposal is to retain the current tax rate but not the constant yield. She said, "The constant yield tax rate is the tax rate a jurisdiction would need to impose to generate the same amount of property tax revenue in the upcoming fiscal year FY 2024, as it did in the current year FY 23. Those two rates are different because of changes in property assessments. In a rising or increasing assessment environment, we would have to lower our property tax rate to keep our property tax income and county revenues the same."

During the public hearing, Southern Maryland Association of Realtors (SMAR) representative Beverly Rasmussen urged adoption of the constant yield. She said, "SMAR believes local governments should fund from their existing property and income tax basis for the necessary public facilities such as the schools, water and sewer, transportation, public safety, and others at a rate that keeps up with the population growth. We're not doing that. This deviation from constant yield, which amounts to a hefty tax increase on the homeowners, can easily be avoided while not disrupting the county's finances."

Director of Finance and Budget Sharon Strand said the current gap between revenue and expenses that the BOCC will have to resolve before June is \$17.9 million.

Deputy Director of Finance and Budget Beth Richmond explained the differences between the budget presented on May 16 and the earlier one presented by staff. She said, "We revised and refined our estimates based on current information. We reduced the cost for county staff, and this had a ripple impact on payroll taxes. We also adjusted our insurance premiums based on the actual rates received from our insurance providers."

The public record will be kept open for written comments until the close of business on June 5.

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Running Hare Owner Reacts to Controversy

Running Hare Vineyard owner Mike Scarborough provided to The County Times the following statement in response to the controversy with the county that has forced the closing of his business for public events. He read part of the statement at the May 16 county commissioners' meeting but was not allowed to finish because of the two-minute comment time limit.

"I decided this morning that I would address this board and speak directly about the issue of getting Running Hare Vineyard, Inc. (RHV) open and running, no pun intended.

"This process began 2 1/2 years ago when RHV was cited for violations, specifically for construction and work done without permits. For that, we are absolutely guilty, and we have taken full responsibility for that over the past 2 1/2 years. County Administrator Mark Willis has probably got tired of listening to me profusely acknowledging our role in this issue.

"Ultimately, this comes down to the issue of, has Running Hare Vineyard done what it has been asked to do? I saw on Commissioner Grasso's Facebook page a timeline that was put together by the County Government of what Running Hare Vineyard has done over this 2 1/2-year period. By and large I believe that that timeline is pretty darn accurate. What it does not address, however, is a lot of the work that needed to be done with state agencies such as the Health Department, Maryland Department of The Environment, Fire Marshal, etc. Some of this work could be done sequentially, and some of this work could be done concurrently. It has been stated that at times Running Hare Vineyard simply did nothing, and nothing could be further from the truth. Some work simply had to stop until we got guidance from the appropriate department on what we could and could not do and what was acceptable and not acceptable. Many times, we were essentially told to have the engineers and architects design something and the county

staff will tell you if it works or not. Once we received sufficient guidance, we would then act accordingly, working with our engineers at Collinson, Oliff & Associates, Inc. (COA), architects, electricians, and other associated parties to complete the tasks at hand. All these processes took a considerable amount of time.

"If I were sitting on this board, I probably would've come away with the same conclusions based on the timeline published by the county; that Running Hare Vineyard dug their heels in and at times didn't do what they had been asked to do. Just because the county did not directly see us doing anything does not mean that there wasn't activity taking place either internally or between us and individual departments so that we could ultimately get this whole issue put behind us. We all look bad; the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners, Running Hare Vineyard, and the County Government Departments. The problem ultimately lies with communication, as well as the processes at the county level as it relates to permitting.

"A great example of this is the requirement for us to construct permanent restrooms. While our work with the county government began in September of 2020, we were unaware of the requirement for us to build permanent restrooms in order to correct our initial violations until well into 2022. The planning and construction of these restrooms could have been easily completed at an earlier stage had we known this requirement. Once we found out that restrooms would be needed, we engaged an architect to begin designing the facility while also engaging Health Department staff extensively to figure out what parameters would need to be met. The frequency and depth of these conversations is missing from the county's timeline, and as such, it appears that we did nothing between when we were notified of the need for permanent facilities

and February 8th, 2023, which is simply untrue. This is just one example where communication between county departments and the BOCC fail to acknowledge the work that was done by Running Hare Vineyard to resolve its issues.

"The other issue that both we and the BOCC have with this situation is the length of time that it has dragged on. With a situation of this nature, there is sure to be some period of time that would be deemed reasonable to have the issues resolved in terms of repairs and permitting. However, much of the time spent during these past 2 1/2 years has been spent in parts of the county process, rather than actually fixing the issues at hand. The physical work that was needed to correct our

issues took months, while the process to gain approvals on this work has taken years. While it would be unreasonable to expect county staff to turn around permits, guidance, and approvals instantly, we feel that the process as it is currently structured is unnecessarily lengthy and complex. County staff have done their best to work as quickly as possible, but they are unfortunately hampered by a slow and antiquated process that results in excess time, money, and effort having to be expended by individuals and businesses like ourselves. We just feel that at this point, we are being penalized for this situation dragging out, while we have made our best efforts at each stage of the process to expedite getting this situation resolved.

"As I stated earlier, I certainly understand based on the county timeline and the information presented to the BOCC why the current BOCC has made their decision to keep us closed, my point is that this



Running Hare Vineyard owner Mike Scarborough

timeline fails to account for a vast body of work that Running Hare Vineyard has, and continues to do when asked. The tragedy of this situation is that we believe that the BOCC would allow us to remain open, as the previous BOCC did, if they were a party to the entirety of this process from beginning to end. The overwhelming majority of the work that was required of us has been done for many months but here we are. At this point, we have submitted what has been asked of us, and await further guidance in order to proceed.

"I hope that this board will take a serious look at this situation in hopes of it being resolved soon. Our temporary closure has had a profound impact on our employees, local charities, our county citizens, and our business as a whole."

North Beach Town Administrator Proposed

To be Included in Budget

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The proposed budget of the Town of North Beach for the next fiscal year beginning July 1 includes a first ever town administrator.

Town Treasurer Joanne Hunt noted, in presenting the budget to the town council at their May 11 meeting, that the position was advocated by Mayor Mike Benton. The mayor did not respond to a request from The County Times on why he feels the new position is needed. The budget includes \$85,000 for the position.

The neighboring town of Chesapeake Beach has a town administrator (Holly Wahl).

In presenting the budget, Hunt said, "We're going with the constant yield tax rate and that proposed rate is 0.5695 for a hundred of assessed value. We've consistently gone with the lower rate, which is

the constant yield rate every year. So, you should feel secure that we're not raising your taxes."

She added, "I believe that the Calvert County Commissioners are still using the 0.336 differential for all North Beach residents. That's a reduction in your county tax bill by 0.336 per hundred because we provide services that the county does not provide for you. So, they reduce your tax bill by that amount."

Hunt said she believed the town had been going with the constant yield since 2010.

Hunt said the total assessable tax base of the town was \$297 million, "That's a lot and it's increased each year."

"We're not using the old rate, which could be considered an increase in taxes. So, we're actually lowering your tax rate," she reiterated.

She presented budget highlights. She said, "One of them is state highway user

fund. The town is a beneficiary of that. And for this year, FY '24, it'll be \$161,000 that they contribute for the services that we provide. And that's done through the fuel tax and some others."

As to the gambling revenue, she said, "This year we increased it. We've been conservative in our rates for the last four years. We used the last three years, but we did not use 2020. We skipped 2020 due to the pandemic. And that just distorted what we had seen in the past. So, we used 20 19, 20 21 and 2022. So, in the budget it is \$455,000 from gambling revenues," adding "there was no increase to the beachfront waterfront fees."

As to expenses, Hunt said, "There is a 7 percent COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) for all town employees. That's the same rate that the Calvert County is doing with their employees." The county, however, has reduced their COLA to three percent.

In addition to the new administrator, Hunt said there's a temporary receptionist at the front desk at the town hall.

Hunt observed, "There was an increase in the North Beach Fire Department. We do donate to them annually. It has been \$6,000 in the past. This year it's going to be \$8,000."

And for dog walkers, the town is purchasing \$1,000 in "mutt mitts." When you see people getting mutt mitts and they don't use them, it's discouraging, but there are many that do use it," she noted.

The fee the town pays the sheriff's office for police protection also increased by \$52,913, Hunt said.

There's no increase in the debt service. "We're just trying to pay the debt service down."

The town will hold a public hearing on the budget at the June meeting and then finalize it.

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What's Coming to Calvert

The following list of pending site plans was presented to the Calvert County Planning Commission at their May 17 meeting. That means that the proposals are on the list for consideration by the planning commission at a future meeting. The meeting was in a hybrid form, both virtually and in person at the Harriet E. Brown Community Center (HEBCC), 901 Dares Beach Road, Prince Frederick.



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

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

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

4) CSPR-142871, **Calvert Hills - Phase II**, located on Calvert Hills Road, Prince Frederick on a 2.33-acre parcel, zoned Town Center/Village. This project is proposed for

35 apartment units, served by public water and sewer, to complete the development that started with Calvert Hills - Phase I. The concept submittal was accepted October 26, 2022. Agent: Bay Engineering.

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

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

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

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

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Visit biketoworkmetrodc.org for pit stop locations and times.

*T-Shirts available at pit stops to first 15,000 registrants.
Pit stops in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia!

[f](https://www.facebook.com) [i](https://www.instagram.com) #BTWD2023

Bike to Work Day is funded by DDOT, MDOT, VDOT, and USDOT.



CONTACT US

George Clark, Acting Transportation Director
Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland
gclark@tccsmd.org
301-274-1922 x 19
www.tccsmd.org

JustCuttsLawns Spring Spruce Up

Free
Estimate



Yard Clean up **Brush Cleaning & Removal**
Trimming shrubs **Cut Beds & Mulch**
Seeding **Aerating Lawn**

Call 301-556-8335

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Fri, May 19

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Sat, May 20

Beer, Food & Wine Festival

St. Leonard Volunteer Fire Department
200 Calvert Beach Road, St. Leonard
11 a.m. - 7 p.m.,
\$12/person; kids 14 and under are FREE

Event features a variety of vendors offering their wares, including artwork, homemade desserts, delectable doughnuts, decorative signs and a range of foods. There will also be alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, whiskey, and bourbon available for purchase. Children can enjoy themselves in a playhouse and explore the fire trucks on display. Bring a chair/blanket to relax and enjoy the live music being played. Tickets: 532655696527 or at the entrance.

Breezy Point Beach Blastoff

Breezy Point Beach
5300 Breezy Point Rd., Chesapeake Beach
5-9 p.m.

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation invites the public to celebrate the opening of Breezy Point Beach & Campground for the 2023 season at this event. Attendees will enjoy music, food for purchase from local food trucks, family games and a spectacular fireworks show to end the night. Everyone is welcome to bring a picnic or use the grills at the beach; grills are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The use of gas grills, pull-behind grills, smokers and deep fryers is prohibited. Alcohol, smoking/vaping, pets and glass containers are also prohibited. 410-535-1600 ext. 2649.

Free Paper Shredding Event

Huntingtown High School
4125 Solomons Island Rd., Huntingtown
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

The Calvert County Department of Public Works, Solid Waste Division, is hosting free paper shredding event for county residents and businesses. Proof of residency or business location is required. All paper must be removed from plastic bags and cardboard boxes prior to shredding. Paper clips and

staples are acceptable. Binders and binder clips are not acceptable. Businesses are permitted up to five banker boxes of paper per business (or the equivalent volume of five banker boxes in alternate containers). There is no limit for residents. Certificates of destruction will be provided if requested.

Community Baby Shower.

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9-11:25 a.m.

Sponsored by HIPPY/Healthy Families/PAT and the Calvert Health Department. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Sun, May 21

Fairy & Gnome Home Festival

Anne Marie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center, Solomons
11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Join us for a magical day of family nature play as you travel through the six realms of Annmarie Garden and discover an enchanting variety of activities. Meet fairy friends, discover hidden gnome homes, enjoy crafts, and explore nature. Food and drink vendors will be available. It's an over-the-top day of magicalicious fun for your family to imagine, create, and explore. Advance timed-entry tickets required; admission: \$8/person (\$10 at the gate, if not sold out), kids 2 & under free; members free. Reduced price admission tickets available for SNAP card holders. Rain or shine event, no pets, no smoking. Details: www.annmariegarden.org

Tue, May 23

Veterans and Military Families Connect

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 5:30-7 p.m.

Join Calvert Library and Blue Star Families as they ask active duty military and veteran families what the library can do to better support you. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Book Discussion Dine Out

Heritage 485
485 Main Street, Prince Frederick
6-8 p.m.

We're meeting for dinner at 6pm at Heritage 485. Discussion starts at 7pm. Please register! Hosted by Calvert Library, 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

Wed, May 24

Job Seeker Resources

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

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

MWE Workshop

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

Offered by Maryland Department of Labor, this workshop is for the experienced, seasoned jobseeker who wants to step into a new role! It explores going after the dream, making your skillset fit into a new career path and, most importantly, working around those subtle age and over-experience barriers. Registration ends 24 hours before the event. For additional information or to request one-to-one assistance, please contact AJC Job Service Specialist Gayle Howe at: gayle.howe@maryland.gov

Sleepy Stuffies Storytime

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

Wear your jammies and bring your favorite stuffed animal as we wind down from our busy day! We'll begin by getting our wiggles out and then snuggle up for stories and songs. Suggested for children 0-5. Older siblings are welcome to attend. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Thu, May 25

Little Minnows: Whose My Mama?

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

For preschoolers ages 3-5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story time and 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.

Story Walk and Talk

Fishing Creek Trail, Chesapeake Beach
10-11 a.m.

Join Calvert Library and CCPR for a

Story Walk and Talk on the Fishing Creek Trail. We will stroll the trail, enjoy the scenery, and take reading breaks together along the way. Please register on CCPR's website. You won't want to miss this collaboration. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

JobSource Mobile Career Center

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Rd., 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. The Mobile Health Center travels to areas of the community to bring free health services and education. Some of the services provided include cholesterol screenings, blood pressure checks, referrals, seasonal vaccinations, and more! For more information to view the full schedule or view an online tour of the vehicle visit them online. Calvert Health Mobile van information from CalvertHealth. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

Reading Buddies

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Rd., 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! 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Ongoing

Wm. B. Tennison Public Cruise

Calvert Marine Museum
Wednesday-Sunday, month of May
2 p.m.

Relax and enjoy a leisurely one-hour sightseeing cruise on the river aboard the Wm. B. Tennison, a log-built bugeye. Capacity allows for 40 guests. Cost is \$7 for adults and \$4.00 for children 5-12 years. Children under 5 ride free when accompanied by a paying adult.



First Friday All Weekend!

Experience all that Leonardtown has to offer!

For the second year in a row, Leonardtown will continue its newest tradition of expanding Leonardtown First Fridays to Leonardtown First Friday All Weekend Events (Starting in May and running through October 2023).

Come stay in our beautiful hotel - The Inn at Leonardtown, and experience all that Leonardtown has to offer at your leisure - the fine dining, an eclectic mix of shops, art galleries, live entertainment, special offers and more!

Upcoming First Friday Themes:

- ✓ JUNE / Grillin' & Chillin'
- ✓ JULY / Jazzy First Friday
- ✓ AUGUST / Sharkfest
- ✓ SEPTEMBER / Art Walk
- ✓ OCTOBER / Octoberfest

www.VisitLeonardtownMD.com/FirstFridays



Leonardtown
A most exceptional place!

FREE TROLLEY RIDES!

**RIDE THE
LEONARDTOWN
TROLLEY**

AVAILABLE ALL WEEKEND LONG!

April 21st - October 15th:

Fridays 5-10 pm

Saturdays 2 pm-10 pm

Sundays 11 am-5 pm

**TRACK
THE
TROLLEY**



Live During Scheduled Times!

www.VisitLeonardtownMD.com/LeonardtownTrolley

MAY - OCTOBER 2023



Join Us For A SUMMER OF MUSIC IN LEONARDTOWN



Leonardtwn Square



Leonardtwn Wharf

A HIGHLIGHT OF SOME OF THIS SEASON'S CONCERTS

MAY 20TH
Jay Armworthy
& Eastern Tradition
LEONARDTOWN WHARF

JUN 24TH
Latrice Carr
LEONARDTOWN WHARF

JUL 15TH
Doc Martin &
The Flannels
LEONARDTOWN SQUARE

SEP 2ND
Phillip Michael
Parsons
LEONARDTOWN WHARF

OCT 14TH
Vertigo Red
LEONARDTOWN SQUARE

PRESENTING:
On the Water's Edge
At the Leonardtown Wharf

Continuing this season, join us for
Concerts/Celebrations at
the Leonardtown Wharf Sponsored
by Jimmy Hayden of ReMax 100!



For a full list of concerts & details go to:

www.VisitLeonardtwnMD.com/LeonardtwnMusicFest

Cultural Arts Market

June 3, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM
 Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
 13470 Dowell Rd., Solomons
 Admission: Free

Celebrate the ethnic and cultural diversity of the arts and crafts design in our region! Browse works from artists and vendors selling fair-trade products. Food and drink will also be available for purchase. 410-326-4640.

Children's Day on the Farm

June 4, 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum
 10515 Mackall Rd., Saint Leonard
 Admission: Free

Featuring live performances, creative activities, entertaining games, wagon rides, and delicious food vendors. Explore the fascinating displays and demonstrations showcasing rural life from the past and present.

Dragon Boat Festival

June 10, 9:00 AM
 North Beach

Enjoy a family friendly atmosphere, the dragon boat races, and more while supporting End Hunger in Calvert County. Please see <https://endhungercalvert.org/events/dragon-boat-festival/> for registration information. 301-855-6681

6th Annual Mud Day

June 10, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
 13470 Dowell Rd., Solomons
 Admission: \$10 for non-members; \$5 for members (\$12 at the gate, if not sold out); kids 2 & under free.

Celebrate International Mud Day with an afternoon of family-friendly muddy mayhem. Explore squishy art projects, play in the mud kitchen, create a terrarium, paint with mud - and have fun in the giant mud pit! Advance timed-entry tickets required. Food trucks will also be on-site. 410-326-4640.

Movie on the Beach: Minions—Rise of Gru

June 17, 7:30 PM
 North Beach
 Admission: Free

Grab the family, bring a blanket or some beach chairs, and enjoy a movie on the beach! 301-855-6681.

13th Annual Drink Maryland

June 24, 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Bay Avenue, North Beach
 Admission: Free.

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

Waterside Music Series: Ziggy Marley

June 24, 7:00 PM; Gates open at 5:00 PM
 Calvert Marine Museum
 14200 Solomons Island Rd., Solomons
 Admission: \$39-\$69 plus additional fees

Eight-time Grammy award winner Ziggy Marley is the eldest son of Bob and Rita Marley. He is also an Emmy winner, musician, producer, activist and humanitarian who has cultivated a legendary career for close to 40 years.

Tickets for the event can be purchased on the official website of Calvert Marine Museum's Waterside Music Series here: <https://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com/141/Waterside-Music-Series> or through Etix by calling 1-800-514-3849.

July

4th of July Fireworks Cruise

July 4, 8:00 PM
 Calvert Marine Museum
 14200 Solomons Island Rd., Solomons
 Admission: \$35

Come aboard the Tension for the best view of the Solomons fireworks! Cruise to the Patuxent River where you will anchor and watch a fabulous display of fireworks. We invite you to bring your favorite food and drinks in a small, hand-held cooler. FREE parking is available at the Calvert Marine Museum. For ages 6 and up.

August

Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social

August 9, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM
 One-Room Schoolhouse
 3100 Broomes Island Rd., Port Republic
 Admission: Free, including first serving of ice cream!

Bring a lawn chair and enjoy local, farm fresh ice cream while visiting the original, fully restored Port Republic One-Room Schoolhouse. You'll see where the Calvert County fourth grade students experience a day of history. There will be activities for the children, artifact display, and live music by the Calvert County Dance Band. The One Room Schoolhouse has accessibility for those who use a wheelchair or walker.



37th Annual ST MARY'S COUNTY CRAB FESTIVAL

located at the St Mary's County Fair Grounds
 Saturday June 10th 2023 11 AM to 7 PM
 Wesley Spangler
 Hydra FX

Live music- Food vendors! Classic Car Show! Crafts!

Free Vision & Hearing Screening! Petting zoo!

Family friendly




HOT STEAMED BLUE CRABS

Gate Admission \$7.00 , Food Additional
 Sponsored by the Leonardtown Lions Club



HAPPY SUMMER!

from the **County Times**
 St. Mary's County • Calvert County



100% LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS
 SERVING ST. MARY'S AND CALVERT COUNTIES

ON NEWSSTANDS EVERY THURSDAY & ONLINE AT COUNTYTIMES.NET **CountyTimes**

CALVERT COUNTY Summer Events

May

Beer, Food & Wine Festival

May 20, 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
St. Leonard Volunteer Fire Department
200 Calvert Beach Rd., St. Leonard
Admission: \$12/person; kids 14 and under are FREE

Event features a variety of vendors offering their wares, including artwork, homemade desserts, delectable doughnuts, decorative signs and a range of foods. There will also be alcoholic beverages such as beer, wine, whiskey, and bourbon available for purchase. Children can enjoy themselves in a playhouse and explore the fire trucks on display. Bring a chair/blanket to relax and enjoy the live music being played. Tickets: 532655696527 or at the entrance.

Breezy Point Beach Blastoff

May 20, 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Breezy Point Beach
5300 Breezy Point Rd., Chesapeake Beach
Admission: Free

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation invites the public to celebrate the opening of Breezy Point Beach & Campground for the 2023 season at this event. Attendees will enjoy music, food for purchase from local food trucks, family games and a spectacular fireworks show to end the night. Everyone is welcome to bring a picnic or use the grills at the beach; grills are available on a first-come, first-served basis. The use of gas grills, pull-behind grills, smokers and deep fryers is prohibited. Alcohol, smoking/vaping, pets and glass containers are also prohibited. 410-535-1600 ext. 2649.

Waterside Music Series: Dustin Lynch

May 26, 7:00 PM; Gates open at 5:00 PM
Calvert Marine Museum
14200 Solomons Island Rd., Solomons
Admission: \$39-\$79 plus additional fees

Dustin Lynch is a renowned figure in modern country music, having built a consistent recording career with eight #1 hits, four albums in the Top 5, and ten gold and platinum-certified singles. Opening for Dustin Lynch will be Michael Ray and Avery Anna! Tickets for the event can be purchased on the official website of Calvert Marine Museum's Waterside Music Series here: <https://www.calvertmarinemuseum.com/141/Waterside-Music-Series> or through Etix by calling 1-800-514-3849.

June

Dining in the Field

June 1, 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM
American Chestnut Land Trust (ACLT)
676 Double Oak Rd., Prince Frederick
Admission: \$150/person

Experience a memorable evening savoring delectable locally-sourced cuisine and refreshing drinks amidst a stunning backdrop. Event will take place in the field next to the Double Oak Barn. Secure your tickets at the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/ACLTForms/dining-in-the-field-tickets-form>. The proceeds from this year's dinner will go towards benefiting ACLT.

Discover Fun at St. Mary's County Museums

Something for Everyone in the Family this Summer



St. Clement's Island Museum

Learn how Maryland began and take a fun boat ride out to the first landing.
Open Daily
10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
[Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum)
301-769-2222



Piney Point Lighthouse Museum

Climb the oldest lighthouse on the Potomac, see lots of historic boats and much more.
Open Daily
10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
[Facebook.com/1836Light](https://www.facebook.com/1836Light)
301-994-1471



Old Jail Museum

Learn the tales of St. Mary's County old jail, stories of the Underground Railroad, and more.
Open Daily
10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
[Facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum)
240-925-3427



Drayden African American Schoolhouse

Discover stories of struggle of the Black community during an era of segregated education in St. Mary's County.
Open first Saturday of the month and Juneteenth
Weekend or special groups
11 a.m.-2 p.m.
[Facebook.com/DraydenSchool](https://www.facebook.com/DraydenSchool)
301-994-1471



Check Out A Ton More Events Throughout the Summer at:
Museums.StMarysMD.com



July

Potomac Jazz and Seafood Festival

July 7-July 9

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd, Coltons Point
and Leonardtown

Enjoy live jazz, seafood, stunning water-side vistas, and events for jazz aficionados in Leonardtown and St. Clement's Island Museum in gorgeous St. Mary's County across three days and venues. Visit PotomacJazzAndSeafoodFestival.com for more information on the event and purchase tickets.

St. Clement's Island Museum Art Kids

July 11-July 13

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd., Coltons Point
Admission: \$5

Explore a variety of artistic styles in the fine arts with your art instructor, Ms. Ellen Duke Wilson. While learning to sketch, paint, draw, weave, sculpt, and do a variety of other things, young artists will gain a better understanding of art.

Additionally, students will learn how creating art can have a positive and lasting effect on society. Toward the finish of every class, all attendees will make an individualized masterpiece to share with family and the local area.

For ages 7 to 17, pre-registration is required; \$5 per child. Materials are provided; bring a light snack. To sign up, call Christina Barbour at 301-769-4723, to reserve your child's spot.

Upcoming dates:

July 25-27; and August 8-10

AeroPark Fly-In Farmers Market

July 16, 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

St. Mary's County Regional Airport
Terminal Building
44200 Airport Rd., California
Admission: FREE

Everyone is welcome at this market, regardless of how they get there. It was originally intended as a reason for area aviators to fly by and shop. At this distinctive market with local goods, meals, and craft beverages, there's always something local and exciting going on even though the sellers occasionally change. The money from vendor rentals supports our wonderful friends and their fantastic work at Historic Sotterley, which is the best part. There is no requirement for a plane to attend, but if you do, there is plenty of parking available.

August

National Lawn Mower Races @ Bowles Farm

August 4-August 5

Bowles Farm
22880 Budds Creek Rd, Clements
Admission: \$10, ages 8 and under free

Come see some of the quickest mowers in the country for two nights of thrilling racing. This event will appeal to both adults and children. On-site food and beverages are available for purchase. The proceeds from the event, which will take place rain or shine, will benefit the 7th District Rescue Squad and the 7th District Optimist Club.

Friday, 8/4

Gates open at 4 p.m.
Trial runs start at 6 p.m.
Race starts at 7 p.m.

Saturday, 8/5

Gates open at 3:30 p.m.
Trial runs start at 5 p.m.
Race starts at 6 p.m.

National Lighthouse Weekend at St. Clement's Island

August 5-August 6

St. Clement's Island Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd., Coltons Point
Admission: Free

Bring your summer friends to St. Clement's Island for a fun open house at Blackistone Lighthouse as part of the events for National Lighthouse Day. Visit the St. Clements Island Museum before boarding a boat to St. Clement's Island and the Blackistone Lighthouse. The lighthouse is an exact replica of the historic lighthouse that once stood in that location. The last boat to the island will leave at 2 p.m.

National Lighthouse Weekend @ Piney Point

August 5-August 6, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and
Historic Park
44720 Lighthouse Rd., Piney Point
Admission: Free

For a wonderful open house weekend in honor of National Lighthouse Day, which is formally observed every August 7th, head to Piney Point. Take tours of the gardens, lighthouse tower, museum, and Potomac River Maritime Exhibit.

The official day as designated by Congress, August 7, 1989, is the anniversary of the signing of the August 7, 1789, Congressional Act "for the establishment and support of lighthouses, beacons, buoys, and public piers" and the date of the first commissioned Federal lighthouse.

The keeper's quarters and lighthouse will offer special tours featuring interpreters who depict Lightkeeper Yeatman and his wife, who will tell visitors more about life at the lighthouse.

Rain or Shine Event

17th Annual 2023

St. Mary's County National Lawn Mower Races

August 4th & 5th (Friday & Saturday)



at **Bowles Farms**
22880 Budds Creek Road, Clements, MD 20624 | Intersection of Rt.234 & Pincushion Road



2-Days Of Racing

Admission Cost: \$10.00

Children 8 and under "FREE"

Food & Refreshments Available – **NO Coolers Permitted**
Camper Sites Available - 301-904-7694







Friday August 4th

Gates Open	4:00 PM
Trial Runs	6:00 PM
Racing Starts	7:00 PM

Saturday August 5th

Gates Open	3:30 PM
Trial Runs	5:00 PM
Racing Starts	6:00 PM

7th District Rescue Squad: Ronnie 301-904-7694
7th District Optimist Club: AL 240-299-1891

www.BowlesFarms.com

All Proceeds To Benefit





CHESAPEAKE BEACH WATER PARK

**2023 Season
Opening May 27th**



chesapeakebeachwaterpark.com

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Summer Events

May

Pick Your Own Strawberries @ Southern Comfort Berry Farm

May 12–June 1, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Southern Comfort Berry Farm
22410 Bushwood Wharf Rd., Bushwood

Get ready to bring your family to pick strawberries with over 18,000 plants, all of which have been carefully selected to produce juicy, sweet, bright red strawberries that are ideal for family picking. Take your children to a real working farm on the Potomac River's banks, so they can pick their own strawberries.

Weather and crop availability determine hours. Always make sure before you go.

When produce is available, it is open from early May to early June.

Monday – Saturday: 10-6
Sunday: Noon – 5

June

First Friday Weekends in Leonardtown

June 2–June 3
Leonardtown
Admission: Free

This is a family and friend invitation to Leonardtown's extended First Friday event, which is now a First Friday Weekend event. Given how busy Leonardtown was, we had to extend the celebration. Local businesses in Leonardtown organize promotions, concerts, exhibitions, and themed events from May through October to promote the region's sole officially recognized arts and entertainment district. Take advantage of everything Leonardtown has to offer to start and finish your weekend.

Sunset Cruises @ Leonardtown Wharf

June 2, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM
Fish The Bay Charters

Admire the stunning scenery of St. Mary's County from the water on the Lisa S., a 48-foot vintage Chesapeake Bay charter boat, and join Captain Phil as he explores the Potomac River.

Bring your favorite snacks, drinks, and adult beverages aboard and enjoy the wonderful sights and sounds of nature. This small-group cruise (for ages 12 and up) will allow passengers to relax and unwind while cruising along the tranquil waters of St. Mary's.

Heritage Day at St. Clement's Island

June 3, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
St. Clement's Museum
38370 Point Breeze Rd, Coltons Point
Admission: Free

Bring your family to St. Clement's Island to join in free events and activities that celebrate the culture and traditions of the island. Start your day by taking a free water taxi to the island. You may learn about history, wildlife, and art while playing games, going on lighthouse tours, and listening to traditional music. You can view the island's stunning natural features, the Potomac River, and wildlife by taking a stroll along the coast. Bring a picnic lunch to enjoy on the island's many tables or beneath the pavilion.

Rumble on the River @ Piney Point Landing

June 10 - June 11
Piney Point Landing
17139 Piney Point Rd, Piney Point
Admission: Free

Two days of vintage race boats and racing await you at Piney Point Landing. Southern Maryland's waterways will be invaded by vintage raceboats, bringing a little bit of history back. Stop by the nearby food truck for some refreshments and bring your appetite. The SMBC Merchandise Tent has branded shirts, cups, frisbees, and programs.

Schedule of events:

Saturday June 10

- 9 a.m.–noon: Vintage Race Boat Morning Heats
- Noon–1 p.m.: Lunch Break, Pits open to public
- 1–4 p.m.: Vintage Race Boat Afternoon Heats

Sunday June 11

- 11 a.m.–noon: Vintage Race Boat Morning Heats
- Noon–1 p.m.: Lunch Break, Pits open to public
- 1–3 p.m.: Vintage Race Boat Afternoon Heats

Crab Festival @ St. Mary's Fairgrounds

June 10, 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM
St. Mary's County Fairgrounds
42455 Fairgrounds Rd., Leonardtown
Admission: \$7, 12 and under free

Bring a crab-obsessed friend or family member to sample a variety of crab dishes. Steamed crabs, crab soups, crab cakes, and other seafood dishes will be available. This celebration's upbeat atmosphere is provided by live music and local entertainment.

Before or after your meal, take a peek at the local artisans. If you're looking for a one-of-a-kind, handcrafted present or something with a 'crabby' theme, this is the place to go.

A Crab Picking Contest with a Twist

This is your opportunity to demonstrate your crab-picking prowess while also winning a trophy. Each person's "pickings," which will be stripped of all non-meat ingredients, will be weighed by the contest judges. The Crab Festival, hosted by the Leonardtown Lions Club, honors St. Mary's crab culture and cuisine.

A Summer Night's Dream @ Pier450

June 11, 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Pier450
48342 Wynne Rd., Ridge
Admission: \$82/person

Savor the tastes of summertime and bask in the warm evening sunset during this one-time-only Pier450 outdoor dinner.

With a special chef-created menu featuring in-season ingredients, you'll experience the sweet satisfaction that only summer brings. Reserve your tickets in advance to secure your table at this summer's most delicious soiree.

Mulberry Music Festival @ St. Mary's College of Maryland

June 16, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
St. Mary's College of Maryland,
Townhouse Green
47645 College Dr., St. Mary's City
Admission: Free

Meet your family and friends and listen to the uplifting beats of these four outstanding performers: Oh He Dead, Kevin Howard, The Boneshakers, and headliners The JoGo Project.

To help enjoy the event, attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, blankets, and food. The Townhouse Green opens at 4 p.m. the day of the event.

HELLO SUMMER

FREE SUMMER EVENTS
HAPPENING AT ST. MARY'S
COLLEGE OF MARYLAND



FRIDAY, JUNE 16

MULBERRY MUSIC FESTIVAL @ 6 P.M.

Featuring four great acts: Oh He Dead, Kevin Howard, The Boneshakers, and headliners The JoGo Project. Learn more: www.smcm.edu/mmfnp

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

RIVER CONCERT SERIES @ 7 P.M.

Featuring the Chesapeake Orchestra, directed by Jeff Silberschlag. Bring your folding chairs and blankets and enjoy the finest food trucks from across Southern Maryland. Learn more: www.smcm.edu/rcsnp

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

FRIDAY, JULY 7

FRIDAY, JULY 14

FRIDAY, JULY 21

SATURDAY, AUG. 5

GOVERNOR'S CUP YACHT RACE

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SATURDAY, AUG. 5

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Summer Fun in St. Mary's and Calvert

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Summer fun in St. Mary's County can take revelers from parks and beaches to historic landmarks like Sotterley Plantation in Hollywood and St. Mary's City but the county continues to grow in communities like Leonardtown and the offerings for summer fun are growing with them.

New markets have opened on the town square, such as Marie and Nash as well as Flour bakery, each enhancing the shopping opportunities for day-to-day fun. The Rex, Sweet Bay, the Slice House, the Front Porch, and Ye Olde Towne Restaurant are all open to satisfy appetites as well.

Shepherd's Old Field offers all kinds of eclectic shopping opportunities but outside in the backyard of the property is Viking Axe Throwing, which offers sharp blades and fun times to players as they attempt to sink axes and various other thrown implements into wooden targets aiming for the highest points and bragging rights.

At the Leonardtown Wharf vacationers can rent out canoes and other craft to boat on Breton Bay.

Summer time also brings music to the air in St. Mary's. In Leonardtown this weekend Jay Armsworthy and the Eastern Tradition band will join the U.S. Navy Band Country

Current for the Summer Music Festival at the Leonardtown Wharf.

The Potomac Jazz and Seafood Festival starts July 7 and runs through July 9 at St. Clements Island in Coltons Point for the main event but jazz tunes will sound through the town square in Leonardtown for all three days.

The event became so big over the years that it had to be divided between two sites.

St. Mary's College of Maryland will host the River Concert Series once again on the banks of the St. Mary's River.

"A Southern Maryland tradition now in its 25th season, this family-friendly music festival, and winner of two Governor's Awards for Arts, Tourism, and Community Economic Development will be held on the St. Mary's College Townhouse Green," the announcement for the event states. "The programs will be on Friday evenings at 7 p.m. starting on June 23, and continuing until July 21."

The main musical group at the foundation of the event is the Chesapeake Orchestra led by Maestro Jeffrey Silberschlag.

If vacationers have a more sporting frame of mind, they can charter a fishing expedition through one of the many boat captains in St. Mary's.

For example, Capt. Phil Langley of Fish the Bay Charters offers charter services and

operates out of Dameron.

North Star Charters offers fishing as well and operates out of St. George's Island.

For those wanting to partake of St. Mary's abundant seafood but have an easier time of it, there is the county's Crab Festival at the county fairgrounds in Leonardtown in June.

Sponsored by the Leonardtown Lions Club, who rely on it as a major fund raiser for their charitable activities throughout the year, the Crab Festival brings community together and provides other food vendors for visitors as well games and activities for children.

The Crab Festival opens at 11 a.m. June 10 and runs through 7 p.m.

For those looking for an activity that also enriches the mind, St. Mary's County has plenty to offer.

At St. Mary's City, archaeologists continue to uncover the mysteries of the lost city where English settlers came to make a new life in 1634.

In recent years they have unearthed the palisade — defensive wall — of the first fort the settlers stayed in upon landing on these shores and have just unearthed the remains of a teenager buried there approximately 400 years ago.

Programs there throughout the summer allow visitors to learn about the Native Americans who called the county home before the settlers arrived and the struggle to

survive in the New World for the colonists.

In neighboring Calvert County there are plenty of outing options, especially for families looking for big fun.

In the very northern regions of Calvert, the Chesapeake Beach Water Park is one of the most popular destinations for families looking for outdoor swimming fun.

The water park opens May 29 for its 29th season and is open every day of the week except on Mondays from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. depending on the day.

Chesapeake Beach is also the home of the Rod n' Reel hotel and resort, offering live entertainment, 24-hour gaming and two marinas.

For hiking trails it's tough to beat Calvert Cliffs State Park where walkers can take miles-worth of excursions through some of the most rugged and lush forest and wetlands in Southern Maryland leading all the way out to the beaches of the Chesapeake Bay.

The Calvert Marine Museum offers visitors a look at the history of making a living on the water as well as prehistoric life in bay watershed.

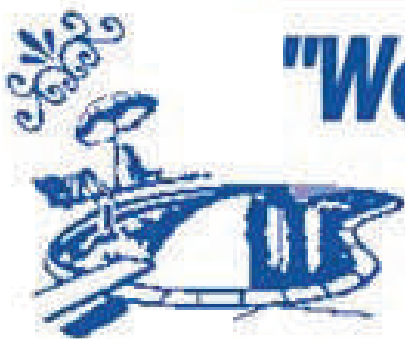
The museum also has life that families can observe up close; like otters and skates and rays in an indoor pool.

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SUMMO

Summer Fun

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.

Thu, May 18

Lecture: Revealing Richard Orchard: Insights on a 17th Cent

Visitor Center Auditorium
18751 Hogaboom Ln., St. Mary's City
7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Join HSMC staff member Marlee Putnam for this free lecture centered around Richard Orchard; master of the ship Dove that came to Maryland in 1634. Recent research has uncovered evidence of Orchard making five transatlantic crossings throughout the 1630's, revealing information about him as a person and as an expert mariner. By creating a microhistory out of this new information, Richard Orchard can be placed in a unique facet of maritime history, lending agency to men like him that spearheaded trade and travel between England and the New World throughout the 17th century.

Admission: free
Info: 301.994.4370 or email info@hsmcdigshistory.org

Sat, May 20

Yard Sale & Plant Sale!

Patuxent Presbyterian Church

23421 Kingston Creek Rd., California
8 a.m. to Noon

It's Yard Sale season! The Patuxent Presbyterian Church Yard Sale & Plant Sale is coming up on Saturday, May 20th, from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

The Yard Sale will take place in our Fellowship Hall, which will be overflowing with gently used items: clothing, toys, books, jewelry, furnishings, housewares, and more! All proceeds will support our Outreach Ministries.

Our Garden Club will host a Plant Sale, offering outdoor and indoor plants for purchase. All proceeds will go to the Garden Club fund to pay for replacement plants or landscaping projects at the church. Stop by and buy!

For more details: www.paxpres.com/yardsale

On the Water's Edge Bluegrass Concert Feat. Jay Armsworthy

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

The On the Water's Edge Concert Series at the Leonardtown Wharf (sponsored by Jimmy Hayden of RE-MAX/100 and Homes for Heroes) presents a Bluegrass

Celebration in honor of Armed Forces Day featuring the U.S. Navy Band Country Current (performing from 3 PM—4 PM) and Jay Armsworthy (performing from 4 PM—6 PM) on Saturday, May 20, 2023.

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

Texas Hold'Em @ HVRS

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

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

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

****PLEASE NOTE THIS EVENT IS AT THE RESCUE SQUAD, NOT THE FIRE HOUSE****

St. John's Knights of Columbus Classic Car Show

St. John's Church and School
St. John's Rd., Hollywood
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Open to spectators, vehicle owners and all years of makes. Show vehicle registration of \$20 per vehicle is open until noon. Trophies for the top 20.

For more information call Bill Cameron at 240-434-1647.

Rain date is May 27.

Sunday, May 21

East Coast Drifters Spring Open Car Show

Mechanicsville Moose Lodge
27636 Mechanicsville Rd., Mechanicsville
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All years Cars, Trucks & Motorcycles are welcome. Top 70 and several other awards. First 100 receive dash plaques. Pre-registration \$15 by May 8. \$20 at gate. Spectators \$5 (under 12 free) Registration cut-off Noon. For more info call: Chuck 301-751-5602 or Rich 240-538-4266 eastcoastdrifters.com (rain date June 4th)

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

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



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Four ways to use cash wisely

There has been a lot of talk about a “cashless” society, but it’s not here yet. In fact, cash can still be a valuable element of your overall financial picture – if you employ it wisely. But how?

Consider these four key uses of cash:

- *Everyday spending* – Of course, you need sufficient cash on hand to pay for your cost of living – mortgage, debt payments, utilities, groceries, etc. You’ll likely rely on your savings or checking accounts to pay for these needs.
- *Unexpected expenses and emergencies* – It’s never a bad idea to establish a monthly budget. But, as you know, life is unpredictable – and sometimes you may encounter “budget-busting” expenses, such as a major home repair or a large medical bill. If you haven’t planned for these costs, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments, such as your IRA and 401(k), which can result in taxes, penalties and less money for your retirement. A better alternative is to prepare in advance by building an emergency fund containing up to six months’ worth of living expenses in cash, or at least in a highly liquid account, held separately from your regular checking or savings account so you won’t inadvertently spend the money.
- *Short-term savings goal* – When you are investing for a long-term goal – especially retirement – you will likely need to own a reasonable percentage of growth-oriented vehicles, such as stocks and stock-based mutual funds. The value of these investments will fluctuate, so, if it’s possible, you’ll want to avoid selling them when their price is down – which may make them unsuitable for short-term goals. But if you’re aiming for a goal that you want to achieve in a year or so – a wedding, a long vacation, and so on – you’ll want to be sure a specific amount of money is there for you when you need it. Consequently, you’ll want to put away cash for this type of goal, possibly in a short-term savings or investment vehicle that might pay somewhat higher interest than a regular checking/savings account.
- *Source of investment* – In regard to your longer-term investment strategy, cash can play two important roles. First, it can serve as its own asset class, alongside other classes, such as stocks and fixed-income vehicles. Unlike these other classes – especially stocks and stock-based mutual funds – cash won’t fluctuate in value, so it can potentially help lessen the impact of market volatility on your portfolio. And second, having the cash available in your portfolio gives you the opportunity to quickly take advantage of other investment opportunities that may occur. And you may be able to use your existing investments to help replenish the cash in your portfolio. For example, if you choose to take stock dividends in cash, these dividends can be “swept” into your brokerage account and held there until you’re ready to invest them. (However, depending on your comprehensive financial strategy, it may be a good move to simply reinvest the dividends into the same stocks or stock funds.) Keep in mind that you won’t want your investment accounts to contain too much cash, as its purchasing power can erode due to inflation.

By managing your cash efficiently, and putting it to work in different ways, you can gain some key benefits – and you’ll help yourself to keep moving toward your short- and long-term goals.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.
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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



Sweet Strawberry Time

I am so thankful for these beautiful days we are having; we have been blessed with quite a few days of dry, fairly cool weather for Southern Maryland. I’m especially thankful today since I will start baking my Bundt cakes to be used for our strawberry shortcakes which will be eaten and sold at our Christ Church, Chaptico Strawberry Festival this Sunday at our parish hall on Zach Fowler Rd. We don’t have central air at home, so it won’t be stifling upstairs when I am baking this time. Thank goodness the strawberry pies don’t need to be baked, but I won’t make them until Saturday. The only time I have been overheated was when I put up our festival banner up at April’s Pools and Spa’s corner – as you can see in the photo.

Just a few months ago, I was upset to find that the hand mixer my mother gave me for my first wedding 42 years ago had finally given up the ghost. I think it was a Sunbeam and obviously good quality to last that long. And I used to bake a lot when my sons were young. Every Sunday they had desserts, including my ex-husband who was known as cookie monster. As a matter of fact, my husband now is a cookie monster as well – is that a quality I look for? Well, I went to Sneade’s Ace Hardware and looked through their hand mixers and bought a new Black and Decker model. The base is nice and sturdy with a pair of beaters and a pair of whisk attachments (very fancy), and 5 speeds, including a very “low splash” setting which sounded really nice, since I think all my counter baskets probably have hidden batter stains I’ve missed, though I try to use the cake mix boxes as a barrier against batter splatter. But I did notice that the new type of beater and whisk attachments are much lighter weight than the ones with my old mixer. My husband asked if I kept the old beaters, which of course I didn’t. So, I will give this new hand mixer its test run today to see if it stands up to my old one.

Tomorrow, after a well-timed cortisone shot doctor visit, I will pick up all our dairy items at Food Lion in Charlotte Hall. I pre-order and the dairy manager leaves it all in a few large carts in the cold storage. I always get a lot of looks when I, and usually a dairy employee, are walking towards the front with 2 to 3 grocery carts of ice cream, whipping cream, cool whip, and frozen lemonades. Naturally, I tell them about the festival. I have been the Strawberry Queen for 20 years I think, and I have the tiara to prove it.

Friday morning is when I, and my friend Amy, will go to the Loveville Produce Auction and nervously hope I can get the number of strawberries I need. I wish I could still pick them myself, but I can’t be anywhere near dirt because of my infection risk. Whatever I can’t get there I am sure the Lyons Family Farm, Forrest Hill Farm, or Russell’s Farm will have out for sale on Saturday. I just want them to be local, but strawberries are finicky things with the weather and timing having to be just right. Some past years, if it wasn’t a good year for strawberries, I had to travel to farms in both St. Mary’s and Charles counties to get all the strawberries I needed. This is why my stomach starts turning two weeks before the festival each year.

There is nothing like walking into our parish hall from Friday afternoon on and smelling 250 plus quarts of strawberries. The entire hall has that lovely smell. I hope our new priest likes strawberries. We keep them in our prep kitchen on the coldest temperature to have them perfect for the early Sunday morning “berry people” who graciously come to wash, cap and slice berries for all those strawberry dessert options. It’s a good thing you have to wear gloves, or everyone would be “caught red-handed” in the strawberries. Sorry, I know my puns and jokes are always bad.

As always, I hope you can stop by the Strawberry Festival this Sunday from 1:30 to 5 to eat some of Mike’s Barbecue truck’s delicious BBQ meals and sides first and then enjoy all the strawberry desserts. We also have live music all day by The Bushmill Band and The Patuxent Rounders and crafters inside the hall. There will also be a dance presentation by The Southern Maryland Bootscooters at 1:30 pm . . . and a visit by a couple of Clements Cuties from The Clements Cuties Foundation from for the early part of the event. All proceeds go to local charities: Hospice, ACTS, and Clements Cuties. Oh, and please stop and say hi to the strawberry-crazed woman wearing the tiara.

To each new day’s adventure, Shelby

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

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Schools Pursue Gun Sensing AI Technology



L to R: School Safety Coordinator Charles Eible, Sheriff Steve Hall, and School Security Chief Mike Wyant

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

School security chief Mike Wyant told the St. Mary's County Board of Education last week that every tragic school shooting — such as the one last year in Uvalde, Texas and the one more recently in Nashville, Tennessee — informed the next steps this school system would take to strengthen the capabilities to keep students safe.

One of those improvements is the possible addition of sensors that can detect the presence of a firearm once it has been revealed from concealment, Wyant said, and a security program that alerts law enforcement automatically if such an active shooting emergency occurs.

"This is going to be a little about the past and a whole lot of the future of school safety and security," Wyant said at the school board's May 10 meeting.

Joining Wyant were Sheriff Steve Hall and senior security specialist Charles Eible.

"Our weapons abatement procedures are definitely something we're evaluating," Eible said.

This means metal detecting technology.

"But what's out there is what we're after, making sure it's effective and at a decent cost," Eible said.

Wyant said: "Our new camera systems are going to be able to recognize when a weapon is being carried openly. What we're focusing on is in the concealment."

Also included in the school system's long-range security plans are the hiring of 18 new security specialists — unarmed per-

sonnel — at schools.

"These positions are needed," Wyant said.

Eible said the security plan also counted on 20 completed security vestibules in the long term, with five vestibules to be completed by this summer at Dynard, Hollywood, Leonardtown, Mechanicsville and Oakville elementary schools.

There are four remaining vestibules to be finished in the near future at Capt. Walter Francis Duke, Lettie Marshall Dent, Evergreen and Ridge elementary schools.

A vestibule is the room visitors must enter to access the school; they can no longer bypass the main office and proceed into the building proper.

At the vestibules there have been added security stations for uniformed staff, according to the long-range plan.

Also included in the plan are visitor management systems for signing in and out at the school as well as monitoring systems for exterior doors at all schools. The door monitoring systems have been completed.


"That is our closed campus concept," Eible said.

"We have security vestibules at every school," Wyant said. "We are enhancing them as part of this closed campus concept."

Exterior doors have electronic access points, Eible said, allowing staff and law enforcement access to the school at any time.

All classroom doors now have locks to ensure effective lockdowns in case of an emergency.

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We remember your Birthday*



Pet OF THE WEEK

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Board of Health to Host Community Briefing on Cannabis Legalization

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County (CSMC), in partnership with the St. Mary's County Health Department, will host a briefing on Wednesday, June 7, 2023, at 6:30 p.m. to share information with the community on the upcoming legalization of cannabis for adult-use in Maryland. This event will be held in the CSMC meeting room in the Chesapeake Building, located at 41770 Baldrige Street in Leonardtown. Residents are encouraged to attend in person or to watch the briefing live on St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) Channel 95 or the SMCG YouTube Channel.

The Board of Health is pleased to announce the following panelists for this event, including:

- William Tilburg, Director, Maryland Cannabis Administration
- Sheriff Steven Hall, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office
- Dr. Meenakshi Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer
- John Houser, Assistant County Attorney, SMCG

These speakers will cover key topics relating to the upcoming legalization of adult-use cannabis in Maryland, including statewide implementation, public safety, public health, and land use/zoning.

"We know that our residents have ques-

tions about this, and how it will impact our community," said CSMC President, James Randy Guy. "We are thankful to our partners from the State, as well as our own St. Mary's County Health Department and Sheriff's Office for taking the time to provide key information to our community about this upcoming transition in Maryland."

"The legalization of adult-use cannabis has sparked many questions for community members that we hope to answer during this community briefing," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "Community health and protecting our youth are key priorities for the St. Mary's County Health Department as we prepare for this new law."

Community members are encouraged to submit their questions related to adult-use legalization of cannabis in Maryland through the online form available at stmaryscountymd.gov. Questions must be submitted in advance, by 5 p.m. on May 31, 2023. Submitted questions will be compiled and addressed as time permits during the event. For additional details on this event, or for assistance submitting questions through the online form, please contact the St. Mary's County Health Department at smchd.pr@maryland.gov or by calling (301) 475-4330.

Gov. Moore Signs Gun Control Bills

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

No sooner did Gov. Wes Moore sign two high-profile gun control bills into law May 16, than the National Rifle Association filed a lawsuit against them on the grounds that the measures ran afoul of the U.S. Constitution's 2nd Amendment protections.

SB 1 makes it virtually impossible to legally carry a concealed handgun in Maryland, even if the wearer has a state police-issued permit, while HB 824 greatly increases the requirements and costs to attain that permit.

The new laws take effect Oct. 1.

The laws signed by Moore were a response to the U.S. Supreme Court's Bruen decision, which ruled that New York's requirement of a "good and substantial reason" to obtain a concealed carry permit was unconstitutional.

Several states have acted quickly to make carrying a concealed handgun legally even harder in the aftermath of the Bruen decision; New Jersey is one of them but a federal judge issued a ruling this week enjoining the state from enforcing a provision similar to SB 1.

"Clearly, the state disagrees with Bruen, but it cannot disobey the Supreme Court by declaring most of New Jersey off limits for law-abiding citizens who have the constitutional right to armed self-defense," wrote

U.S. District Judge Renée Marie Bumb in a 235-page opinion.

Moore defended the controversial new law.

"We have... strengthened common sense gun laws that will help protect our communities across Maryland," Moore said in a prepared statement. "This will be Maryland's decade, and the best way to see that through is to invest in our children and the safety of our communities."

The NRA's Institute for Legislative Action, which filed the suit, retorted: "In response to—and in defiance of—those court rulings, Maryland enacted Senate Bill 1 and House Bill 824.

"Through these bills, Maryland replaced one blatantly unconstitutional licensing regime with another blatantly unconstitutional licensing regime."

The NRA statement continued: "The state has destroyed the right recognized in Bruen—the right of ordinary, law-abiding citizens to bear arms for self-defense outside the home—in the state of Maryland.

"The state effectively went from a regime where nobody could legally carry to one where there is nowhere to legally carry."

Maryland Shall Issue, an advocate of 2nd Amendment freedoms, especially concealed carry, has filed a similar suit challenging SB 1 in U.S. District Court for Maryland.

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Family Reunited with Missing Dog

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

After two months of wandering through the forests and fields of St. Mary's County, the Great Pyrenees dog known as Boog was finally found on a farm on Flat Iron Road and returned to his family, The County Times has learned.

Finding Boog represented a herculean effort made by local animal lovers who took to social media to organize search parties, set up trail cameras and post picture signs describing the big dog all over St. Mary's.

One of those trail cameras finally spotted Boog May 11 and searchers were able to find him and bring him in from being in the wild after a week of planning his capture.

His owners warned those searching for Boog that he was skittish and not to approach him as he would likely run away.

When found he was festooned with ticks that had to be removed and he was bathed several times.

"Boog's first day back home has been good," said Lynn Loffler Bauman, his owner in a social media post dated May 14. "You can tell he's exhausted but struggling to rest.



Boog

"He has a new version of his same blue harness on and a collar with his new GPS tracker. We have PTSD too. He can be an escape artist so we have a careful eye on him."

The searchers who had looked so long for Boog were ecstatic to finally have him spotted.

"Eight weeks, what a team," wrote Drema Ballengee-Grunst to all of the volunteers who had been looking for Boog. "What a time; thank you to every single one of you who helped and supported us in more ways than I can name.

"As always, life is short, love your dog."

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Planning Commission Approves Stewart's Grant PUD



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

After another long meeting — this time with public testimony — the county planning commission gave near unanimous approval to the Stewart's Grant planned unit development project to be built just off of Great Mills Road.

It is the largest mixed use residential development to be built in the Great Mills Road corridor of Lexington Park in years.

The key question about the project has been whether the county's public facilities, such as schools, roads, police and fire and EMS, can serve such a large new community.

The developer has stated that they would build the project in phases over several years.

"There are available seats in the inventory for this proposal withing St. Mary's County Public Schools," said Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith at the commission's May 15 hearing, speaking on whether there would be adequate public facilities for the massive project. "We have capacity at Spring Ridge and Esperanza middle schools; that means that those schools would be operating at 1,200 students.

"They were only designed for 1,000."

Smith said middle schools were allowed to operate at 109 percent of their state-rated capacity.

Smith said that just because the county had capacity for all the students the project would possibly bring to the county, did not necessarily mean that the county should seek to bring them here.

"Does that mean we should have 2,000 students at Great Mills High School?" Smith asked.

Because the county schools were experiencing only "modest" growth in enrollment, Smith said, there were no plans at the state level for a new school here for at least another seven years.

Conservative estimates for a new elementary school were \$45 million and \$70 for a new middle school, Smith said, while a new high school could be over \$120 million.

The school system is just able to maintain the facilities it has now, Smith said.

Similarly, other county agencies, including the Office of the Sheriff, have expressed concerns about providing adequate services in the community if the project were fully built out.

Joan Sullivan Cowan, who lives on South Essex Drive in Lexington Park, said

"Stewart's Grant does have the potential to improve our quality of life... this will happen by providing affordable housing for young professionals and retirees," she said. "Our county needs more young professionals."

The only member of the planning commission to vote against the project was John Brown who expressed safety concerns over the northern portion of the project being so close to Sanner's Lake Sportsmen's Club, which hosts rifle, shotgun and pistol shooting.

William Sanner, representing Sanner Properties, said the family owned about 150 acres at the northwest edge of the proposed development.

"This current site plan has apartments... being built 100 yards from six firing ranges," Sanner said. "I can't understand why someone would want to build that close to firing ranges considering this [past] weekend there were 10,000 rounds put downrange.

"What are the current plans for protecting children from wandering on to these ranges and also what is the plan to deflect the noise?"

The club has operated since 1951, Sanner said.

The project would bring 1,122 housing units to a 394-acre piece of land in the area of Quatman Road and Great Mills Road, according to county planning documents.

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

About 20 acres would be used for commercial development.

The concept site plan calls for 619 town homes, 291 single family homes and a four-story apartment building with 224 units, planning documents show.

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Commissioners Put Up Funds for Willows Rec Center

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

As the budget season is coming to a close the Commissioners of St. Mary's County approved a budget amendment to take \$4.6 million and put it towards the purchase of the Willows Recreation Center on Bradley Boulevard in Lexington Park.

The decision ended weeks of speculation as to what the county commissioners would do about the relatively new building that housed the private, though now out of business, recreation center.

Commissioners had been signaling for that same amount of time that they were interested in a potential purchase of the building to expand recreational amenities in Lexington Park and provide a new home for the county's gymnastics center.

"With the higher ceiling there they can do more gymnastics events," said Commissioner Scott Ostrow.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt said the purchase would help the county modernize its stock of recreational facilities.

"It's about time we moved out of our Lexington Park facilities [at the former George Washington Carver Elementary School]," Hewitt said. "It's served our needs but we've outgrown it."

The newer building is only a few years



old, Hewitt said, and offers an extra 7,000 to 8,000 square feet of space.

Arthur Shepherd, director of the Department of Recreation and Parks, said that pickleball courts at the facility would be kept on the second floor and the sport could even be expanded into the older facility as it has experienced an increase in popularity.

County budget documents refer to the commissioners' actions on May 16 as moving forward with the potential purchase of the property but their open discussions in session signaled that the purchase of the building was a fait accompli.

The request for the budget amendment, which came from Shepherd's department,

came on the same day as the final budget work session before voting on the fiscal 2024 operating and capital improvement budgets next week.

Commissioner Eric Colvin's only concern as that the commissioners remained committed to funding the Shannon Farm Park on land south of Patuxent River Naval Air Station. "We're pushing out Shannon Farm, and I'm okay with that as long as we are committed to that project," Colvin said, noting that the project would be delayed at least another year in the capital improvement project schedule.

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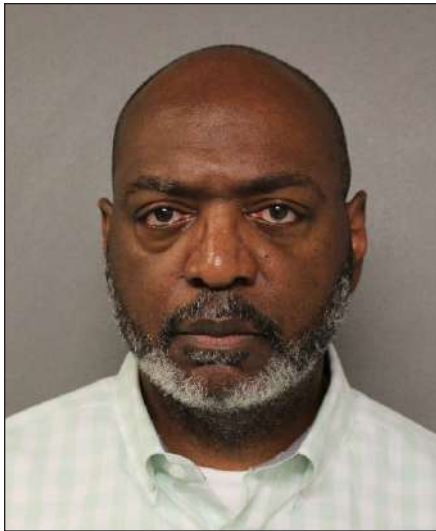
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School Employee Charged with Sex Offense



Kelly McClure-Hewitt

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

An assistant principal at Leonardtown High School has been charged with sexually molesting a student there, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office has reported.

Kelly Eugene McClure-Hewitt, 55, of Lexington Park, faces charges of third-degree sex offense, fourth-degree sex offense: sexual contact and second-degree assault.

According to the sheriff's office, McClure-Hewitt remains incarcerated at the county detention center in Leonardtown.

According to an application for a statement of charges against the defendant filed in District Court the victim, an 18-year-old male, "alleged during multiple visits to the defendant's office the suspect provided him unsolicited gifts, discussed sexual preferences and touched the victim's [private parts] over the clothing with his hand."

According to court documents the defendant had "no apparent reason" to make personal contact with the victim as McClure-Hewitt was not the victim's grade

administrator.

A child protective services investigator reported that the victim told them that the defendant had pulled the victim out of their class and escorted the victim to the defendant's office.

"The victim disclosed the defendant had the victim touch his hand in order to feel 'good vibes,'" court papers stated.

The alleged contacts between the victim and the defendant occurred in mid-March, court papers stated.

On April 12 when police contacted the defendant: "He acknowledged his contact with the victim in his office at Leonardtown High School..." and admitted to touching the victim but denied touching him in a sexual manner.

"He also denied discussing sexual orientation with the victim," court papers stated.

Prior to the contacts laid out in court documents, the victim said they had never had contact with McClure-Hewitt before.

Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith said McClure-Hewitt had been placed on paid administrative leave pending the outcome of the investigation.

"St. Mary's County Public Schools has been notified by The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office of the arrest of employee Kelly E. Hewitt, an assistant principal at Leonardtown High School, for allegations of inappropriate contact with a student at Leonardtown High School," Smith said in a prepared statement.

"Mr. Hewitt has been placed on administrative leave.

"St. Mary's County Public Schools is fully cooperating with the authorities during the investigation of this matter."

Anyone with information is asked to contact the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office, DFC Daniel Sidorowicz, 301-475-4200, ext. 78043.

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“WITH THE HIGHER CEILING THERE THEY CAN DO MORE GYMNASTICS EVENTS”

COMMISSIONER SCOTT OSTROW ON THE PURCHASE OF THE WILLOWS REC CENTER



LOCAL 5
Assistant Principal Charged with Sex Offense



LOCAL 7
County To Purchase Willows Rec Center



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