



Calvert County

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Times

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2023



CALVERT, HUNTINGTOWN GO TO STATE FINALS

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WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, NOV 30	FRI, DEC 1	SAT, DEC 2	SUN, DEC 3
Mostly Sunny Hi: 55° Lo: 39°	PM Showers Hi: 53° Lo: 48°	Cloudy Hi: 65° Lo: 51°	Showers Hi: 58° Lo: 47°
MON, DEC 4	TUE, DEC 5	WED, DEC 6	THU, DEC 7
Showers Hi: 54° Lo: 38°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 49° Lo: 37°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 48° Lo: 32°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 49° Lo: 35°

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County to Issue \$69 Million in Bonds

Bond Sale Set for December 19

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved the issuance of slightly more than \$69 million in bonds to finance a number of projects. The sale will take place on Dec. 19. The Maryland General Assembly has given the county the authority to issue up to \$100 million in bonds. Of the total bond issuance of \$69,270,000, the general fund would absorb \$63,500,000 and \$5,445,000 would accrue to the Enterprise Fund for water and sewer projects. The remainder would be for fees.

Director of Finance and Budget Bruce Miller noted that the largest project by far on the list for the proceeds of the bond sale monies would be the new county administration building. He detailed the projects on the list:

General Fund

- Beach Elementary — \$ 4,000,000
- Little Cove Point Rd. Curve Improvements — \$ 500,000
- Road Drainage (Piping) — \$900,000
- Breezy Point Shoreline Restoration — \$2,500,000
- Barstow Salt Dome — \$ 350,000
- Ball Rd. Culvert Repairs — \$1,000,000
- County Services Plaza II

- \$45,000,000
- Calvert Pines Senior Center — \$250,000
- Chesapeake Hills Golf Course Clubhouse — \$1,700,000
- Fire & Rescue Co. 1 North Beach — \$300,000
- Fire & Rescue Co. 5 Dunkirk — \$ 50,000
- Detention Center — \$1,000,000
- Career EMS Apparatus — \$50,000
- Twin Beach Library — \$5,900,000

Water and Sewer Fund

- Chesapeake Heights/Dare Beach Water Treatment — \$ 270,000
- Paris Oak Pump Station — \$500,000
- Cove Point Water Expansion — \$25,000
- Prince Frederick Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade — \$850,000
- Solomons Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvement — \$1,000,000
- Solomons Septage Receiving Plant Upgrade — \$1,500,000
- Chesapeake /Dares Beach Water Distribution Replacement — \$250,000
- Wastewater Treatment Plant – Biosolid Handling — \$1,000,000

Deputy Director Sharon Strand said, “The general fund bond sale is a 15-year bond sale, which is a rapid repayment. And then

the water and sewer bond sale is spread over 25 years. And the debt is paid by the water and sewer uses.”

The only speaker at the Nov. 28 public hearing on the bond sale was Joseph Cormier of Owings. He said, “We as a county need to be very careful about the money that we put on our credit card. But all of these projects are needed and are going to add benefit to our county.”

The county did not do a bond sale last year and the year before they issued only about \$20 million worth of bonds, Miller said.

Strand said the county is well short of its percentage limit for indebtedness. Commissioner President Buddy Hance noted, “We had a discussion in my previous board about extending the repayment and at that time we did not entertain it because it just increases the cost of projects and the sooner you clear them off the books, the sooner you can do new projects.”

Commissioner Vice President Mike Hart observed the county was going into the bond sale at a time of rising interest rates. He added, “I think this is a very good compromise where you have on the general fund a 15-year amortization. Whereas on the enterprise funds, their capitalization cost, which is a totally different activity, typically utility debt is long term because that asset is a very



Director of Finance and Budget Bruce Miller

long term.”

Hart observed, “The county’s in very good financial shape and we do pick certain small capital projects and pay them upfront instead of borrowing the money.”

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Another CRE Special Tax District Proposed

Association Says Extra Money is Necessary

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) received a briefing on Nov. 28 on a request by the Property Owners Association of Chesapeake Ranch Estates (POACRE) to create another special taxing district (STD) and to assess each of the 4,000 lot owners \$275 per lot per year for the next four years.

Many of the roads in Lusby community are not able to be brought up to county road standards and thus the county has not taken them over as they have done in other heritage communities. Instead, they are owned by POACRE. According to POACRE President Travis Scott, all the money collected in the STD (about \$1 million annually) will be used for the community’s roads, bridges, and dams. “In order to maintain what we have, we need the STD to help maintain that and obviously continue to

improve the infrastructure.”

Scott said the community used to have “dirt roads, then it was millings. Now we’ve paved (with) tar and chip. None of that would be possible with the native funds we have with our own road fees. That was all done via the STD, the infrastructure repairs, the drainage, the water, and everything else.”

Scott added, “We are not a profit. We don’t make massive amounts of money. We’re an HOA (homeowner’s association). Everything we take in goes right back into the community, especially the roads. We want to maintain improvements made with previous STDs. The tar and chip program has been massive. I’m sure you all are familiar with how much it costs to pave a road. Used to be a million a mile. I don’t know what is today, but I guarantee it’s more than a million a mile.”

Scott said tar and chip paving requires more frequent maintenance (seven years

versus 20 years for concrete).

Country Attorney John Norris explained to the commissioners, “Legislation was passed in the Maryland General Assembly in 1995 as a public local law that allows the elected board of directors of a homeowner’s association to petition the Board of County Commissioners for the creation of a special tax district. Special tax district revenues are generated through property tax billing. The law imposes restrictions on how the association may spend the revenue. The broadest uses for which these special tax district revenues can be spent includes the cost of furnishing, providing, and maintaining: (1) Community roads and streets, including the maintenance and improvements of the roads and streets, appropriate drainage, and all appurtenances including water runoff and control; (2) Lakes; (3) Canals; and (4) Other community-wide amenities and other special privileges or benefits as the County Commissioners may approve. The association may further restrict itself to the uses set forth in its petition. POACRE has previously sought and obtained approval to create a Special Tax District for the residents of the Chesapeake Ranch Estates subdivision.”

The original STD, many residents point out, was intended to last only four years, but they have been extended a number of times for more than 20 years. That is a main bone of contention at public hearings on the STDs.

But Scott pointed out to the BOCC that the residents have consistently denied requests to increase their annual regular

assessments to raise more money for roads. Those votes require a majority of property owners to agree. So, Scott says POACRE is left with no other revenue producing avenue other than the STDs.

Of the money received from the annual assessments of property owners, Scott said, “Pretty much everything we take in goes straight back to keeping our roads department and (what) those guys do. They work very hard. We do as much in-house as possible, even with the STD projects. If there’s prep work, cleanup work, different things that can be dug or we do as much in-house as possible to support any STD work and our own roads work.”

When asked why there is always so much opposition to the STDs at public meetings, Scott said it may be because the road in front of their property is in pretty good shape now, but they fail to recognize that maintenance will be required.

Also, he said the property value of each lot is impacted by the surrounding area. If a potential home buyer has to travel over a potholed road, that could influence their decision, he observed.

Scott promised to muster up more support for the next public meeting. Since the briefing was not a work session, no vote was taken. But the commissioners seemed inclined to agree to a public hearing for the latest STD request. A vote on that will come at a future commissioner meeting.

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County Times

Two Calvert High Schools Advance to State Football Championship

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

All four of Calvert County's public high schools made it to the semifinals of their division in the Maryland State high school football championship series, quite a feat for such a small county, as noted by the county commissioners at their Nov. 28 meeting.

Now two of those schools, Calvert and Huntingtown high schools, are headed for their state championships this week. Calvert advanced by beating Forrest Park 17-14 and Huntingtown defeated Walkersville 27-7 to advance to the finals.

The Huntingtown High School Hurricanes will face Stephen Decatur of Berlin in the 2A championship on Thursday, Nov. 30 at 7 p.m. at US Naval Academy Stadium in Annapolis.

The Calvert Cavaliers will face Dunbar of Baltimore in the 2A/1A championship on Friday, Dec. 1 at 4 p.m., also at the Naval Academy stadium.

At the Nov. 28 commissioner meeting, Vice President Mike Hart said, "We're a small county and if you've never been involved with any of the Calvert sports you don't really realize how small we are till you leave the county and you see these places, they recruit kids. And as competitive as we continually are... in everything. And all you do is walk around. When I go, I don't like to sit in the stands. I'm a little hyper sometimes to sit there. Go



walk around. And, if you see the family and sense of community and it's not made up. It's real. Whether you're any of the schools in the county, you see how we travel. We go a lot farther a lot of times because we are remote. When we travel out to Charles County, it's an hour. You see the participation.

"If you watch our kids, they help each other up. They protect each other. Football is a contact sport. You see a respectful way, I really can't say enough. They feel that [if] one of their teammates was hit maybe excessively... watch how they protect each other."

Hart added, "I really can't say thanks

enough to the families that do the concession stands, that help out with the fundraisers. We are a small county. You travel out and you see some of these stadiums that they play. I think our kids, we all would love to have all (those) things, but I think our kids get a built-in small-town thankfulness, I guess for lack of better word, because they have that sense of family and then to be together for years. And you see the alumni come back year after year to watch and support these kids on and travel. It's a special thing to watch. And I'm just very thankful to live here and be part of that. And I wish our

teams just the biggest luck coming up. At the end of the day, we're all Calvert County, so hopefully we will bring them some titles here this week."

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said, "We're very small...and to compete against Dunbar and all those teams up there around big cities that recruit, and kids [who] move therefrom different schools to build these teams. And little old Calvert County every year is up there fighting for the state championship, says a lot."

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Child Abuse Agreement Signed

Seven local and state agencies on Nov. 28 signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) "that establishes protocols for investigating and prosecuting suspected child abuse and neglect cases in Calvert County," according to a release from the Maryland Department of Human Services.

The signers to the agreement were: Calvert County Department of Social Services, Office of the State's Attorney for Calvert County, Calvert County Sheriff's Office, Maryland Department of State Police, Maryland State Department of Education Office of Child Care, Calvert County Board of Education, and Calvert County Department of Health."

In a Facebook posting, the Calvert County Sheriff's Office said about the cooperation, "we renewed our commitment to protecting the youth of Calvert County by signing our Memorandum of Understanding. This

signing took place at the Child Advocacy Center in Prince Frederick where numerous detectives, Captain Fridman (Commander of Criminal Investigations Bureau), and Sheriff Cox were present. This commitment ensures that the communication, sharing of critical information, and relationships between all parties are codified. Sheriff Cox solidified his commitment to supporting the Child Advocacy Center and stressed the importance of maintaining relationships between all parties."

The press release from the state said, "The MOU, which is updated every three years, prioritizes child safety and aims to reduce trauma experienced by child abuse victims. The MOU will also help strengthen collaboration and expedite information sharing between partner agencies and enhance resources needed to conduct child abuse and neglect investigations and prosecutions."

Grant Awarded for Free Computers Three Early Voting Sites Approved

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County on Oct. 30 was awarded a grant of \$496,875 to distribute 2,500 free laptop computers to needy county residents. The Maryland Connected Devices Program (MD-CDP) also is providing an additional \$15,000 to the county to support device distribution.

Grants Management Program Specialist Danielle Russell said in a memo to the county commissioners, "The MD-CDP program provides grants of internet-enabled devices to counties and municipal governments to distribute to their eligible households. Eligible households are identified as a household with an income at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, households enrolled in the federal Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and households participating in certain government assistance programs. Qualifying households may receive only one device per address. The period of performance for the program is six months. A stipend of \$6 per device is available to the applicant to assist with the distribution cost." Russell noted that statewide, "Round one of the application requests awarded 91,300 devices. Round two of the application requests will award the remaining allotment of devices."

The commissioners authorized the submission of the grant at their Sept. 12 meeting. The acceptance of the award was approved on the commissioners' consent agenda without discussion at their Nov. 28 meeting.

Also on the consent agenda for the Nov. 28 meeting was approval of three early voting sites for next year's primary and general elections, including a new one in a trailer to

be located at Ward Farm Park in Dunkirk.

According to a memo to the commissioners from Elections Administrator Gail L. Hatfield, "The State Board of Elections has asked that each local board of elections have a signed agreement in place for each site used as an early vote center as well as confirmation that the Board of

County Commissioners has decided to implement a third site in the county. Based on HB745, which was passed by the Maryland General Assembly in 2021, Calvert County is required to have two early vote sites. The Board of County Commissioners approved a third early vote site on May 18, 2021, in order to serve Calvert County voters with an early vote center in each of the county's three districts."

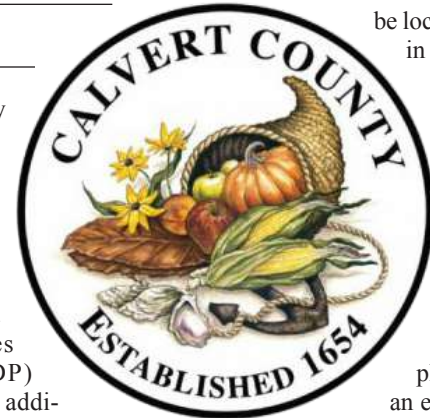
The third early voting site for the last election was added at the Fairview Library, but that proved to be inadequate, Hatfield told the commissioners at an earlier meeting. The new site at Ward Farm Park is at 10455 Ward Road, Dunkirk.

The other two early voting sites remain the same as they were at the last election:

- Southern Community Center (20 Appeal Lane, Lusby)
- Community Resources Building (30 Duke St., Prince Frederick)

The consent agenda approvals requested by the State Elections Board involve passing agreements that "outline the responsibilities and duties of both the local board and the county regarding early voting, including when facility access is needed for both the primary and general elections," according to Hatfield.

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CALVERT COUNTY CRIME BLOTTER

During the weeks of November 6 – November 19, 2023, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 3,764 calls for service throughout the community.

Property Destruction: 23-80278

On November 11, 2023, Deputy Sylver responded to the 3000 block of Lower Marlboro Road in Owings, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised his mailbox as well as the mail inside the box had been burned. The estimated value of damaged property is \$200.00.

Property Destruction: 23-82289

On November 19, 2023, Cpl. Ward responded to the 100 block of Armory Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised she heard a noise outside her window at 1 a.m. Cpl. Ward arrived on scene and observed two exterior windows had been damaged with multiple cracks. The estimated value of damaged property is \$1400.00.

Theft: 23-80761

On November 13, 2023, Deputy Aley responded to Calvert County Sheriff's Office located at 30 Church Street, in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised she left her Canon camera at the Solomons boat ramp on Monday, November 6, 2023, between 5 – 6:30 p.m. The complainant realized she left her camera on Tuesday, November 7, 2023, around 7 a.m. and responded to the boat ramp to retrieve it. Upon arrival at the ramp, the camera was no longer there. The camera is described as a Canon EOS 90D and a Sigma AF 150-600mm camera lens. The estimated value of stolen property is \$2,303.00.

Theft: 23-91760

On November 17, 2023, DFC Barger responded to Planet Fitness located at 865 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for a reported theft. The complainant advised his wallet had been stolen from a locked locker inside the gym. The victim advised his locker was locked using a three-dial lock. The wallet contained \$400 in cash, a credit card, a debit card, a driver's license, and an insurance card. The victim received several fraud alerts regarding fraudulent charges that occurred on the credit card shortly after the wallet had been stolen. The total amount stolen is \$2317.34.

Theft: 23-82208

On November 18, 2023, Deputy T. Bowen responded to the 11500 block of Senora Lane in Lusby, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised four Amazon packages were stolen from the victim's front steps. The victim received photo confirmation the packages had been delivered and upon going to retrieve them, the packages were missing. The estimated value of stolen property is \$112.00.

Theft: 23-81019

On November 14, 2023, Deputy Brown responded to the T-Mobile store located at 10119 Ward Road in Dunkirk, for a reported theft. Investigation revealed two males

entered the store and began to pull phones and watches off the front displays then fled on foot. Suspect #1 is described as 5' 8", wearing an orange jacket, black hat, blue facemask, and New Balance shoes. The other male was approximately 5' 11", wearing a gray sweat-suit, blue hat, blue facemask, and New Balance shoes. An estimated \$6,147.00 in property was reported stolen.

ARRESTS



On November 9, 2023, DFC Plant responded to the Wendy's Old Fashioned Hamburgers located at 170 N. Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, in an attempt to locate a wanted person. Upon arrival, deputies entered the restaurant and observed **Joseph Anthony Peifer**, 23 of Owings, wanted on two active warrants through Maryland State Police. As deputies approached Peifer, he fled towards the rear of the restaurant and out the exit door. A brief foot chase ensued as Peifer ran toward the drive-thru and Walmart. Peifer was apprehended and placed into custody. Prior to entering the Detention Center, Peifer advised he was in possession of Percocet. A search of Peifer revealed two Oxycodone pills and a Ziploc bag containing a white powdery substance of suspected Heroin and a straw with residue. Peifer was arrested and charged with two counts of CDS: Possession- Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, Resisting and Interfering with Arrest, and Obstructing and Hindering.



On November 8, 2023, Calvert deputies initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle after observing several traffic offenses. Upon making contact with the driver, **Kevil Casswell Gregory**, 43 of Lusby, and passenger **Alexa Kirsten Freeman**, 28 of Lusby, it was learned Gregory was operating the vehicle without a valid driver's license. Further investigation revealed Suboxone and a bottle containing a strong odor of urine inside the center console. Gregory was placed under arrest and transported to Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and Altering a Drug or Alcohol Test. Freeman was also transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and a search on Freeman's person upon entry to the jail revealed a glass pipe with burn marks and cooper material. Freeman was charged with two counts of CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia and Altering a Drug or Alcohol Test.

On November 15, 2023, Deputy Hudson initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle for a speeding violation in the area of Bayside

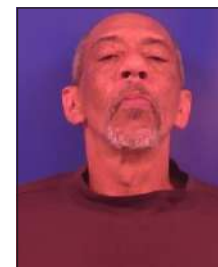


Road and 31st Street in Chesapeake Beach. Upon making contact with the driver, **Brian Emery Freeman, Jr.**, 31 of Brandywine, Freeman initially provided a false name. Freeman advised he did not have a valid driver's license. Investigation revealed Freeman had active open warrants through St. Mary's and Charles County. Freeman was placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with False Statement to a Peace Officer.



On November 15, 2023, Deputy MacWilliams responded to the area of Rt. 4 and Walton Road in Huntingtown, to assist with a traffic stop. The driver, **David Earl Donaldson**, 57 of Hyattsville, initially provided a false name. Through further investigation, it was revealed Donaldson had open and active warrants through another agency. Donaldson was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was arrested for the warrants and charged with making a False

Statement to an Officer.



On November 16, 2023, at 8:07 p.m., DFC Wilder responded to the 12300 block of Ridge Road in Lusby, for a disorderly subject. Prior to arrival, citizens concerned for their safety reported **Eric Lamont Teal**, 60 of Lusby, on his porch yielding a hammer, screaming, and making threats. Deputy Wilder arrived on scene and made contact with Teal. Further investigation revealed Teal was in possession of crack cocaine. Teal was placed under arrest and charged with Disorderly Conduct and CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis.

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

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

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Southern Maryland to Los Angeles: The Rest of My Kicks on Route 66

Story & Photos by Rick Thompson
Special to the County Times

(Ed. Note: This is part two of the correspondent's recent coast-to-coast adventure driving Historic Route 66. The first half appeared in the November 16 issue of the County Times.)

One thing you notice going through New Mexico on Day 5 and Arizona today on Day 6: it looks familiar. This is wide open dry country, with more mesas than you'll see anywhere else. How many westerns have been filmed in this same type of territory? Seems like hundreds.

Day 6 is the first of two Arizona days. In the eastern portion of the state is the Petrified Forest National Park, which also contains the Painted Desert. It really does look painted. It's a land of more mesas, including the "Blue Mesa," which really looks blue.

Day 7 belonged to the Grand Canyon, but the night before I did something I didn't plan. My hotel that night before was called "Under Canvas" which a 9.2 rating on Expedia (normally 8.5 or so is the highest you'll see). So, I thought it looked interesting and booked it. Not mentioned in any of the writeups was this place is for outdoorsy folk, which this ex-New Yorker is not. "Under Canvas" was exactly that: a tent — a heavy-duty tent with a king-size normal bed in it, but still a tent. No electricity and a wood stove for heat.

The redemption came with the people I met, several from Cleveland (must have something to do with being Browns fans, which they all were). Even better, I woke up in the middle of the night and ventured outside. The sky was gorgeous. Because there was no "light pollution" from buildings and streetlights, the stars sparkled in stark white against a jet-black sky. It was 35 degrees, but I spent over 30 minutes in the chair outside "home sweet tent" just admiring the sheer beauty of it all.

Come morning it was the Grand Canyon, which was everything the name says — just one spectacular view after another. After spending the day there, I couldn't help but notice that gas was getting progressively more expensive. It was \$3.85 in New Mexico, then \$4.47 in Arizona. What would it be in California?

My hotel was just over the border, in Needles, California, and there was the answer: \$6.79 a gallon. The next morning was also my first palm tree sighting. (Oddly enough, going through the Mojave Desert I never saw a cactus!)

Day 8 was The Big One, but it starts with an example of what has been lost due to the Interstates. Goffs, California was a small Indian town. It had a one-room school, which has now been restored. When I-10 was built, Goffs was bypassed. Today it is almost a ghost town. Only one lone resident remains. When he leaves or passes on, Goffs will be officially dead. The restored school is staffed by volunteers from area towns closer to I-10.

Out here there are still lots of wide-open spaces. You drive for miles seeing parched ground that life still finds a way to survive

on. Remember that \$6.79 gas? Fenner has it beat: \$8.49. It's not till you get close to Los Angeles when things abruptly change. Millions live here, and roads are packed, stop-and-go traffic even on the many interstates — on a Sunday afternoon!

But anticipation builds as I get closer to my goal, eventually picking my way to Santa Monica Boulevard, which passes through Beverly Hills and its ultra-ritzy Rodeo (pronounced "ro-DAY-o") Drive. Only one more turn remains, a left onto Lincoln Boulevard.

At 8:36 p.m. on Sunday, October 15, after eight days (nine if you count that day-long jaunt from Maryland to Illinois) I reach the Western end of Route 66. It turns out there are actually three endings. The official one is the corner of Lincoln and Olympic Boulevards. The celebratory ending is right on that corner: Mel's Drive-In, the newest of the chain made famous in the film "American Graffiti." That's where I have my celebratory hot fudge sundae. Be sure to tell the waiter or waitress of your triumph, because you'll get an official Mel's "Certificate of Achievement," signed by the owner and shift manager.

The spiritual ending of Route 66 is the Santa Monica Pier, just over a block away. I walk to pier's end and look out into the black sky and waters. I've gone about as far as I can go. With that, I walk back to the car and start for home. Four days later, driving straight interstates with almost no stops, I'm back in Prince Frederick.

So what did I take away from my 6,004.3 mile journey to the other coast and back? What did I learn from this long-standing and long-planned expedition?

First, my former occupation working conventions meant I flew all over the country to both major and minor cities and towns. All told, I traveled to 49 states, and did the 50th (Alaska) after retiring. What I never truly realized, and it takes a driving trip like this drive home the point, is just how physically BIG the United States of America actually is. It's IMMENSE, as driving the long distances between towns will attest.

You also get impressed on you that the political games played in D.C. are far from the minds of regular people as they go about their lives. In all the places, I never heard one word about politics unless I brought it up. Not even in passing.

In addition to the sheer size, this country is incredibly — to use a word that's been corrupted by overuse — diverse. I don't mean diverse in the political games sense, measuring this many whites, this many blacks, that many women, this many Hispanics, Asians, Indians (both American and India Indians), the list goes on.

No, I'm talking about the stories of their lives. The American Indian lady explaining the history of a restored one-room schoolhouse in near-ghost town Goffs; the man who is personally restoring an historic Phillips 66 service station, his wife having hand painted the shingles in the original colors and design; the woman volunteer at the Barbed Wire Museum who has never left her hometown, and at age 14 worked in that very building when it was a ladies under-



Meeting Geoff and Margaret Hyde of Surrey, England, who came from even further away than me to drive Route 66. In the background is a rusted Studebaker that marks where pre-1937 Route 66 crossed through the Painted Desert National Park.



In California, selling marijuana and gasoline at the same place. What could possibly go wrong? (This is one of a chain.)



The official West end of Route 66, at Olympic and Lincoln Boulevards.



At the end of Santa Monica Pier. I've gone about as far as I can go!

garment (her term) factory; the African-American husband and wife truck drivers who have seen almost all the country from their 18-wheeler; the man who has repaired and restored every car in the Auto Museum ("Don't ruin the shine," he tells me); the young woman who is named Stacey and will allow it to be spelled "Stacy" but not "Staci" ("That's wrong!") and thinks I'm a prince and a half because I offered (and she accepted) a cold iced tea with lemon added on a hot day in the Painted Desert; and the waitress in Seligman, Arizona who's on top

of the world because her husband is personally building her a house and she can't wait to start a family in it. Again, the list goes on.

So the question once more, what did I come away from all this with? Stated simply:

DAMN, THIS IS A GREAT COUNTRY!
PS. Favorite sign seen (I did not make this up):

*We Have Pumpkin Spice Tacos!
(Just kidding!)*

Only in America, folks. Only in America.

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Nov 30

Reading Buddies

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

Does your K-5th grade child love to read out loud, or struggle with reading confidence? Here's the chance for everyone to practice in a safe and welcoming space! At this event, elementary-aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! Want to work with elementary aged kids and help build their confidence while they read aloud? Become a Teen Reading Buddy! Teen volunteers can earn one (1) service learning hour for participating. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Dec 1

First Fossil Friday

Calvert Marine Museum
1-4:30 p.m.

Fossil hunters bring your fossil finds from the Calvert Cliffs or other local areas to be identified! This service is provided for free; however, admission fees apply for access to CMM exhibits.

Sat, Dec 2

Christmas Town in Lusby

East-John Youth Center
11835 Mill Bridge Road Lusby
10 a.m.-8 p.m.

Free Christmas Event for the Whole Family! Food, Music, Live Nativity, Silent Auction, Santa Hut, Gingerbread House Contest, Craft & Merchandise Vendors, Hayride, and more

Holiday Market

Annemarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center
9 a.m.-2 p.m.
Admission to the market areas is free

Join us for an indoor and outdoor market where you'll find a variety of gifts made with love. Outside, guests can browse a festive variety of vendors selling unique jewelry, pottery, beauty products, home decor, small batch foods, and more. Inside, you will find more shopping in the Annemarie Gift Shop, the Holiday Gift Show, and the Ornament Show & Sale. There'll be something for everyone on your list! Well-behaved pets on a short leash are welcome outside; rain or shine event; no smoking or vaping. Food and drink will be available. Details: www.annemariégarden.org

Annual Wreath and Greens Sale

American Chestnut Land Trust
South Side Trailhead
11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Handmade wreaths and greens for sale. All greens gathered from ACLT lands.

Sun, Dec 3

Christmas Caroling

St. Leonard Polling House Holiday
5095 St. Leonard Road, St. Leonard
4:30 p.m.

22nd annual event. Join in the Spirit of the Season with Cookies, Cocoa, and Song. Santa will make a special appearance at 5 pm! Sponsored by the SLVG. For questions, contact Nancy W. Zinn, 410-586-0682.

Holiday Wreath Making Party

Annemarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Join us for our popular outdoor wreath-

making extravaganza. Learn how to create a wreath from an assortment of greens and fun decorative elements. Enjoy music, cash bar, assorted treats and festive company. Advance registration required. Details: www.annemariégarden.org

Thu, Dec 7

Sea Squirts: Dinosaurs are Fossils Too

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

Children 18 months to 3 years, with an adult, are invited to discover the museum together through music, stories, and special activities. Join us for story time and a craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. The cost is free with museum admission. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive.

Ongoing

Annemarie Garden in Lights

Annemarie Sculpture Garden and Arts Center
Through January 1, 2024
5-9 p.m. nightly; closed some evenings
Advance timed-entry tickets required

Join us for the most magical time of year as the grounds of Annemarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center are transformed into an outdoor twinkling wonderland! Annemarie Garden in Lights will transport you and your family to an enchanted world full of glowing "light sculptures" and wondrous light installations. Discover magical creatures, wintery wonderlands, musical holiday scenes, deep sea treasures, shimmering trees, and so much more! You'll find sparkling delights and fun photo ops around each corner! Check out the full schedule of special nights, including the Holiday Train Display, Santa Sundays, Local Heroes Nights, Special Needs Night, Golf Cart Tours, and more! Advance timed-entry tickets required; \$15/person (\$17 at the gate, if not sold out).

Reduced cost tickets for SNAP card holders available. Rain or shine event, no pets, no smoking. Details: www.annemariégarden.org.

Upcoming

Christmas Parade

Saturday, Dec. 9
Lineup starts at 9 a.m., parade starts at 10:30 a.m.

New Location, New Date, New Time! Parade route will start on Duke Street in Prince Frederick, go through the Prince Frederick Shopping Center, then turn right onto Church Street toward the reviewing stand and continue onto Main Street.

There will be no on-site registration. Registration forms for the parade are available on the Optimist Club of Calvert's website: www.CalvertOptimists.org.

Calvert County Parks & Recreation, Calvert County Department of Economic Development, Calvert County Chamber of Commerce, Calvert County Historical Society, The Optimist Club of Calvert County, and the Calvert County Fair Board are teaming up for Home for the Holidays, a full day of free family-friendly fun! After the parade, stay for festive family fun at King Park and Linden House (noon - 4 pm) including children's activities, vendors, food trucks, music, and more, and then experience the magic of the season with a tree lighting ceremony in front of the Calvert County Courthouse (4:00 - 5:00 p.m.)

Solomons Christmas Walk

Solomons
Saturday Dec. 9

Sponsored by Solomons Business Association. Lighted Boat Parade starts at 6 p.m., weather permitting, coordinated by Solomons Island Yacht Club, Patuxent River Sail and Power Squadron, Solomons Yachting Center, Sail Solomons and Southern Maryland Sailing Association.

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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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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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Fri, Dec 1

2nd Annual Christmas Tree Lighting 2nd Dist. VFD & RS

2nd Dist. VFD & RS
19330 Piney Point Road, Valley Lee
5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

- Tree Lighting @ 6:30 p.m.
- Photos with Santa, Mrs. Clause and Elves
- Guest Appearance from the Grinch
- Food Vendors Available
- SDVFDRS Auxiliary
- Olde Town Pub
- Pizza Hotline
- Hot Cocoa, Cider and Baked Goods
- Games & Crafts
- Coloring Contest
- Free Giveaways

- Fire truck Rides and more!

Sat, Dec 2

A Dickens of a Mystery Murder Mystery Dinner

Wicomico Shores Golf Club
35794 Aviation Yatch Club Rd,
Mechanicsville
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

An evening of murder, mystery, mayhem, and a meal! Come join us for the fun!

Summerseat's Christmas Open House

Summerseat
26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Held at the historic Summerseat Farm Manor House, beautifully decorated for the Christmas season. A festive day of family fun. Enjoy holiday cookies and cider, photos with Santa, Christmas music, kids' ornament take-home craft, Manor House tours, hayrides, farm animals and more. \$20 per family admission. visit summerseat.org/ for more information. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram 26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville, MD 20659

Games -start @1:00 pm. Ages 4-12 must be accompanied by an adult. \$5.00 per child (10 Games Played) Food available for purchase. We accept Visa, Mastercard and Discover (processing Fee apply)

Christmas Market

Homegrown Farm Market
21708 Three Notch Road,
Lexington Park
11:30 am to 3:30 pm

Homegrown Farm Market will host local crafters for a Southern Maryland Christmas Market. Santa will be on hand to hear everyone's wishes until 1:30 pm. Girl Scouts will be on hand with crafts and carols. Stop on by!

Sun, Dec 3

Children's Santa Bingo

Mechanicsville Vol. Fire Dept.
28165 Hills Club Rd., Mechanicsville
12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library UPCOMING EVENTS

St. Mary's County Library Closures

All three locations of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Friday, December 1 for staff development. All locations will be open regular business hours on Saturday, December 2.

English Conversation Hour

Practice your English speaking skills in a group at Lexington Park Library on Thursdays from 6 - 7 p.m. This is a fun, casual atmosphere to practice and improve your English. Speakers of all levels are welcome. There will be a new topic for every meeting. Activities will be provided for accompanying children. No registration. (No meeting on November 30).

D&D at Your Library!

Learn and play Dungeons and Dragons at the Charlotte Hall Library on Saturday, December 2 from 1:30 - 3:30 p.m. Attendees under 14 must have an adult present. Characters will be available to be chosen from. No experience needed! Register on www.stmalib.org.

Roads to Political Action: Engaging in Our Communities

Ever wondered what you could do

to make a difference in your community? Join Dr. Diana Boros, Professor and Chair of the Political Science Dept. at St. Mary's College of Maryland for a virtual discussion on Wednesday, December 6 from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m., and get inspired to be an informed and involved citizen! This virtual talk will discuss how change is made in our community - from the most local to national, and how to get involved - from voting to activism to community leadership. Be empowered to learn more, share more, and interact more with the many issues that affect us all. Register on www.stmalib.org with an email address to receive the Zoom link the day before the event.

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

Gently used books and other materials, great for gift giving! Join the Friends at Leonardtown Library on Saturday, December 9 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Members Only from 10 a.m. - 12 noon

Open to the Public: 12 noon - 3 p.m. Memberships available at the door or join online on www.stmalib.org in advance.

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Dec. 9 & 16 Gingerbread house decorating contest

Dec. 16 Christmas shopping &
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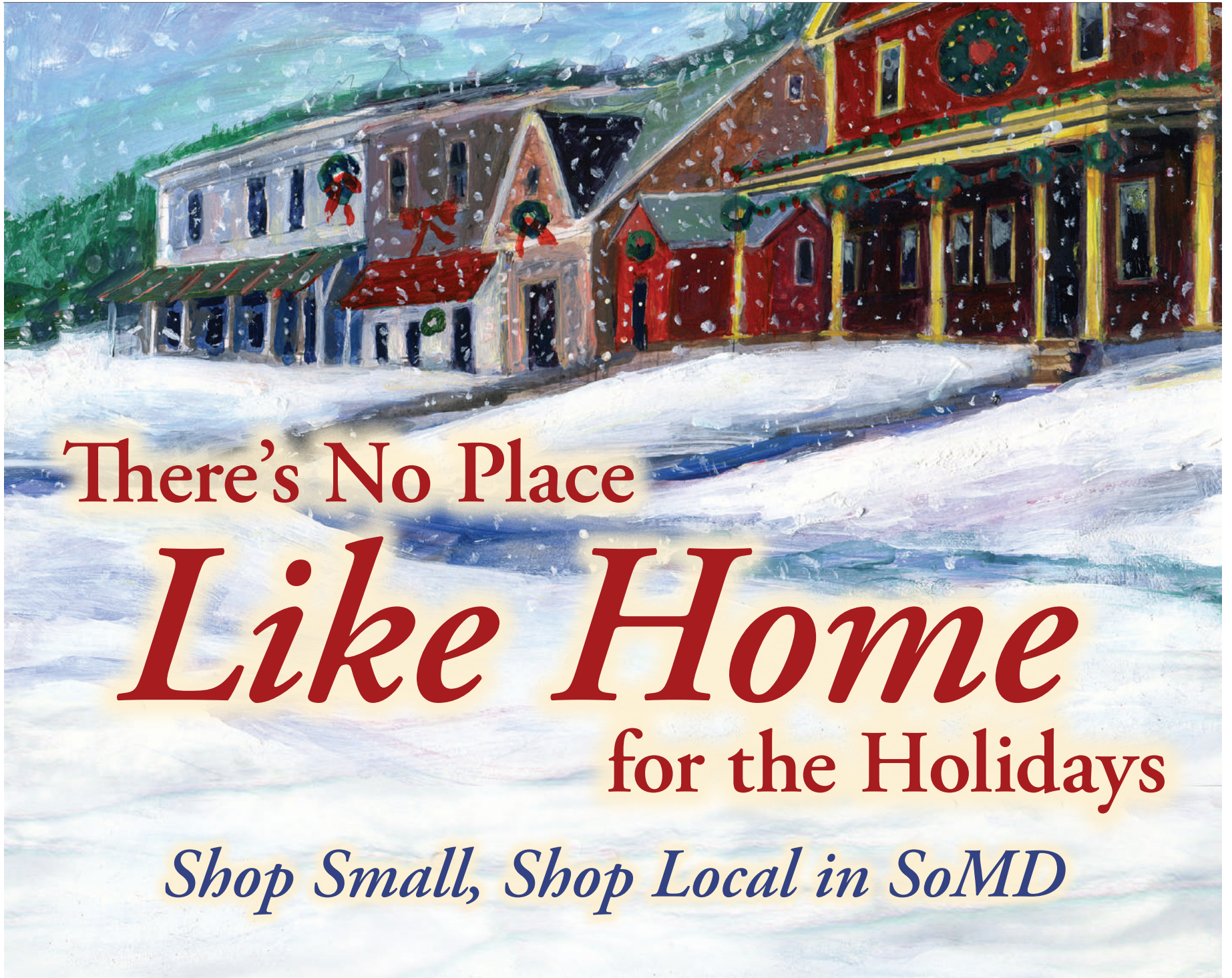
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Friday - Sunday

December 1 - 3, 2023

Christmas Open House &

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Sunday, December 17th

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Holiday Hours

Through December 24, 2023

Monday - Saturday: 10 AM - 7 PM

Sunday: 11 AM - 5 PM



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Light Up Leonardtown

DECEMBER 1

First Friday

Leonardtown

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 (Closed 12/24 & 12/25)
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Unique Gifts at the Museum Stores or Online at [friendmuseumstore.square.site](https://www.friendmuseumstore.square.site)

First Friday Itinerary

- 5:15 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Choose from a variety of fitness classes** from root, SUP, and Fitness including Flow, rootCamp, Spin, Aerial Yoga. [facebook.com/rootsupfitness](https://www.facebook.com/rootsupfitness)
 - 6 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Choose from a variety of fitness classes** with SPICE Studio, including Barre and High-Low Fitness, and Pilates. [facebook.com/spicestudio](https://www.facebook.com/spicestudio)
 - 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Brunch at Antoinette's Garden.** [facebook.com/AntoinettesGarden](https://www.facebook.com/AntoinettesGarden)
 - 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Old Jail Museum & Leonardtown Visitor Center** offering extended hours for First Friday. [facebook.com/theoldjailmuseum](https://www.facebook.com/theoldjailmuseum)
 - 1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Special Holiday Barrel Tasting** at Port of Leonardtown Winery. [facebook.com/portoftownwine](https://www.facebook.com/portoftownwine)
 - 3:30 p.m. – 5 p.m. Special Holiday Barrel Tasting** at Port of Leonardtown Winery. [facebook.com/portoftownwine](https://www.facebook.com/portoftownwine)
 - 4 p.m. – 7 p.m. Jingle & Mingle Shopping Event** at SPICE Studio. [facebook.com/spicestudio](https://www.facebook.com/spicestudio)
 - 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. Holiday Open House at St. Mary's County Art's Council** - Live music with Doc Lohn, meet the staff and artists! Shop from the works of over 60 local artists. [facebook.com/smcartsCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/smcartsCouncil)
 - 5 p.m. – 8 p.m. 37th Annual Holiday Show Opening Reception** at North End Gallery. [facebook.com/North.End.Gallery.Leonardtown](https://www.facebook.com/North.End.Gallery.Leonardtown)
 - 5:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Live music featuring Joe Parsons** with Gatos Tacos food truck on site at Port of Leonardtown Winery. [facebook.com/portoftownwine](https://www.facebook.com/portoftownwine)
 - 6:30 p.m. Movie Night featuring The Polar Express** at Town Market. Children's activities and food vendors on site. Bring a lawn chair and a blanket. www.facebook.com/TownMarketLLC
 - 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. Thrift Store Santa Party** at the Yellow Line Art Studio. [facebook.com/theyellowline.co](https://www.facebook.com/theyellowline.co)
 - 8 p.m. – 11 p.m. Live Music featuring Funkzilla** at Action Lounge & Billiards. [facebook.com/ActionLounge](https://www.facebook.com/ActionLounge)
- The information included here is accurate at the time of printing, and is subject to change. Please visit the event page for current information.*





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In Remembrance

Along with his wife Sally, he is survived by: sons; Kirk, Brett (wife Carolyn), Todd (partner Debbie); daughter Lisa (husband Stacey); grandchildren; Todd Jr, Jamison, Madison, Victoria, Dylan and Elizabeth; great-grandchildren; Bianca, Hailey, Shelby, Dalton and Camden; as well as many nieces, nephews and cousins. All of whom will miss hearing his favorite saying "It is what it is"!

Memorial contributions may be made to Patuxent Presbyterian Church, the Wounded Warrior Program, Shriners Children's Hospital and/or Hospice of St. Mary's.

Funeral Services will be private. Internment will take place at Princess Anne Memorial Park in Virginia Beach, VA. Plans for a celebration of life will be announced at a later date.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., Leonardtown, MD.

Chris Dugan, 58



Christopher Joseph Dugan, 58, passed away November 20, 2023 after a short but valiant fight against cancer, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born September 13, 1965 in Heidelberg, Germany to the late Michael H. Dugan and Shirley Ann Wren Dugan.

His wife and children, as well as all the members of his large family, were always on his mind and his family was most important to him.

Chris was also known for having an exuberant love of people and living life to the fullest. He was passionate about golf, boating and spending time with family and friends. The West Virginia University Mountaineers was another passion and he was a dedicated fan.

His passion for golf was evident by how many times you could find him on the course with a new club, a new putter or maybe even a new swing. He was always practicing trying to get better.

His love of the Redskins/Commanders was evident by his dogs, named Gibbs and Riggins.

Chris always had an encouraging, kind word for everyone he met. He used humor to put people at ease and had a gift of turning everyone he met into an instant friend.

His optimism, humor and love for others never left him.

Christopher is survived by his cherished wife, Marcia Dame Dugan, two children, Christopher "Blue" Dugan, Megan Dugan, his siblings, D. Kevin Dugan (Inelka), Shaun P. Dugan (Trish), Bryan T. Dugan (Sue), Keith S. Dugan (Becca), Kelly J. Dugan, Patrick E. Dugan, sister-in-law Gaye Dugan, step-children, David DeFreitas, Thayse Dame, and numerous loving nieces and nephews.

Along with his parents he is preceded in death by his brother, Michael W. Dugan and

sister-in-law, Debbie Dugan.

Family will receive friends for a memorial Mass of Christian burial on Saturday, December 2, 2023 at 11:00 a.m., at St. John's Francis Regis Catholic Church, 43950 St. John's Rd. Hollywood, MD 20636. Internment will be private.

Memorial contributions may be made to the American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 6704, Hagerstown, MD 21741, or the Melanoma Research Foundation, P.O. Box 719329, Philadelphia, PA 19171-9329.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Mary Oliver, 87



Mary Ethel Oliver, 87, of Clements, MD passed away peacefully at St. Mary's Nursing Center in Leonardtown, MD on November 26, 2023, after a long illness.

Born on October 23, 1936, in Clements, MD, Mary was the daughter of the late William Albert and Mary Violet Hayden Graves.

Mary married the love of her life, Joseph "Harry" Oliver, on April 27, 1957, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Bushwood, MD. They spent 66 years together raising three wonderful boys.

Along with her loving husband, Mary is survived by her sons, Wayne Oliver (Anne) of Clements, MD, Gary Oliver (Kim) of Clements, MD, and Craig Oliver (Karen) of Hollywood, MD. She is survived by her grandchildren, Keith Oliver (Sara), Cassie Oliver, Brooke Oliver (Peter) and Kenna Oliver. Survived by her siblings, Shirley Suite (Andy (desc.) of Bushwood, MD, Anne Ridgell (Orem) of Clements, MD, and Cathy Owen (Charles) of Lusby, MD, and brother-in-law Gregory Jack Bean of Callaway, MD.

In addition to her parents, Mary was preceded in death by her siblings: William Morris "Snookie" Graves, Bernard Leon "Buster" Graves, Albert Ignatius "Billy" Graves, Guinette Alberta Bean, Christine Graves, and daughter-in-law Brenda Oliver.

Mary began her career working at Bailey's Restaurant in Leonardtown, MD before discovering her passion for floral design. She began working at Towne Florist and then managed the Naval Exchange Florist at Patuxent River Naval Air Station. Her floral experiences led her to open her own business, Mary's Variety Florist, in Lexington Park, MD, which she owned and operated for 25 years. She valued the importance of generosity, established a long-lasting relationship with her employees, and thoroughly enjoyed talking and making friends with each customer that entered her business. She took great pride in her craft and her

work brought happiness to many.

Family will receive friends at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church on Monday, December 4, 2023, at 11 am. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 12 pm. Interment will be at Charles Memorial Gardens in Leonardtown, MD.

Pallbearers will be Wayne Oliver, Gary Oliver, Craig Oliver, Steve Oliver, Keith Oliver, and Peter Fortescue.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donating to:

- Hospice of St. Mary's: PO Box 625 Leonardtown, MD 20650
- St. Mary's Nursing Center: 21585 Peabody Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Church: 22375 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653

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

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

Bob Rotzinger, 90



Robert John Rotzinger, Jr., "Bob", 90, of Hollywood, Maryland, passed away on November 20, 2023 in Leonardtown, Maryland. Born on June 12, 1933 in Fordland, Missouri,

he was the son of the late Robert John Rotzinger, Sr. and the late Cleo Faye Holt Rotzinger. Bob is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Helen Rotzinger, a daughter, Robin Rotzinger (Luchino) of Loveville, MD, a grandson, Stephen Stewart (Deanna) of Hollywood, MD, and a sister, Cecelia

Trivitt, of Springfield, MO, as well as a host of nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Kenneth Jay Rotzinger, and five sisters – Rosalee Rotzinger, Marie Phillips, Emily Jones, LaVonna Farrell, and Carole White.

Bob served in the U.S. Navy for 30 years and retired as a Sr. Master Chief in November 1981. He worked as a Defense Contractor and a civil servant for 12 additional years before officially retiring. Bob was a long-time member of St Andrew's Episcopal Church, where he served as a Lay Reader and managed the church cemetery. He enjoyed being with his family and friends, and fishing and watching football.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, November 30, 2023, from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Father John Ball officiating. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Stephen Stewart, Luchino Stewart, James Holt, and Brandon Curtis.

Family will gather at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, St. Andrew's Church Road, California, MD, following the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to your local Volunteer Rescue Squad, the American Heart Association, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and the National Kidney Foundation.

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

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

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In Remembrance

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

Brian Hicks, 42



Brian Alan Hicks, 42 of Lexington Park, MD passed away unexpectedly on November 20, 2023.

He was born on September 15, 1981, in Biloxi, Mississippi to Bradley Alan

Hicks and Sherrienne Bice Pierson.

Brian was a resident of St. Mary's County, Maryland for 32 years. Before moving to Maryland he resided in Salem, Virginia. He attended Glenvar High School in Roanoke, Virginia from which he graduated in 1999. He was a dedicated student and talented athlete. He played various sports including tackle football, track, karate and wrestling. After graduation, he studied masonry at The Burton Center for Arts and Technology. Then, his career ventured through each construction trade such as masonry, electrical, excavating, carpentry, design, and project management. In 2014 Brian finally took the leap to open his own construction business: Full Circle Construction Services. Brian was a true "Jack of all Trades".

Brian was also a loving husband and

father. He married Jillian Dawn (Winters) Hicks on June 20, 2020 in Piney Point, Maryland. He was a father to Briella and mentored two bonus children, Kaliyah and Bella, all whom he adored. He loved just spending time and teaching them all sorts of things. Together the family loved the outdoors, especially being in the mountains camping, fishing, target shooting with his collection, riding dirt bikes and 4-wheelers, and boating. He was able to experience traveling to places like Hawaii, Honduras, Maine, Virginia, Las Vegas, Florida, etc. He was an avid cook and enjoyed grilling, smoking meats, and just being in the kitchen. He was also a talented musician and could play the electric and acoustic guitars. When he wasn't busy being a father, working, or enjoying a hobby, he enjoyed volunteering his time with local charities and organizations such as Christmas in April and The Mission, among others. Ultimately, Brian loved serving his Lord Savior throughout his every waking moment from volunteering to building playgrounds for local churches, to embracing the unity, Holy Spirit, and camaraderie at Men's Retreats with Our Fathers House, to his regular worship and constant dedication and faith in fulfilling God's every calling for him.

In addition to his parents, Bradley Hicks of Salem, VA and Sherrienne Bice Pierson of St. Petersburg, FL, he is survived by his loving wife, Jillian; daughters, Briella Alana Hicks, Kaliyah Elnora Carpenter and niece, Bella Autumn Winters; grandmother, Angela Anne Bice of Mechanicsville, MD; siblings, Benjamin Hicks of Salem, VA, Tristan Queen of Hayes, VA, Brittany Zalovick (Kyle) of St. Petersburg, FL; brother-in-law, James Winters II (Tina) of Lusby, MD, David Winters (Gabrielle White) of Piney Point, MD; mother and father-in-law, James Winters, Sr. and Jane Amber of Piney Point, MD; step-father-in-law, David Kulibert of St. Cloud, FL; and many nieces, nephews, and extended family and friends. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Robert and Millie Jameson and William Hicks, and his mother-in-law, Deborah Dawn Maloy Kulibert.

A memorial service will be officiated by Pastor Jay Patterson on Thursday, November 30, 2023 at 2:00 p.m., at Our Father's House located at 45020 Patuxent Beach Road, California, MD 20619. Immediately following the service will be a Celebration of Life at the Holiday Inn Express Banquet Hall located at 45260 Abell House Lane, California, MD 20619. Interment will be private.

Memorial contributions may be made to the college fund for Brian's daughter, Briella Alana Hicks:

- GoFundMe: <https://gofund.me/22452553>
- ZELLE: jillianwinters84@gmail.com - Jillian D Hicks
- VENMO: @JillianHicks

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

Dalton Wood, 88



The Honorable Judge Dalton Wood Jr., 88, passed away peacefully at his home on November 25, 2023, surrounded by his loving family.

He lived most of his life in Lexington Park, MD. Having moved to Maryland in 1978 with his wife, three sons and daughter from Virginia Beach, VA.

Dalton was born in St. Petersburg, FL on September 9, 1935 to Dalton Wood Sr. and Valerie West Wood. Being part of a Coast Guard family, they moved frequently. Dalton started school in Savannah, GA, moved up the east coast to North Carolina and then to Princess Anne County, VA, where he attended Kempsville elementary and high schools. In 1953 during his junior year he joined the Coast Guard Reserve and attended boot camp that summer. He graduated from high school with honors in 1954.

After high school Dalton attended the College of William and Mary for two years

studying electrical engineering.

On July 29, 1956, Dalton married Sally Mae Baines, a beautiful red headed country girl. Together they had four children, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

He then received an appointment to the Norfolk Naval Air Station apprentice program. After graduating with honors as a certified aircraft electrician he worked on various land and carrier based military aircraft, both in the states and overseas.

After moving to Maryland to help establish the Naval Air Logistics Center he supported Naval Air Stations around the country as an Industrial Specialist.

In 1995, he retired from both Civil Service after 39 years and from the Coast Guard Reserves as a Chief Warrant Officer after 42 years. Mentoring, encouraging and helping to guide young Coasties in their careers was something that Dalton was very proud of and enjoyed tremendously.

He was a very civil-minded individual who served as an election judge and served on the Alcohol Beverage Board of St. Mary's County for a total of eight years, including six as vice-chairman and another year as the President of the Maryland State Alcohol Beverage Board.

In 1998, Dalton once again felt the desire to serve and entered politics by running for a seat on the St. Mary's County Board of Commissioners. Although unsuccessful, he met many wonderful people and made many friends that he remained close with over the years. In 2002, he again ran for elected office and was elected as a Judge of the Orphans Court for St. Mary's County. This was the first time that a republican had been elected to that position since 1777. His responsibilities as a Judge was something he took very seriously and he was reelected three more times, serving a total of 16 years as a judge. Dalton finally retired for good in 2018 at the age of 83. In 2017, he was honored by the St. Mary's County Republican Party with their Lifetime Achievement award. He never had a job he didn't love, because to him if you love what you do then it's not really a job.

He was a man of amazing energy, intelligence and passion who loved to work with and around people. He always worked two jobs, while also serving in the Coast Guard Reserves.

Dalton was a member of the Thomas J. Shryock #223 Masonic Lodge in Hollywood, MD, the Southern Maryland chapter of The Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, and the American Legion Post #221 in Avenue, MD. He spent over 25 years in local and state leadership, including one year as Associate Grand Guardian with the International Order of Jobs Daughters. Dalton also served as 1st and 2nd Vice President of the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees.

He will be deeply missed by his Sally, who lovingly remembers him for his steadfast support, quirky sense of humor and the wild range of adventures during their 67 years of marriage.



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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



Too Many Goodies, Not Enough Willpower

November has been so busy; I can only imagine what the looming of December 1st and beyond will bring. Have you already noticed that the days are filling up with Christmas to-do lists and events, plus all the regular stuff of life. This weekend we have a few fun wine club pick-ups, and on Sunday at the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department Hall we will have the Clements Cuties check presentations to the three childhood cancer recipients and their families that our organization supported this year. It is always a lovely, but very emotional evening for all of us. The Cuties and their families get very attached to the children each year. The Cuties, and everyone in the organization give their all - all year long. I'd like to ask if you could add some extra healing prayers for Finn Cusick, one of this year's recipients and his family, right now.

I know one thing I have to do is make my cranberry-orange shortbread cookies in bulk, especially before we do our grandkids Christmas fun day (when we find a date that all are available) with punkin chunkin' (to celebrate another wonderful Thanksgiving is behind us), crafts, s'mores, lunch, putting up outside decorations, putting up the inside Christmas Village, and eating lots of cookies! I made the cookies in bulk last year, making quite a few logs of the cookie dough ahead of time so it would be ready both for Thanksgiving and for Christmas gifts which I either mailed or gave in vintage cookie jars. Well, everyone that received the cookie jars is now ready to have them refilled for this season. I can't remember how many years ago I started making this recipe which I found somewhere online, but it has become a blessing and a curse for me. It doesn't matter if I make a full Thanksgiving dinner for my side of the family, or bring something to share to my husband's family dinner, if I don't make the delicious, addictive little cookies invariably a few family members will ask, "Where are those cranberry orange cookies you make?" I'm always thinking, hey I made four apple pies, or in my side of the family's case most all of the dinner, but all you want are those cookies????!!

I almost made them for Thanksgiving but told everyone that they are really Christmas cookies and therefore I have the prerogative to make them at anytime during the holiday season (as good as an excuse as any right?). And they still want to know why I didn't make them. I already was figuring out how many batches I have to make to cover family and friends which totals out to be 10, possibly 12 batches. I also need to have some sliced and baked, so it may even be more. That means I have to start finding butter on sale because I need 5 to 6 boxes, plus 6 to 7 pounds of flour and sugar each, and a few bags of Craisins and 2 or 3 oranges. But is it worth it? Definitely, especially when one of those logs is for us.

I had an extra apple pie left and was going to take it to our friends Bob and Susan who own Robin Hill Winery on Saturday while they were having their big craft and vendor show. When I mentioned this to my husband, he didn't say anything, but gave me kind of a glare that said, "Hey, I Love Bob and Susan, but they are not getting this pie." The vendor/craft fair was wonderful. It was in a large area of trees down the hill below the tasting room. In fact, I am drinking some herbal tea now that I bought from a vendor there, called Efflorescence Wellness Tea which is supposed to help with hot flashes. I don't get hot flashes anymore, but I do get overheated from some of the steroids I'm on, so I thought maybe it would help with that. I can tell you that it is delicious.

I also enjoyed the vendor and craft fairs on Sunday at The Belmont Farm in Clements and the one at the Mechanicsville Volunteer Fire Department Hall. I got a late start, but still enjoyed seeing people I knew and getting a few Christmas gifts. I love shopping locally for Christmas. It made me wish though that I was still a crafter in the craft show circuit like I was for so many years. As a bonus, at The Belmont, I left with some of Rita B's (and her crew of family and friends) chicken dinners and a stuffed ham sandwich that Robert and I split for lunch when I got home. Yummy! Speaking of food, let me see if there is a slice of apple pie or a cheese biscuit left to go with my herbal tea. Oh no, I forgot, I gave the last piece of pie to the Breezeline Technician yesterday and ate the last cheese biscuit this morning. I gave the pie out of kindness to the Tech, but realized after he left that there was also another reason... between the pie and the Thanksgiving food and goodies at my stepdaughter's house I can't even fit into my fat pants. Guess I better forget making the cranberry orange cookies for us then - no willpower in this house.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby

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

FINANCIAL FOCUS

Can you make charitable giving less 'taxing'?

Once again, it's the season of generosity. In addition to considering gifts for your loved ones, you might want to think about charitable gifts as well. But what should you know before making gifts to charities? And what impact might these gifts have on your financial and tax situation?

First, you may want to create a gift budget by deciding just how much you will give to charitable organizations over the rest of the year.

Next, look closely at the groups to whom you wish to contribute. You can find many reputable charities, but some others may be less worthy of your support. One of the red flags of a questionable organization is the amount of money it spends on administrative costs versus the amount that goes to its stated purpose. You can check on the spending patterns of charitable groups, and find other valuable information about them, on the well-regarded Charity Navigator website (charitynavigator.org).

Once you've established a gift budget and are comfortable with the groups you choose to support, you might turn your thoughts to another key issue connected with charitable giving: tax benefits. A few years ago, changes in the tax laws resulted in a large increase in the standard deduction, which meant that many taxpayers found it more favorable not to itemize — and lost the ability to take charitable deductions. But if you still do itemize, your charitable gifts or contributions to tax-exempt groups — those that qualify as 501(c)(3) organizations — can generally be deducted, up to 60% of your adjusted gross income, although lower limits may apply, depending on the nature of your gift and the organization to which you're contributing.

Other, more long-term avenues also exist that combine charitable giving with potential tax benefits. One such possibility is a donor-advised fund, which allows you to make an irrevocable charitable contribution and receive an immediate tax deduction. You can give cash, but if you donate appreciated assets, such as stocks, your tax deduction would be the fair market value of the assets, up to 30% of your adjusted gross income. Plus, you would not incur the capital gains tax that would otherwise be due upon the sale of these assets. Once you establish a donor-advised fund, you have the flexibility to make charitable gifts over time, and you can contribute to the fund as often as you like.

Another possible tax benefit from making charitable contributions could arrive when you start taking required minimum distributions, or RMDs, from some of your retirement accounts, such as your traditional IRA and 401(k). These RMDs could be sizable — and distributions are counted as taxable income. But by taking what's called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), you can move money from a traditional or Roth IRA to a qualified charitable organization, possibly satisfying your RMD, which then may be excluded from your taxable income. You must start taking RMDs at 73 but you can begin making QCDs of up to \$100,000 per year as early as age 70½. (This amount will be indexed for inflation after 2023.)

Establishing a donor-advised fund and making qualified charitable distributions are significant moves, so you'll need to consult with your tax advisor first. But if they're appropriate for your situation, they may help you expand your ability to support the charitable groups whose work you admire.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Contributed by David McDonough

Financial Advisor at Edward Jones

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SMECO Donates \$58,000 to Support Behavioral Health



Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) employees recently held a fund-raising event and donated \$58,000 to Cornerstone Southern Maryland.

"We chose Cornerstone as this year's fund-raising recipient because they help people with behavioral health disorders enhance their quality of life and realize their potential as citizens of the community," said Natalie Cotton, SMECO's government affairs and community relations director.

"Our vendors and employees work together to make SMECO's annual charity golf outing a successful event. The vendors provide very generous contributions that enable us to make a substantial donation that will help people in our community who need it most," said Sonja M. Cox, SMECO's president and CEO. "Like many other rural areas, Southern Maryland has a shortage of mental health services. Helping residents who are struggling with mental health issues or substance abuse addiction is vital to the well-being of our community."

"This donation will allow us to keep providing services to our clients—to the people that we serve in Southern Maryland," said Cari Guthrie, president and CEO of Cornerstone Southern Maryland. "COVID definitely had an impact on some of our programs in terms of staffing, clients, and case-load capacity. This money is going to help us reinforce that so we can get more staff in, reopen to admissions and bring more clients in, and get back to where we were before COVID."

"Mental health and substance use—behavioral health disorders—don't discriminate. All of us probably know somebody who is touched by either a mental health or substance use disorder," Guthrie continued. "While COVID has helped bring that to light, in a lot of ways, there are still people that forget about that or don't think it's as important as other things. I believe that mental health is equally as important as physical health. They are so linked that they really need to be looked at together. And that's what we are trying to improve."

SMECO employees raised the money

through the Annual Charity Golf Outing in September. The event draws support from SMECO vendors, the cooperative's board and executive team, and employees who volunteer. The cooperative selects different organizations each year to benefit from its fundraising events. Contributions, which may be tax deductible, can be made to the SMECO Charitable Foundation.

According to Cotton, "SMECO employee fund-raisers have contributed more than \$542,000 to local organizations over the last 11 years. We are especially grateful to our business partners who generously contribute by providing donations and participating in the event. Diamond Sponsors include AUI Power, Penn Line, SMCIS, and ULCS. Platinum Sponsors include Altec, AV3, Booth & Associates, CDW, CMI General Contractors, ConvergeOne, ICF International, Maryland Broadband Cooperative, Milwaukee Tools, New River Electrical Corp, OCCLS, The Okonite Company, PowerTech, Sargent & Lundy, Scheibel Construction, Schneider Electric, Sumter Utilities, Super Salvage, TRC Companies, United Utilities, and WESCO. Gold Sponsors include ABB, Bank of America, Eaton, G&S Technologies, Invoke Consulting, ITsavvy, Meridian, Rodgers Consulting, RSI Sales, Standard Petroleum, and The Wills Group/Southern Maryland Oil. We rely on Golf Outing sponsors for their donations and we appreciate their assistance."

About Cornerstone Southern Maryland

Cornerstone Southern Maryland (formerly Southern Maryland Community Network) empowers people living with mental health and substance use disorders to thrive in their community. The organization benefits more than 3,500 clients each year in Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's, and Montgomery counties. Services include residential rehabilitation, supported living, supported employment, targeted case management, assertive community treatment, residential crisis, and three outpatient clinics.

Health Department Employee Retires After 50 Years of Service



Patricia Smith accepts a commendation from St. Mary's County Health Officer Dr. Meena Brewster

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) congratulates Patricia A. Smith upon her retirement after a remarkable 50+ years of public service at the agency. Ms. Smith received a Commendation from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, as well as an Official Citation from the St. Mary's County House Delegation.

After graduating from Great Mills High School, Ms. Smith began her career with SMCHD as Executive Assistant to the Health Officer with Dr. William Marek.

She continued in the position for over fifty years, working closely with four health officers during that time.

"Ms. Smith's faithful public service and dedication to this community have been outstanding," said Dr. Meena Brewster, St. Mary's County Health Officer. "Her career has been distinguished by her grace, patience, and fortitude. We will all miss her very much and wish her the best in her retirement."

Pet

OF THE WEEK

MEET BINX

You can't buy love, but you sure can rescue it!



Hi there, my name is Binx. The Care Center Gang thinks I'm a 2 YEAR-OLD, PETITE feline SENSATION with a flair for the FABULOUS! I'm currently on the hunt for a FUREVER HOME that appreciates my SOPHISTICATED TASTE in comfy blankets and my refined skill in the art of bird watching. I'm a DIVA in a fur coat who is a CONNOISSEUR of chin scratches and head pats, and I'm not afraid to demand them with a sassy meow and a flick of my LUXURIOUS tail. ADOPT ME and get ready for a COMEDY of whiskers, fluff, and ENDLESS PURR-SONALITY! I'm all ready to meet YOU during adoption hours, Monday-Friday 11am-4pm and Saturday 10am-3pm.

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





Letters to the Editor

A better Christmas for our neighbors

Every year since 1983 I have written this letter. Mike's Food Fund is trying to provide turkey dinner baskets consisting of a 10-to-12-pound turkey, eight pounds of potatoes, and a can of beans, corn and cranberry sauce to over 1,000 needy families in St. Mary's County.

These used to cost \$20, they now cost \$35. We need donations to pay for the food.

We need volunteers to put baskets together and for delivery.

This will take place at Zion United Methodist Church in Lexington Park on Route 235 south of Gate 2 of Patuxent

River NAS, one-and-a-half miles on the right starting at 3:30 p.m., Monday, December 18 and Tuesday, December 19.

We need help. We need donations. To donate please write a check out to Mike's Food Fund and send it to 21310C Great Mills Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653.

If you need a basket, call the Office of Aging and Human Services at 301-475-4200. You can help make a better Christmas for a less fortunate family.

Michael N. Schwartz

Sidewalks & road safety

For some years now, since Leonards Grant (2009) and Duke Elementary (2015) and the library (2020), administrators, engineers and developers have been considering the need for sidewalks, jogging safety, safe and adequate turning lanes as development has progressed along Rt 245 coming out of Leonardtown. I see walkers and joggers and bikers using the shoulders on a daily basis.

The other day I watched three 13 year olds on their bicycles trying to navigate from the shoulder in front of SMECO to the sidewalk going to Leonards Grant. It was not pretty, it was not safe. That sidewalk has been promised by at least two parties for years.

I now almost daily watch the lane maneuvering at the Dry Docking Ln entrance. The entrance at Dry Docking looks inadequate with hard angles on shoulder lanes and short turning lanes. I have observed drivers going over the double yellow lines often as that maneuver makes the most sense. The few feet of dashed lines exiting Drydocking

and accessing Rt 245 East should present some interesting conflicts. In the meantime, Drydocking is still in the 50 MPH zone.

There are several other situations in between with no shoulder for pedestrians, although none as bad as Dry Docking and the Rt 245 pedestrian shoulder entrance to Leonard's Grant.

It appears to me we have let builders and the State get by with minimum expenditures. I wonder where we are with safety standards. At Town Run Dr the short section of sidewalk is centered into a fire hydrant with a utility pole just further on.

I would challenge any of us to bike or jog or walk from the State Police Barracks in Leonardtown to St John's Rd.

Can anything be done to correct these conditions? Can the 40 MPH zone be extended to past Bradfords?

*Mike Thompson
Hollywood*

Legal Notice

TOWN OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE TO INVESTORS—REQUEST FOR INTEREST FOOD HALL "THE ICEHOUSE" AT THE WHARF

The Town of Leonardtown is pleased to announce a unique opportunity for interested developers to submit letters of interest for the development of a food hall on a prime waterfront parcel in Leonardtown, Maryland, referred to as The IceHouse at the Wharf. We are seeking visionary developers who can transform this location into a vibrant culinary destination that will enhance the community's quality of life and evolve Leonardtown's Wharf District with visitor amenities that would include authentic dining options, craft beverages, gathering spots, and family-friendly amenities. Interested parties are encouraged to contact Town Hall at 22670 Washington Street PO Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650 to pick up a packet, or visit www.Leonardtown.somd.com to download a packet. All Statement of Interest forms must be returned to Town Hall or emailed to Laschelle.McKay@leonardtownmd.gov by January 8th, 2024. A hybrid virtual/in-person information briefing will be hosted on a date to be determined.

The Commissioners of Leonardtown reserve the right to reject any and all proposals, and to accept any proposal deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.



NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER News

PMA-271 Embracing Get Real, Get Better Practices



The U.S. Navy this summer accepted the first Block II E-6B Mercury upgraded entirely by Northrop Grumman Corp., an initiative that is slashing modification times thanks to Get Real, Get Better practices implemented by the Airborne Strategic Command, Control and Communications Program Office (PMA-271).

PMA-271 began the herculean task of upgrading each of its 16 E-6B Mercury aircraft in 2017, but quickly found that taking the planes out of service for 475 days – the average turnaround time for the first two Block II modifications completed – was not sustainable. It needed a faster way to deliver the required capabilities to the fleet.

Initially three installers were responsible for the six engineering change proposals (ECPs) required for Block II. They include a combination of mission systems upgrades and aircraft sustainment initiatives.

The solution: integrate the six ECPs into one Block II modification contract and implement Get Real, Get Better practices, including Performance to Plan, to transform the process. That was 90 days ahead of the contract schedule.

Northrop Grumman delivered that aircraft in record time – 392 days – and beat that record on the second plane, which it delivered on Oct. 24 after 255 days. The turnaround time (TAT) required by the IMMC is 180 days, a goal that is expected to be met by the third aircraft.

"We must achieve our target turnaround time in order to ensure our warfighters have enough mission-ready aircraft equipped with the upgraded communications capabilities that they require," said Capt. Adam Scott, PMA-271 program manager. "Every organization involved in producing a Block II aircraft is collaborating, identifying and solving problem areas, and setting aggressive goals to accomplish this no-fail mission, and we are seeing results."

The E-6B Mercury is a communications relay and strategic airborne command post aircraft. It executes the no-fail Take Charge and Move Out (TACAMO) and Looking Glass missions. TACAMO connects the president, secretary of defense and U.S. Strategic Command with naval ballistic missile forces during times of crisis. Looking Glass facilitates the launch of U.S. land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles using an airborne launch control system.

Together they provide strategic nuclear deterrence against America's adversaries.

The E-6B's successor, the E-XX, will be delivered under the TACAMO Recapitalization Program and will eventually take over the TACAMO mission.

Until the E-XX is delivered, the E-6B must be mission-ready. The fleet is vital to the military's nuclear command, control and communications at a time when Russia, China, North Korea and Iran are increasingly vocal about their nuclear capabilities.

"The best way for us to deter our adversaries from using nuclear weapons is by assuring them that we are always ready and willing to respond," said Scott.

PMA-271, a Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) acquisition program, began upgrading its aircraft in 2017, with three separate entities completing the work out of Waco, Texas. But without a single installer empowered to drive schedule and performance, delays ensued.

Leadership corrected course, moving to an IMMC with the goal of reducing delays by setting aggressive goals – including the 180-day TAT – embracing a Performance to Plan mindset and improving collaboration. This is the first time a single company is responsible for the entire installation, reducing bureaucracy and improving speed.

Northrop Grumman is conducting the upgrades out of its Aircraft Maintenance and Fabrication Center (AMFC) in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The \$111 million IMMC is for the remaining 12 aircraft in the fleet and is scheduled for completion by 2026.

The Block II modification team consists of Northrop Grumman, V2X, PMA-271 and Fleet Readiness Center Southeast (FRCS). Together, they're embracing the Navy's Get Real, Get Better practices to deliver required capabilities to the fleet as quickly as possible.

As the E-6B mission systems leads, Rich Wooldridge and Cmdr. Jeff Desmond led the charge, said Bob Stailey, the E-6B deputy program manager at the time.

"The Block II team aggressively tackled the challenge of improving the Block II modification process and their success is demonstrated by the downward trend in turnaround times," Stailey said. "This wouldn't have been possible without their creative thinking and fully embracing the Navy's Get Real, Get Better practices."

Life Sentence Issued for the Murders of Mother & Child

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Wayne Carroll Key, Jr., 44, of Lexington Park, Maryland, was sentenced to Life without parole consecutive to Life in prison for the double homicide of a six-year-old child and her mother, which took place on November 20, 2021.

Following an eight-day jury trial in April 2023, Key was convicted by a St. Mary's County jury of two counts of first-degree murder; two counts of second-degree murder; and two counts of first-degree assault. During the sentencing hearing, the presiding judge, the Honorable Joseph M. Stanalonis, cited that the case was "a circumstantial evidence case in its entirety" that was "very compelling and substantial," which was comprised of more than 200 pieces of evidence and testimony from over forty witnesses.

"Deliberately stealing an innocent child's life simply to cover up the initial murder where the child was sadly the only eyewitness, is especially callous. The defendant viciously and senselessly murdered the child's mother and when he realized the child witnessed his heinous crime, he consciously and maliciously killed again. I pray the victims' family may gain peace knowing the defendant will be in prison for the rest of his life," said Sterling.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Sarah



Wayne Carroll Key

Proctor, Chief of the Special Victims Unit, represented the State during the sentencing proceedings on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Detective Tyler Payne of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

The Honorable Joseph M. Stanalonis presided over the case.

Three Indicted in Lexington Park Murder

As a result of continued investigative efforts by detectives with the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division, on Monday, November 20, 2023, 19-year-old James Jerome Adams Jr., a juvenile from Great Mills, Maryland, and an adult, who at the time of the incident was a juvenile from Bushwood, Maryland, were indicted for their involvement in the murder of 26-year-old Marcus Anthony Day on April 4, 2023. Both the juvenile from Great Mills, Maryland and the adult from Bushwood, Maryland, were charged as adults.

At the time of the indictments, all three individuals were incarcerated on unrelated matters. Adams and the juvenile were served with their indictments by Detective Forinash, W. #344, on 11/22/2023 at the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center. A detainer was



James Jerome Adams

lodged against the third incarcerated individual, who is currently in a corrections facility outside of St. Mary's County.

Testing of Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant Sirens



There will be a full-cycle test of the alert and notification sirens throughout St. Mary's, Calvert, and Dorchester counties on December 4, 2023, at noon.

This includes a three-minute activation of all sirens within the 10-mile area around Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant. All citizens should be aware of this scheduled testing and relay the information to friends, family, and neighbors.

The testing is conducted to check siren operation and increase public awareness of the alert and notification siren system. If the sirens sound at any other time, resi-

dents should tune in to one of the local radio stations for information and instructions.

Knowing what to do before, during, and after an emergency is a critical part of being prepared and may make all the difference, when seconds count.

To learn more about how you can be prepared and stay informed, please visit:

- stmaryscountymd.gov/em
- calvertcountymd.gov/101/Emergency-Management
- dorchestercountymd.com/emergency-management-division

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St. Mary's Hospice Needs Help to Help Others

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Hospice House of St. Mary's County, nestled in Callaway, takes care of about 40 patients now, said its director Kara Rawlings, with six of them able to live at the facility full time under constant supervision and care.

But none of it happens without funding, and the upcoming Festival of Trees this weekend at the University System of Maryland Southern Maryland campus in California is set to provide just that.

"We rely on fundraising just to be able to do our daily operations," Rawlings said. "We have two huge fundraising events each year that help fund us; one is the Festival of Trees event where sponsors bid on decorated trees."

The other event is the Run for Hospice in the spring which brings in joggers and walkers from all over the county to bring in donations for end-of-life care resources.

Aside from the funds raised through their own events, other businesses and organizations work their own efforts to boost the hospice house; Suttler Post Farm in Mechanicsville has an event to raise funds for hospice every December.

"They raise quite a bit of money for us," Rawlings said.

The hospice house also has the backing of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital.

"They don't pay our bills but they back us

up when we need it," Rawlings said. "They recognize how important it is to have hospice here."

Hospice of St. Mary's is a not-for-profit service that provides physical, psychological, spiritual care, and comfort to those who are terminally ill and to their families. Hospice also offers grief support to families and community members who have experienced a loss.

Founded in 1981, Hospice of St. Mary's was started by a group of community volunteers under the direction of Dr. Patrick Jarboe, one of the most well-known and well-loved local physicians in county history.

Rawlings said, the local hospice house is different from others that offer only a limited time of stay to deal with a patient's symptoms.

"If you are a hospice patient and need to live somewhere you can come and live here," Rawlings said. "We do a sliding scale for patients who can't pay [the \$200 a day cost of care]."

"Some people pay as little as \$5 a day."

And then there are people who cannot afford to pay at all, she said,

If they have room, the hospice house will take care of them and take them in anyway.

"We'll take anybody, really," Rawlings said.

She said the \$200 a day charge for care was really more akin to \$300, which means hospice house provides just basic care at a loss.

Rawlings is up front about hospice house's expenses surpassing whatever revenue it collects from patients.

The non-profit's 2022 tax returns, found on the website Pro Publica, show it took in roughly \$625,000 in revenues but its expenses were \$925,000.

The non-profit's total assets are \$3.79 million with \$849,000 in liabilities, the same tax returns show.

Rawlings said many of the patients who come to the hospice house have only a few days or perhaps a week or two before they pass away.

While the staff there is dedicated to helping those people with 24-hour-a-day care, if they came to get help earlier, the nurses and doctors there could have helped even more.

"It's designed to support patients and families for much longer than that," Rawlings said.

She said that some studies have shown that patients can live as long as 28 days — nearly a month — longer if they come to get hospice care sooner rather than later.

It comes from a common misconception, Rawlings said, that hospice care is only available to those patients who are so near death.

"Some people live longer with hospice care," Rawlings said. "That's because we're doing preventive things like medication management."

"If we see problems sooner, we can get doctors to come in to deal with problems."

Hospice care also means that patients

who may be in their last days can have better memories with their families before their passing.

"Families get to have moments together; we help deal with symptoms to help patients have better moments," Rawlings told The County Times. "We want to help give them better days to do what they want to do."

Hospice helps arrange family visits, she said, and helps provide memorials such as hand castings of patients holding hands with loved ones so they can leave them a tangible memory for their families.

St. Mary's Hospice also arranges travel for patients by setting them up with hospice care in their destination, Rawlings said.

"Our new push is to tell people to just call the [hospice] office and ask questions about what services we can provide," Rawlings said.

Of all the things St. Mary's Hospice offers, Rawlings said, which is important but not widely recognized is hope.

Not everyone who goes to hospice house, or those who get remote care from nurses who go to patients' homes and teaches them and their families how to administer hospice care, dies.

"People think of hospice as a death sentence because they came to us in the last week," Rawlings said.

Some get better so much they become "graduates" — as Rawlings calls them — of hospice care.

guyleonard@countytimes.net



The Festival of Trees is one of Hospice of St. Mary's largest fundraisers of the year

County Looks for Input on Stopping Overdoses

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The county health department began a series of outreach forums this week to solicit community input on how to combat the continuing crisis of opioid overdoses.

Common street drugs, such as cocaine and heroin, have been mixed with the powerful synthetic opioid fentanyl — often without the user's knowledge — which have led to overdoses, including fatal ones.

Now, local health and law enforcement officials are worried that xylazine, a powerful sedative known on the street as “tranq” is being mixed fentanyl and other drugs for an even deadlier combination.

Moreover, xylazine, which is not even meant for human consumption but for animals, cannot be countered by Narcan as it is not an opioid.

Narcan continues to be a central focus of combating opioids in St. Mary's and Maryland at large.

The county health department reports that since July 1 the department's Harm Reduction Program and Overdose Response Program together have distributed 4,304 doses of Narcan, and trained 1,443 community members in its use.

There have been 511 detention center inmates trained with 485 of those receiving Narcan when released, said Taylor

Nickerson, Overdose Response Supervisor with the health department.

“Community members can help to combat the overdose crisis by staying informed and living each day stigma-free,” Nickerson said. “Carry Naloxone with you; you never know when you'll be in a situation where you might need it.

“Naloxone may be given to anyone who may be dealing with an opioid overdose.”

Nickerson said it was important to avoid stigmatizing a person who was dealing with drug or alcohol use disorders.

“Avoid labels like ‘addict’ or ‘alcoholic’ - instead use person-first language such as ‘a person with a substance use disorder’ or ‘a person with alcohol use disorder.’”

The latest data from the state shows that for the first six months of 2023 there were 12 opioid-related deaths in St. Mary's, just one less than for the same time period the prior year.

There were two heroin deaths recorded for the same time period for both years, state figures show.

Fentanyl deaths increased by one fatality for that six-month time period from 12 to 13, though, the state's data shows.

There were a total of 26 opioid-related deaths in St. Mary's for 2022, down from 37 in 2021, state records show.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Former Orphans Court Judge Dies

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Dalton Wood, a long-serving, former Judge of the Orphans Court, who was well known for his civic activism and outgoing nature, has died.

He was 88.

He served as a judge with the Orphans Court since 2002 and became the chief judge of that court in 2015 before stepping down in 2018 when his term expired.

Wood was a long-time resident of Lexington Park when he first came to live in St. Mary's County in 1978 from Virginia Beach with his three sons, daughter and wife.

He originally hailed from St. Petersburg, Florida, born to an itinerant Coast Guard family.

He served in both the Coast Guard Reserve for 42 years, retiring as a chief warrant officer and from the civil service as an industrial specialist with training in aircraft electronics.

Wood, a Republican, was deeply active in local politics and also served as an election judge and on the St. Mary's County Alcohol Beverage Board for eight years.

He also served on the Maryland State Alcohol Beverage Board for a year.

Before he ran and won a seat on the Orphans Court, he ran for a seat on the county commissioner board but was unsuccessful.

Tamara Hildebrand, administrator for the county Alcohol Beverage Board, said

Wood had left the board by the time she had come to work there, but he would often “drop in to make sure we would do it right.”

She said he was so interested in the workings of county government that he would love to chat with staff to see what was going on, even in departments he no longer served in.

“I thought he was a very nice man,” Hildebrand said. “I had a lot of respect for him.”

Tom Haynie, former chair of the local Republican Central Committee, said he was a close friend of Wood's for 25 years and met him through politics.

“He always was a decent, upfront and honest kind of a guy,” Haynie said. “He was the perfect kind of guy for his job.” As an Orphans Court judge, Wood had to decide cases regarding the administration of estates and inheritances.

Wood suffered from an illness in the final years of his life, Haynie said, but did not let it affect him.

“He never lost his spirit, he never complained,” Haynie said. “He was just Dalton.”

guyleonard@countytimes.net



Report Recommends Communities for Golf Cart Use

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

For years certain communities in St. Mary's County have wanted to have a special exception to allow their residents to operate golf carts and similar type of vehicles to get around streets and roads without having to use their car.

Recent legislation approved by the Maryland General Assembly requires a report from the county government be sent to the state delineating what communities and neighborhoods the county recommends for such an allowance before any legislation would be introduced or passed in the coming legislative session in Annapolis.

The main point of contention regarding golf carts and the like are that for any vehicle to be operated on a public highway in Maryland they must be registered with the state; golf carts and similar vehicles are not registered.

The communities the county's report recommends as being suitable for their use are more rural and isolated in nature.

They are: Golden Beach/Patuxent Knolls; Piney Point and Tall Timbers;

Colton's Point; St. Clements Shores; Hollywood Shores; Clarke's Landing; St. George Island; Mill Point Shores; Longview Beach; Rodo Beach & Scotland Beach and Horselanding.

“The Commissioners of St. Mary's County believe the areas identified satisfy the criteria for public highways appropriate for the operation of unregistered golf carts,” the report reads. “Accordingly, the Commissioners respectfully ask the General Assembly to consider enacting legislation this year giving the Commissioners authority to designate, by local resolution, county-owned highways in each of the recommended areas on which it will be legal to operate golf carts.”

The Commissioners asked that the legislation have the same restrictions and conditions similar to other such legislation enacted in recent years, that only public highways with posted speed limits of 30 miles per hour or less be eligible, and that golf carts may only be operated on those roads from dawn to dusk, as far to the right of a roadway as is reasonably possible, and only by those possessing a valid driver's license.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Handgun License Still Required Despite Court Ruling

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Maryland residents who want to purchase a handgun will still have to submit to the licensing requirements of training and fingerprinting to receive what is commonly referred to as the HQL — handgun qualification license — first, even though a federal court has ruled the requirement is unconstitutional.

The ruling against the HQL requirement came Nov. 21 from the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals, but the court has yet to issue a mandate on the ruling, which gives the state time to appeal the court's decision.

From the issuance of the opinion the state had 14 days to file their appeal to uphold the licensing requirement.

The ruling describes the laborious process residents must submit to when it comes to owning a handgun in Maryland.

"If you live in Maryland and you want a handgun, you must follow a long and winding path to get one," the ruling states. "Like with any firearms transfer—whether a purchase from a licensed dealer, gun show, or private person, or even a gift from a family member or friend—you must comply with Maryland's 77R registration process, which requires you to fill out an application with certain identifying information and then wait seven days while the state performs a background check.

"And if you want to carry your handgun, you need to get a separate carry permit too."

But the licensing must happen first before the actual purchasing can begin.

"You must also obtain a 'handgun qualification license,'" the ruling states. "Getting that license requires, among other things, submitting fingerprints to undergo a background 'investigation' and taking a four-hour-long 'firearms safety training course' in which you must fire at least one live round.

"Then, after submitting your application for this extra license, you must wait up to thirty days for approval before you can start the rest of the process."

The court's view of the law was emphatic.

"Plaintiffs' challenge must succeed," the court ruled. "The challenged law restricts the ability of law-abiding adult citizens to possess handguns, and the state has not presented a historical analogue that justifies its restriction; indeed, it has seemingly admitted that it couldn't find one. Under the Supreme Court's new burden-shifting test for these claims, Maryland's law thus fails, and we must enjoin its enforcement."

Maryland's HQL requirement stemmed from the 2013 passage of the Firearm Safety Act, which banned the sale of many military-style, semi-automatic rifles and restricted ammunition magazine capacities to 10 rounds.

That law was enacted in response to the



Sandy Hook massacre of 20 elementary school children in Connecticut the year prior by a shooter wielding an AR-15 rifle he killed his own mother to get.

The act was one of the most hotly contested in the Maryland General Assembly that year and passed on party line votes, heavily favored by Democrats and lambasted by Republicans as unconstitutional and punitive to law-abiding gun owners.

The latest ruling comes just weeks after a federal court enjoined the enforcement of parts of another gun control law here — SB 1, which restricted carrying legally concealed handguns virtually everywhere in public, from government buildings and public places to private businesses.

It marks two victories, of a sort, for gun

owners who live in one of the most firearms-restrictive states in the nation.

Gov. Wes Moore decried the Fourth Circuit's opinion.

"I am disappointed in the Fourth Circuit Court's decision," Moore said in a prepared statement. "This law is not about stripping away rights from responsible gun owners — it's about every Marylander having the right to live free from fear.

"Every Marylander has the right to feel safe in their own neighborhood — and I will continue to fight for this law. Our administration is currently looking at all options and reviewing the ruling."

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Commissioners Hold Off On Speed Camera Ordinance

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Despite recent testimony from school system and law enforcement officials about the perils of speeding motorists in school zones, the Commissioners of St. Mary's County say they want more information before they approve an ordinance that would allow speed cameras on county roads.

Three out of four sitting commissioners — Commissioner President James "Randy" Guy was not in attendance — voted to have the county's Department of Public Works and Transportation to conduct a traffic study to confirm the problem mobile speed cameras are designed to curb actually existed.

Commissioner Eric Colvin, who chaired the meeting in Guy's absence, voted against the motion.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt started the debate, saying the county should have its own data on the alleged problem before hiring a consultant to come to the same conclusion.

This step would be necessary, law enforcement officials have told elected leaders, as a speed camera vendor would not come to the county if a third party had not first determined that there was a sufficient problem that could fund the speed camera program's operation.

The maximum fine for a speed camera



violation would be \$40, according to the proposed ordinance, and would not result in any points on a person's license.

"Before we engage a consultant ... who may identify data favorable to them continuing the contract, I think our public works department can probably put out some kind of speed sensor processes that we can use," Hewitt said at the Nov. 28 business meeting in Leonardtown. "Before we go down this road let us determine if these issues exist in speed zones."

The ordinance that the commissioners have been considering for weeks now does not immediately establish speed cameras in

school zones, but is the first step necessary in starting the study process to have them installed.

It also does not require that commissioners have them installed even if data showed there were a speeding problem in county school zones.

Public works chief Jim Gotsch said his department could do such a study but it would take a significant amount of time.

"We can only do this while school is in session," Gotsch said. "I'm not sure we could get all of the schools before the end of the school year."

Capt. Shawn Moses, of the county sher-

iff's office said the study was important because the cost of the cameras should be completely paid for by fines levied against speeders alone.

"That's so there is zero cost to the tax payer," Moses said. "They want to make sure they can meet that threshold with the volume of violators they may have."

Capt. Richard Russell, commander of the sheriff's office Special Operations Division, which oversees traffic enforcement, shed some light on speed violations in particular areas of the county.

Prior speed studies the county has undertaken showed that in the area of Tall Timbers Road at Old Tall Timbers Road, near Piney Point Elementary School in 2020, that of 2,542 vehicles "analyzed in that area" that 1,276 of them were in violation of the 25 mile per hour speed limit there by at least 10 miles over the limit, Russell said.

The fastest speed recorded in that area was 63 miles-per-hour, Russell said.

On Wildwood Parkway near Dahlia Drive in California, near Evergreen Elementary School, of 16,890 vehicles checked for speed, there were 3,402 enforceable violations in 2020.

The fastest speed recorded was 71 miles per hour, Russell said, in a 30 mile-per-hour zone.

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<p>THU, NOV 30</p> <p>Mostly Sunny Hi: 55° Lo: 38°</p>	<p>FRI, DEC 1</p> <p>Cloudy Hi: 54° Lo: 49°</p>	<p>SAT, DEC 2</p> <p>Cloudy Hi: 66° Lo: 52°</p>	<p>SUN, DEC 3</p> <p>Showers Hi: 60° Lo: 47°</p>
<p>MON, DEC 4</p> <p>Showers Hi: 55° Lo: 38°</p>	<p>TUE, DEC 5</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 50° Lo: 37°</p>	<p>WED, DEC 6</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 48° Lo: 32°</p>	<p>THU, DEC 7</p> <p>Partly Cloudy Hi: 49° Lo: 34°</p>

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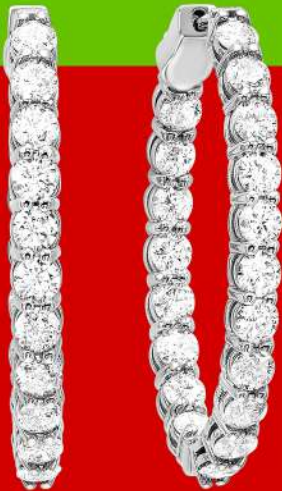
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