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Calvert County Times

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 2024

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Public Hearing Set for Proposed Tax Hikes

Two Subdivisions Get Go-ahead

Report Shows Slowing Growth in Calvert

STARS & STRIPES HONORS THE BEACH BOY



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“WE ARE IN A LITTLE BIT OF A PICKLE.”

COMMISSIONER PRESIDENT BUDDY HANCE ON THIS YEAR'S BUDGET



LOCAL 3
Hearing set for tax increases



LOCAL 4
Major residential developments approved



ON THE COVER 4
Calvert County celebrates Memorial Day

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, MAY 23 Scattered Storms Hi: 80° Lo: 65°	FRI, MAY 24 AM Showers Hi: 82° Lo: 65°	SAT, MAY 25 Scattered Storms Hi: 81° Lo: 66°	SUN, MAY 26 Partly Cloudy Hi: 82° Lo: 66°
MON, MAY 27 Scattered Storms Hi: 78° Lo: 63°	TUE, MAY 28 Mostly Sunny Hi: 76° Lo: 61°	WED, MAY 29 PM Showers Hi: 73° Lo: 57°	THU, MAY 30 Mostly Sunny Hi: 72° Lo: 57°

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Public Hearing Set for Income, Property Tax Hikes

School Board to Get Maintenance of Effort

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners on May 21 voted to move forward with plans to raise real estate taxes by four cents per assessed \$100 and increase the income tax rate from three percent to 3.2 percent. Both proposals will be subject to a June 4 public hearing after which the commissioners are expected to approve the budget for the next fiscal year beginning July 1.

The commissioners also voted to adopt the remainder of the proposals recommended by Director of Finance and Budget Bruce Miller to close the budget gap and balance the budget.

Commissioner Mike Hart was the lone board member to vote against the tax increases. But Hart after the vote proposed another motion that was approved unanimously. It was “the budget prepared for adoption on June 4th include funding the board of education at MOE, or Maintenance of Effort, which is \$152,250,152 with the state \$22.6 million cut to education being funded by the Board of Education’s fund balance. And then a single step and a one-percent cola for county employees.

Start when July 1 comes, and all paid by the savings in pay-go and the use of fund balance.”

According to the county, the maintenance effort this coming year is \$2 million less than the current year.

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said at the May 16 budget hearing, “We are in a little bit of a pickle,” referring to the state cut to education funding and the \$5 million shortfall in tax revenue from the Cove Pt. LNG plant.

But the commissioners’ vote on Hart’s motion leaves the school system in quite a pickle. School Superintendent Dr. Andraé Townsel said at the budget hearing that they had just negotiated a contract with support staff. With that and a ratified contract with the teachers, Townsel said an additional \$6 million would be needed from the county on top of the \$10 million ask from the county in their budget.

Townsell rattled off a list of cuts that could be expected if the county didn’t pony up the extra monies, which now they are proposing not to. The cuts are.

- AP Pathway Reduction – Pay for 5 AP courses following CCR attainment or Limit to 5 AP courses per student

- \$50,000
- Cut All Workshop pay (50 percent) in the Department of Instruction – professional learning outside of the school day and no curriculum work outside of the school day – \$460,030
- Cut all Workshop registration fees (50 percent) for all depts excluding grant funded – professional learning outside of the school day and no curriculum work outside of the school day. 225,000
- Deans (12) – \$1,044,000
- District-wide Furlough Day – \$700,000
- IEP Facilitators (3) – \$261,000
- Increase Class Size to 25 Grades 1-2 (approximately 20 positions) – \$1,740,000
- Limit Dual Enrollment courses – \$50,000
- Middle School Athletics – \$100,000
- Offset Bus Contractor CPI escalators by 3.3 percent – \$611,000
- Reduce General Instructional Assistants Positions (1.5) – \$60,760
- Reduce High School Secretary positions (4) – \$200,000
- Reduce additional middle school positions at CMS/SMS/MCMS (9) – \$783,000
- Reduce additional unfilled counselor vacancies (3) – \$261,000
- Reduce Assistant Principal Positions (3) – \$261,000
- Reduce Assistant Supervisor of Construction (1) – \$110,000
- Reduce Bus driver hours from 8.0 to 7.0 – \$960,000
- Reduce Central Office Part-time Custodian (.5) – \$25,000
- Reduce Central Office Specialists (3.5) – \$304,000
- Reduce Central Office Instructional Supervisors (2) – \$174,000
- Reduce GT teaching positions (4) – \$348,000
- Reduce IT Staff (3) – \$275,000
- Reduce the additional Pre-Kindergarten Instructional Assistants (13 positions) – \$676,000
- Reduce the Online Learning Program to only Music Appreciation, Health I and Health II, Spanish 1 and II in Summer School. No longer offer Foundations of Computer Science (\$7070) in summer school – \$21,210
- Reduce Warehouse Staff (1) – \$55,000
- Shift middle school laptop program in grade 6 from 1:1 ratio to 1:2 ratio – \$245,000
- Total \$10,000,000

During the public hearing, Dona Ostenson, president of Calvert Education Association, which represents the teachers, reacted to the proposed cuts She laid blame on the county staff for not following up on the LNG tax



Commissioner Mike Hart

revenues. She said, “Because it was missed, taxpayers like my parents and myself are going to have to make up shortfall that they did not create. Our public school system is going to face the possibility of layoffs, reduction in staffing, and educators leaving, creating even more vacancies throughout our schools. Now, who is going to pay?”

She said of Townsel’s cuts, “If he is forced to do so, many of those cuts on the slides, he cannot unilaterally decide to do. They are subject to collective bargaining. Also, there were some new cuts on those slides that I’ve never seen before tonight.”

President of the Special Education Citizens Advisory Committee Joseph Cornier said some of Townsel’s cuts were against the Americans with Disabilities Act and could leave the school system open to costly legal challenges.

Sheriff Ricky Cox spoke in support of the men and women in his department. H said his agency is not keeping up with the pay of surrounding jurisdictions.

He said, “Tonight I’m just asking to fully fund the sheriff’s office. I’m asking for the men and women to get the step and [cost of living adjustment] that they deserve because they work hard out there.”

The proposed budget includes a proposed 300 percent increase in capital connection fees for water and sewer, making Calvert the most expensive of neighboring counties.

Jim Schaeffer from Shafer Homes said he grew up in Calvert but lives in Anne Arundel, he said because of the high cost of housing in Calvert.

“There’s been quite an anti-growth or anti-development push in Calvert for quite a while. I think that housing and property, I saw property and income were the top producers for revenue in Calvert County. I think it’s time for a smart growth plan in Calvert County.”

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Powerlifting.....	July 14
Racquetball.....	Sept. 4-5
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Road Race 10k.....	Sept. 22
Shuffleboard.....	Sept. 28
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Soccer 8v8.....	Aug. 17-18
Swimming.....	Sept. 7
Table Tennis.....	July 27
Tennis.....	Sept. 27-29
Track & Field.....	Aug. 3-4
Trap Shooting.....	June 29
Triathlon.....	June 2
Volleyball.....	Aug. 24-25
Walking Events.....	Aug. 3-4
Wii Bowling.....	Sept. 16

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Approvals Advance Two Major Residential Projects

Planners Vote Was 4-3



Chris Gadway



John Toohey

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Planning Commission has given approvals for the next step in the process that will lead to two new major residential developments. Both were on razor thin 4-3 margins.

Magnolia Ridge in Prince Frederick Town Center will have 164 townhouses and 96 multifamily units in two buildings. It is on 30.37 acres on Fox Run Boulevard, a new road connecting the existing access roads into Calvert High School and Calvert Middle School. It intersects with Dares Beach Road and an access road into Fox Run Shopping Center. The May 15 vote was for subdivision approval.

Lusby Villas, according to Planner III Olivia Vidotto, has frontage on Lusby Parkway and Rousby Hall Rd (MD 760). It is located at 11770 Lusby Parkway and consists of 26.23 acres. The proposal on May 15 was creation of one buildable lot for the proposed project.

Lusby Villas is a proposed multi-family residential development project that received conceptual site plan approval from the Planning Commission on March 17, 2021, for 276 multi-family dwelling units and associated community amenities.

Commission member Chris Gadway led the opposition in both cases, largely over concerns about traffic. Members Wilson Freeland and James McQueen joined him in opposition. Acting Chairman Gregory Kernan broke the tie in each case. Later in the meeting John Toohey was elected chairman for the next year.

Gadway argued the traffic studies for each project were outdated and the approvals should be withheld until they were redone in accordance with the county's adequate public facilities ordinance.

Staff recommended approval in each case, subject to some conditions which the majority adopted in their approvals.

For Magnolia Ridge, Gadway said, "I've had the displeasure of sitting in the shop-

ping center at Fox Run either in the morning or the afternoon waiting for 30, 40, 50 school buses to come out onto Route 4 and to put an additional 400 to 500 cars also in the morning or the afternoon coming and going at the same time, I just foresee that as being a major congestion issue, getting out onto Dares's Beach Road from the high school as well as out onto Route 4 from Fox Run Shopping Center because I've literally sat there and seen that light take four cycles, sometimes five, to get the amount of traffic out onto Route 4 adding an additional, possibly 500 cars traveling in and out of there on a daily basis."

The developer's representative said studies deemed the traffic situation to be adequate once Fox Run Boulevard is completed.

The Lusby Villas project is proposing to add a second ingress/egress point along Lusby Parkway, which prompted Gadway to seek another traffic study.

McQueen said, "The second egress that you've added to the original one goes in front of the shopping center to a road where you have to make a right. There's no ability to make a left. Now you're adding another egress to the same problem, to the amount of cars going out in front of the shopping center. The other thing, this egress that you added, you're looking at the back of the shopping center."

The developer's representative said adding another access point would create no additional traffic on Lusby Parkway.

Another unresolved issue for the project involves the vacant property across Lusby Parkway intended for a village green. Deputy County Attorney John Mattingly says a memorandum of understanding between the county and the developer 20 years ago was illegal and needs to be revised. Gadway said that was reason to delay the approval.

The developer noted that didn't have anything to do with the one-lot subdivision approval being sought.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Report Shows Slowed Growth

School Enrollment Predicted to Rise

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Growth is slowing in the county according to the Calvert County Public Schools Educational Facilities Master Plan for Fiscal Year 2026 that was released May 9. The plan is chock full of valuable statistical information about the county.

Director of School Construction Shuchita Warner told the school board on May 9, "The county's population estimate for 2024 is 95,7078, an increase of 938 residents over the calendar year from last year."

She said, "You will notice that the number of building permits in 2023 declined by 23 percent from 2022 figures. This is the lowest number of permits issued in the last nine years and represents a significant decrease from 2015 when 299 permits were issued. The number suggested a combination of the interest rates that we're experiencing combined with increasing home prices could be a factor. Data from Maryland Department of Planning indicates that between 2021 and 2022, residential sales in the county decreased by 27.4 percent, and the annual median price increased by 6.4 percent, making Calvert the seventh most expensive county in Maryland and the most expensive in southern Maryland. In 2023, based on data from Maryland Association of Realtors, the median sales prices increased by another 2.4 percent to \$425,000.

Warner observed, however, "There are a number of high density attached dwelling unit subdivisions progressing through the planning stages within the county. As these advance in the queue, permit activity may increase again."

Warber said, "The county has an APFO or adequate public facility ordinance, which does restrict development within the county, partly by looking at enrollments within the school as a percentage of its capacity based on their calculation count. The county restricts development by closing school zones, but only for a period of six years. This is our opportunity to get a project if we need to in the CIP and react to that A PFO decision. It's essentially their way of throttling down and a planning tool that they use. Therefore, based on the county's capacity calculation for a school zone, the final approval of a residential subdivision can be delayed up to six years.

"This year, the county's spring adequate public facilities report indicates that only Mount Harmony Elementary is over capacity at 107.5 percent and therefore closed for final recording of residential subdivisions and residential site development plans. Northern Middle School and Northern High School are just below the ordinance threshold by a razor thin margin at 99.6 percent and 99.9 percent respectively."

As to birth and death data, Warner reported, "Unfortunately, the 2022 data is not yet available from Maryland Center for Health Statistics. If we receive this information prior to finalizing the FMP report, we'll certainly include that information in the final EFMP, but the 2021 data does show that although both birth and death rates increased that year, the death rates were slightly higher."

Warner said, "Calvert County Public School enrollment did increase slightly in 2023-2024 school year. Therefore, it now comprises around five percent of the total enrollment before it used to make generally around four percent. So that has gone up a little bit. CCPS enrollment is projected to grow very slowly over the next 10 years, still not having recovered from pre-pandemic levels."

Current enrollment is 15,301, and she predicts an increase over the next 10 years of 402 students. "So, it's quite modest. This is based on the increase in birth rates obtained through the Maryland Department of Health Division of Vital Statistics, coupled with trends that are noted and captured in the Educational Facilities Master plan."

The plan reflects the construction of a new Northern Middle School, and she said, "It does include future major projects at Calvert Elementary, Calvert Country, and Mount Harmony Elementary, as is reflected in the CIP that was approved by the board in October. We do know that the commissioners are considering pushing out our projects, however, we don't know if that is happening. So, for the basis of the EFMP, this is what we are showing."

The Educational Facilities Master Plan is being circulated for a 30-day review and the school board will vote on it next month and then forward it to the state for approval.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Calvert Receives Broadband Award

Governor Wes Moore has announced \$19.6 million in Fiscal Year 2024 awards through a new Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development program to help more Marylanders access high-speed, affordable internet. Calvert will be receiving \$1.1 million.

The Home Stretch for Difficult to Serve Properties is administered by the department's Office of Statewide Broadband/ It will provide internet access to approximately 2,400 unserved Maryland households in its first round.

"To leave no one behind, we need to get everyone online – especially those who have been historically beyond the reach of traditional efforts to narrow the digital divide," said Gov. Moore. "By moving in partnership, we are extending broadband access to more Marylanders, meeting people where they are, and creating new pathways to prosperity for all."

Home Stretch for Difficult to Serve Properties is part of the department's new initiative to serve remaining Maryland households without internet access. As of April 2024, 21,000 Maryland households are unserved. Awards for the second program under the initiative, Home Stretch for Public Housing, will be announced in the coming weeks.

American Rescue Plan Coronavirus Capital Projects Fund, both programs are the newest additions to the Office of Statewide Broadband's Connect Maryland

initiative, which provides financial assistance to local jurisdictions to advance the state's digital access efforts.

"Access to high-speed internet is essential to building equitable pathways to economic, educational, and social opportunities for all Marylanders," said Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary Jake Day. "These funds will help the Office of Statewide Broadband partner with local governments and internet service providers to close critical, 'home stretch' gaps in their broadband infrastructure to provide that essential access for unserved homes in their communities."

Home Stretch for Difficult to Serve Properties funds help address distance from broadband infrastructure or other geographic issues that may discourage an internet service provider from delivering broadband service. In the first round, 18 jurisdictions received awards and every jurisdiction that applied for the program received funds.

The Office of Statewide Broadband works to ensure that all Maryland households have access to broadband through its programs to expand infrastructure and increase digital equity. Since the office was created in 2017, it has invested more than \$270 million into broadband infrastructure and programs. Those efforts have provided high-speed internet access to an estimated 52,000 previously unserved homes and businesses statewide.

Zoning Update Includes Higher Than Expected Growth

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

A study has concluded that potential growth allowed in the draft of the county zoning ordinance update is much higher than believed. Director of Planning and Zoning Mary Beth Cook said at a May 15 joint session of the county commissioners and planning commission that the draft would allow for 29,320 new units compared to 17,960 in the existing zoning ordinance.

"We were shocked. We never imagined it was going to be that high. So immediately we regrouped and worked on some options," Cook said.

Cook admitted it could be an overestimate because it does not take into consideration steep slopes and the necessity of water and sewer service to achieve those numbers.

But on the other hand, the study conducted by Deputy Director of Planning Carolyn Sunderland and the county information technology staff does not consider potential population increases within the town centers, which Cook said would be determined during the update process for each town center.

Most of the growth included in the increase comes from the allowance for four units per acre in the area of the one-mile

radius around the town centers.

To ameliorate the higher growth number, Cook offered the suggestion to reduce the density of that one-mile radius to either two units per acre or one unit. Adopting the two-unit density would bring the growth numbers down to the current number. Reducing them to one unit would allow for approximately 11,000 new units.

Cook said the overestimate of the growth in the draft ordinance could be as much as 50 percent. "I threw out 50 percent. Maybe we could come up with some numbers that could get us closer to reality basically," she said.

Cook said staff is working towards presenting a second draft of the zoning ordinance update, after which both the planning commission and county commissioners will hold public hearings, with the planners then making their recommendations to the commissioners.

She noted it could be ready for public hearings in the fall. "We're not rushing it and we're going to take the time we need to get the document right. In addition, just to let the public know we're continuing to accept public comments up and through until the public hearing is closed."

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of May 6, 2024 – May 12, 2024, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 1,869 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 50
- Disorderly: 20
- Domestic: 17
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 41
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 915
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 22
- Traffic Complaints: 65
- 911 Hang Ups: 68
- ARRESTS: 27



Steven Michael Vandevander

CDS Violation: 24-37134 On May 10, 2024, at 1:30 a.m., DFC Crum initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle following a traffic complaint. The vehicle was observed driving at unsteady speeds, swerving into the opposite lane

of traffic, and driving into the grass onto an embankment. Upon making contact with the driver, **Steven Michael Vandevander**, 55 of Prince Frederick, a strong odor of alcohol was emitting from his breath; cut straws and an open alcoholic beverage were observed in plain view. A vehicle search revealed several Suboxone strips throughout the vehicle with no prescription. Vandevander was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis.



Shamal Ulysses Weems

CDS Violation: 24-36690 On May 8, 2024, members of the Calvert County Sheriff's Office Drug Enforcement Unit initiated a traffic stop on a vehicle for an expired registration. Investigation revealed the driver

Shamal Ulysses Weems, 48 of California, MD, was operating the vehicle with a suspended license. Further investigation revealed K9 Rico conducted a K9 sniff of the vehicle resulting in a positive alert for narcotics. A vehicle search revealed a glass



Shannon Marie Seals

smoking device (crack pipe). A passenger, **Shannon Marie Seals**, 38 of California, MD, advised she had prescription medication concealed in her bra. A search of Seals revealed 12 pills of prescription medication with no valid documentation. Seals and Weems were transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and both charged with CDS: Possession-Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Damaged Property: 24-36492 On May 7, 2024, DFC Huy responded to the 3100 block of Beaver Dam Road in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of damaged property. The complainant advised an unknown suspect had keyed the victim's 2007 orange Harley Davidson Motorcycle parked outside the residence. The seat to the motorcycle was missing and the cycle's gas tank had been tampered with. The estimated value of damaged property is \$2400.00.



Elijah Jah Hetmeyer

Disorderly: 24-36349 On May 7, 2024, Deputy Baxter responded to CalvertHealth Medical Center located at 100 Hospital Road in Prince Frederick, for a disorderly subject. Contact

was made with **Elijah Jah Hetmeyer**, 26 of Chesapeake Beach, who was extremely irate and cursing causing a disturbance in the hospital's waiting room. Hospital staff advised deputies they wanted Hetmeyer trespassed from the property. Hetmeyer was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and Trespassing: Private Property.

Disorderly: 24-36493 On May 7, 2024, at 5:12 p.m., Cpl. Robshaw responded to the area of Rt. 4 and Apple Way in Dunkirk, for a disorderly subject. The Calvert Control Center received several calls advising a white male with a beard was throwing



Brendan Christopher Meyer Swope

things at cars along NB Rt. 4 causing them to slam on their brakes. Upon arrival, contact was made with **Brendan Christopher Meyer Swope**, 31 of no fixed address, who was observed throwing objects into the travel portion of Rt.

4 causing multiple vehicles to swerve lanes to avoid getting hit. Swope was advised not to throw objects into the roadway during rush hour traffic. Swope became disorderly and numerous cars passing him slammed on their brakes while observing his actions. Swope continued to yell at deputies while jumping in the roadway. Swope was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Disorderly Conduct.

Theft: 24-36351 On May 7, 2024, M/DFC Burgraff responded to the 2700 block of Cove Lake Street in Lusby, for the report of a burglary. The complainant advised sometime between midnight and 5 a.m., an unknown suspect entered a shed on the property and stole five dirt bikes to include a 2014 KTM 200 SC-W, a 2016 Kawasaki KLX 140, a 2017 Yamaha YZ 85, a 2016 Yamaha PW 50, and a 2007 Yamaha TTR-90. The estimated value of stolen property is \$15,500.00.

Theft: 24-37551 On May 11, 2024, Master Deputy Burgraff responded to the 10200 block of Tickle Lane in Lusby, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised a side entry garage door window had been broken and a Toro push mower had been stolen. The estimated value of damaged property is \$400.00. The estimated value of stolen property is \$400.00.

Theft: 24-37606 On May 11, 2024, DFC Huy responded to the Victoria Station Pond in Owings, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised sometime between 7:30 p.m. and 7:45 p.m., the victim's fishing rod was stolen. The rod is described as all-white with a white/gray camo reel and a deer antler symbol on the handle. The estimated value of the stolen property is \$300.00.

Theft: 24-36715 On May 8, 2024, Deputy



Emily Brooke Bailey

Morrison responded to the Safeway located at 80 W. Dares Beach Road in Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised a couple walked out of the store with a basket full of groceries passing all points of sale. Contact was made with **Emily Brooke Bailey**, 31 of Prince Frederick, who confessed to the theft. The total value of stolen property is \$192.41.



Nicholas Logan Tayman

Weapon Violation: 24-37880 On May 12, 2024, Cpl. Bowlan responded to the Quality Inn located at 255 Lore Road in Solomons, for the report of a suspicious vehicle. Upon making contact with the driver,

Nicholas Logan Tayman, 27 of Ridge, a digital scale, an open container of alcohol, and a marijuana cigarette were observed in plain view. Further investigation revealed that Tayman attempted to remove two large bags of cannabis (totaling 134 grams) from the vehicle. A vehicle search revealed a loaded Glock-style handgun, a bag of cannabis, one THC product, and 41 plastic bags. Tayman was placed into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with a Loaded Handgun in a Vehicle, CDS: Distribution with a Firearm, and Possession/Distribution of Cannabis Packing.

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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In Memoriam, 53, JoAnn Canning

Born in D.C moved to: Forestville, Upper Marlboro, and then Dunkirk, with a summer home in Point Lookout. JoAnn was a professional model from age 16 to 21. She then joined her husband in Fort Gordon, GA. She began working in the Upper Marlboro courthouse in 1975. She is survived by her husband, Robbie Canning from North Beach, her daughter Lisa and son Scott, his wife Theresa and grandsons, Justin Canning and Chris Olson.



Everyone who met you was awed by your classical Italian Beauty and ever eternal elegance and grace.

You said to move on, but that was not the case.

No one could forget your oh so lovely face.

Our time together was so very short in years.

Bringing me nothing but an outpouring of tears.

These words are mine. Not Shakespeare, Sir Francis Bacon, Robert Frost or even Yeats. These are my own words expressing timeless feelings and thoughts.

Happy Birthday
"The Ides of March"
Love, Robbie Canning.



Letters to the Editor

Bring back the water park

The Chesapeake Beach Water Park is closed for the 2024 season while the Mayor and Town Council of Chesapeake Beach have a master plan of "reconceptualizing" the water park to remove elements of the water park that are attractive to tourists.

The 2023 rates for the 3-month season were so outrageously priced; well, you decide. Season rates for a town resident family package (four guests) was \$485, a Calvert County resident family package (four guests) was \$1450. (Calvert Countians are considered tourists?) The equivalent price (four guests) at Six Flags in Bowie would be \$236 for over 100 attractions, 131 acres and a 6-month season. The postage stamp of land that the park occupies is owned by the Board of Commissioners of Calvert County. County residents should pay the same rate as town residents. Why were the 2023 rates changed? The town says it was to cover costs. One could infer that its intention was to fail.

The town conducted a survey before the announcement of the "reconceptualization" master plan which returned almost 2000 responses, many of which were in favor of the water park. The results of the survey are explained by town officials. Respondents want a water park that is "accessible and affordable, instead of a tourist attraction". Other than declaring we don't want tourists, that doesn't make sense and is an obvious

paradox!

Mayor Pat Mahoney says the park is unsafe to open this year. There is no public evidence of existing code violations or identifying imminent dangers. I spent a lot of time there last summer and was never aware of any safety hazards. Without documentation of massive structural failures, condemning the water park and "reconceptualizing" a complete redesign of the water park would be a complete waste and an abuse of the town's taxpayer dollars.

Have current and past administrations neglected to maintain and upgrade the infrastructure? The highest and best use of taxpayer dollars is to upgrade and maintain what we already have.

I want SUMMERTIME JOY in Chesapeake Beach — Smell the salt air while floating around the lazy river, flying down the slides, and splashing around in the pools...AGAIN!

I stand in opposition to "reconceptualizing" the water park. Why close the water park for years and burden the taxpayers with an unnecessary multi-million-dollar project that will take decades to recoup.

If you agree, voice your opinion and email info@chesapeakebeachmd.gov.

Gail Harkins
Chesapeake Beach

'We all need privacy'

The school bathrooms at Northern Middle School need to be remodeled. There are many reasons why they are bad but there are three problems that affect the bathrooms the most. First, the bathrooms are very messy. You can always find paper towels in sinks and anything you can think of on the floors. I believe that students should be cleaner and that our janitors should do a more thorough job cleaning up the bathrooms.

Second, the stall doors on the bathrooms do not lock. Many of the students find this a problem because we all need privacy while we go.

Third, the bathrooms are always out of order. Last week one bathroom was closed two out of five days. This is a significant issue because bathrooms are important to everyone.

To sum up, the bathrooms at Northern Middle School should be remodeled because the bathrooms are messy, the stalls do not lock and because the bathrooms are always breaking down.

Sincerely,
Concerned NMS 6th grader

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Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, May 23

JobSource Mobile Career Center

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

Stop by to visit the JobSource Mobile Career Center for your job search needs! Get job counseling and resume help, search for jobs and connect with Southern Maryland JobSource. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Literary Bites

No Thyme to Cook or Zoom
6-8 p.m.

Join Calvert Library to discuss and digest a culinary novel. This month we're reading "The Hundred-Foot Journey" by Richard Morais. Register to sign up for a free ticket to attend virtually. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, May 24

On Pins & Needles

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

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

Rooftop Car & Truck Cruise Nite

4165 Mears Ave., Chesapeake Beach
4 to 8 p.m.

On the rooftop of the Rod 'N' Reel parking garage by the Bay. DJ tunes. FREE. 866-313-5596.

Sun, May 26

Sunday Afternoons with Poppie

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

Make your Sunday afternoon memorable by coming to visit with our very own Pop Star "Poppie," our Virginia Opossum. You can join the Poppie paparazzi in the museum lobby with one of our educational interpreters, learn all kinds of fun possum facts, and visit our Museum Store for possum fan gear. Since the welfare of our animals is our primary concern, Poppie's ability to visit with her adoring public may occasionally be subject to change on short notice.

Mon, May 27

Wm. B. Tennison Holiday Public Cruise

Calvert Marine Museum
2 p.m.

Celebrate Memorial Day with a leisurely one-hour sightseeing cruise on the river aboard the *Wm. B. Tennison*, a log-built bug-eye. Capacity allows for 40 guests. Cost is \$9 for adults and \$5 for children, infant through 12 years.

Wed, May 29

Reading Buddies

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

At this event, elementary-aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. Teen volunteers can earn one (1) service learning hour for participating. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Anime Night

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

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

Thu, May 30

Reading Buddies

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

At this event, elementary-aged children will do fun activities and read out loud to teen volunteers. Teen volunteers can earn one service learning hour for participating. It's a great way to socialize and build reading confidence! 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>

Little Minnows: Marsh Detectives

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

For preschoolers ages 3 – 5, with an adult. This program focuses on one of the museum's three themes. Join us for story time and a craft, available while supplies last. Sessions are 25-40 minutes. Sign up at the Admissions Desk when you arrive. For more information visit calvertmarinemuseum.com

Upcoming

Juneteenth Community Celebration

Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum

10515 Mackall Road, St. Leonard,
Saturday, June 15, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For this 28th annual event, the NAACP anticipates thousands of visitors to this free celebration. If you are interested in sponsoring this event, please contact us at naacpcalvert@gmail.com or hollandnmd@aol.com.

Community Appreciation Day

Hallowing Point Park
Sunday, June 2, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The Calvert County Department of Parks & Recreation (CCPR) is sponsoring this free event open to people of all ages.

Community Appreciation Day aims to foster a sense of unity, pride and gratitude within our community, by acknowledging the diverse talents and hard work of our community members and to thank them for their positive impact and continued support.

The event will feature a variety of activities designed to entertain and engage attendees of all ages, including live music and interactive games. Families, friends and neighbors are invited to come together in a festive atmosphere and enjoy the beauty of Hallowing Point Park, located at 4755 Hallowing Point Road in Prince Frederick.

parksandrecreation@calvertcountymd.gov or 410-535-1600, ext. 2649.

NARFE Annual Picnic

Cove Point Park
750 Cove Point Rd, Lusby
Thursday, June 20, noon

Calvert County Chapter 1466 of NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association) will be having its June meeting and annual picnic. Members, guests, and federal employees or retirees are welcome. Please RSVP to NARFE14665@gmail.com. Chicken will be provided by the chapter.

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

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



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636



CALVERT COUNTY INFORMATION & EVENTS

Calvert County Government will be responsible and accountable to all citizens of Calvert County; provide high quality, effective and efficient services; preserve Calvert County's environment, heritage and rural character; foster opportunities for responsible and sustainable residential growth and economic development; and support Calvert County's essential institutions and keep them strong.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Meetings are open to the public and are subject to change.

Due to an unforeseen power outage, the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners was required to adjourn its May 21, 2024, meeting early and unable to address certain business items set forth on the May 21, 2024 agenda. The BOCC will hold a special meeting on Wednesday, May 29, 2024, at 10 a.m. to discuss.

Public Hearings

The Calvert - St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization Public Meeting
Tuesday, May 28, 10:30 a.m.

Proposed Real Property and Income Tax Increases Public Meeting
Tuesday, June 4, 10:30 a.m.

Find more information about all Boards and Commissions at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/GetInvolved. Now is a great time to get involved! Call 410-535-1600, ext. 2201 with any questions.

NEW COMMITTEE - CALL FOR APPLICANTS

The new Student Safety and Well-Being Advisory Committee will be charged with making recommendations to improve the learning environment and ensure the safety and security of students and staff.

The committee will consist of members appointed by the BOCC to potentially include, but not limited to, representation from:

- Sheriff's Office
- BOCC/Calvert County Government
- Calvert County Public Schools
- Faith-based and nonprofit organizations



Apply online at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/MemberApplication.



UPCOMING COUNTY EVENTS



Memorial Day
County Government Offices Closed
Monday, May 27, All Day



Community Appreciation Day
Sunday, June 2, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Hallowing Point Park
4755 Hallowing Point Road, Prince Frederick
Join us for a day full of various activities, entertainment and fun for people of all ages.

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Find all of our social media accounts online at www.CalvertCountyMd.gov/SocialMedia



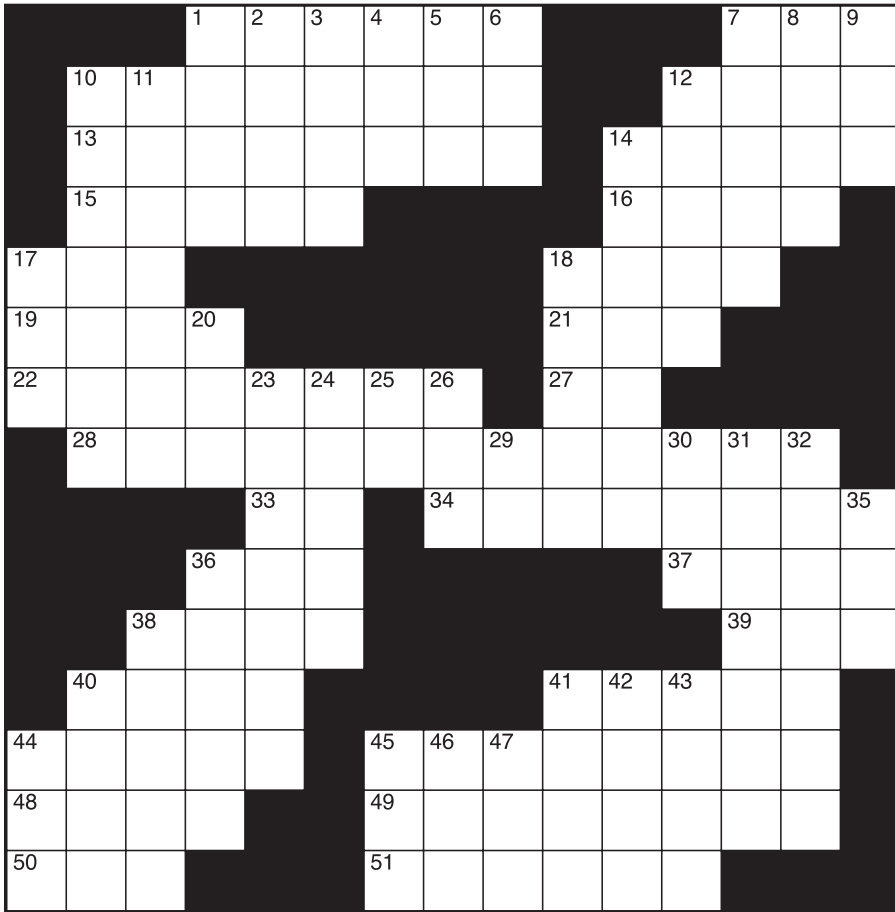
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LINKEDIN
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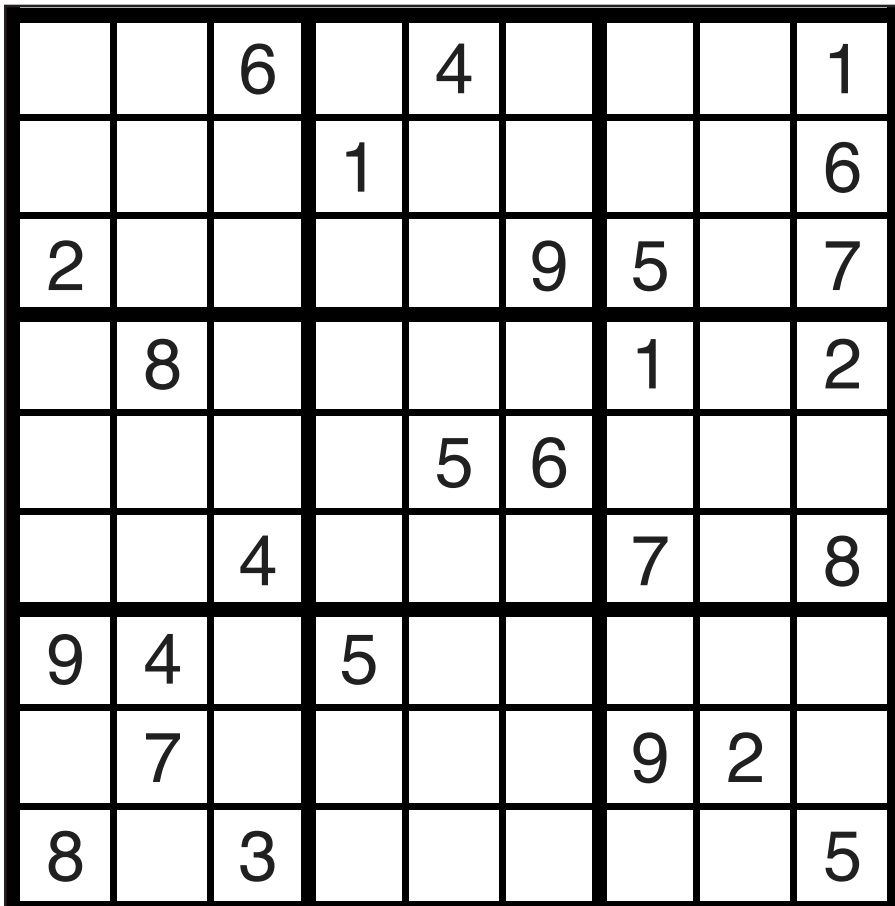


CLUES ACROSS

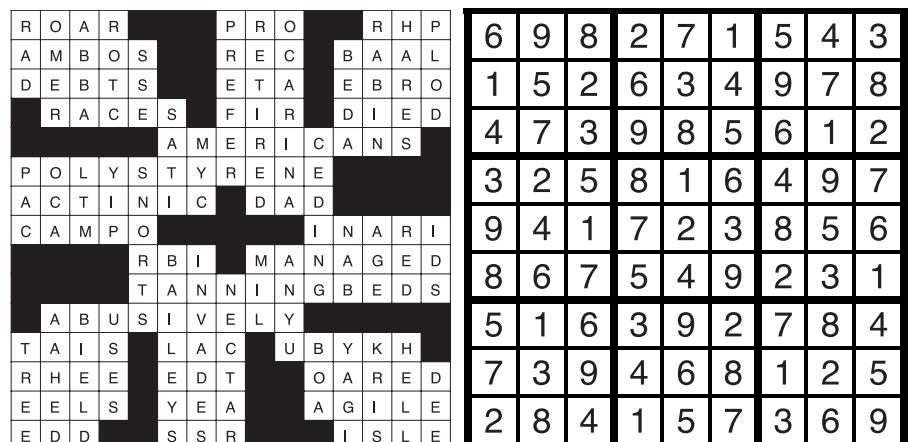
- 1. Lunatic
- 7. Doctor of Education
- 10. Able to make amends
- 12. Tight-knit group
- 13. Gland
- 14. Intestinal pouches
- 15. Fungal spores
- 16. Erstwhile
- 17. Engine additive
- 18. Nasal mucus
- 19. Fit a horse with footwear
- 21. Consumed
- 22. Settle
- 27. Larry and Curly's pal
- 28. Basketball's GOAT
- 33. Exclamation of surprise
- 34. Made tight
- 36. Before
- 37. Actor Nicolas
- 38. Not hot
- 39. Talk
- 40. Pledge
- 41. Abandon a mission
- 44. Trims by cutting
- 45. Aspects of one's character
- 48. Boxing GOAT's former surname
- 49. Holy places
- 50. Body art (slang)
- 51. Attributes

CLUES DOWN

- 1. How one feels
- 2. American Nat'l Standards Institute
- 3. Information
- 4. Licensed for Wall Street
- 5. Keyboard key
- 6. Born of
- 7. Choose to represent
- 8. Small European freshwater fish
- 9. Everyone has their own
- 10. Line from the center of a polygon
- 11. Lebanese city
- 12. Type of watercraft
- 14. A way to twist
- 17. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 18. Greek island
- 20. Medical practitioner
- 23. ___ DeGaulle, French President
- 24. Partner to "oohed"
- 25. Atomic #52
- 26. Santa's helper
- 29. Rapper ___ Rule
- 30. Month
- 31. Word formed by rearranging letters
- 32. Nullifies
- 35. Young woman ready to enter society
- 36. Unemployment
- 38. Weight unit
- 40. Formal party
- 41. Computer language
- 42. Residue formula in math
- 43. Duty or responsibility
- 44. Part of (abbr.)
- 45. Time zone
- 46. Body part
- 47. Nucleic acid



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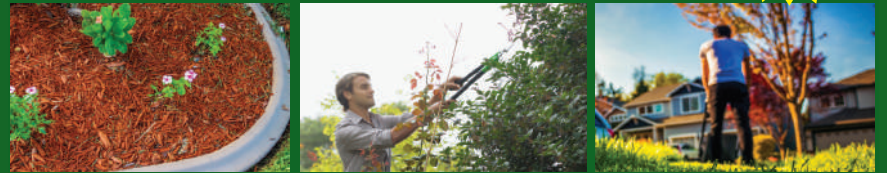


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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Thu, May 23

Lecture: Life of Garret van Sweringen of St. Mary's City

Historic St. Mary's City
18751 Hogaboom Ln., St. Mary's City
7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Garret Van Sweringen, born 1636 in The Netherlands, was among the colonists of 17th-century St. Mary's City and became one of Maryland's most influential citizens—innkeeper, coffee house owner, alderman and sheriff. He is the ancestor of thousands of Americans, including at least four governors of Maryland. Researcher Teun van der Vorm takes us into the fascinating life of Garrett van Sweringen and the successful search for his ancestors.

The speaker, a genealogical & historical researcher who lives in Rotterdam, regularly publishes in genealogical magazines. In the past three years, he has worked with great dedication to portray the life of Garrett Van Sweringen and find his ancestors in The Netherlands. Info: 301-994-4370 or www.hsmcdigshistory.org/events/lecture-van-sweringen/.

Fri, May 24

HomeSpun CoffeeHouse—Open Mic

Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
Zach Fowler Rd., Chaptico
7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Acoustic musicians of all skill levels are warmly welcomed to perform their favorite tunes. Doors open at 7 pm with performances beginning promptly at 7:30 PM. Admission is \$8; performers are admitted free of charge. Contact Chris Dudley in advance (ccdudley@rocketmail.com) to sign up as a performer. Info: smtmd2@gmail.com, www.smtmd.org/#/open-mic-night/

Sat, May 25

Timeline Event—Colonial to Civil War

Point Lookout State Park
11175 Point Lookout Rd., Scotland
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This event will feature volunteers demonstrating weapons, uniforms, civilian cloth-

ing, and life at Point Lookout during these time periods.

Mon, May 27

Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony

American Legion Post 255
13390 Point Lookout Rd., Ridge
11 a.m.

Memorial Day Celebration

Summerseat Farm
26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
Noon to 4 p.m.

Memorial Day Service

Patuxent River Naval Air Station
Test and Evaluation Hall
10 a.m.

Commission on Aging

Garvey Senior Activity Center
23115 Leonard Hall Dr., Leonardtown
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

The Commission on Aging provides the Commissioners of St. Mary's County with advice and assistance concerning county programs and resources offered for the senior residents of St. Mary's County and how to work with the community to develop awareness and understanding of the problems and concerns of the senior population.

Tue, May 28

Registration Opens: Family Archery Workshop

Historic St. Mary's City
18751 Hogaboom Ln., St. Mary's City
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Designed for families looking for a creative way to have fun and learn a new skill while spending time together. Participants of this workshop (minimum age 7) will learn the basics of this ancient sport. No experience needed; equipment will be provided.

See info & register at: www.hsmcdigshistory.org/events/registration-opens-for-archery-workshop/

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library UPCOMING EVENTS



Cricut Crafts: Vinyl Designs for Signs

Come learn more about the library's Cricut Maker and practice cutting adhesive vinyl to apply to wood signs at Leonardtown Library on Friday, May 24 at 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. This introductory, in-person class will cover how to use an electronic die-cutting machine called the Cricut Maker to make clean and precise cuts on adhesive vinyl and transfer that design onto a wooden sign board to take home with you. Participants will also learn the basics of Cricut Design Space, the software used to create endlessly customizable designs. No experience necessary, all materials provided. After learning the basics, you'll be able to return to the Leonardtown Library Makerspace during open hours to use the Cricut on your own to create whatever you can imagine! Visit the Makerspace website to see open hours and learn about all it has to offer! Register on www.stmalib.org.

St. Mary's County Library Closed for Memorial Day

All locations of the St. Mary's County Library will be closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day. All locations will be open regular business hours on Tuesday, May 28.

Genealogy: Digging Into the Census to Find Your Ancestors

The U.S. Federal Census has been conducted every 10 years since 1790. Federal and state census records contain valuable information about your ancestors. Learn about locating census records, what information was collected, and how that information can help you piece together your family history at Leonardtown Library on Tuesday, May 28 from 5:30 - 7 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Geocaching Adventure

Ready for adventure? Starting on June 1, St. Mary's County Library has hidden 10 secret caches around St. Mary's County.

If you find all 10, you will receive a challenge coin! To participate in the adventure, you will need to download the Geocaching app and create a free account. The app will show the approximate locations of geocaches in the area and track your progress on this adventure. All caches—while hidden—are clearly marked with the name "SMCL Geocache Adventure 2024" in transparent, plastic containers. As a cache seeker, you must abide by any park hours and all other rules and regulations. Please do not trespass or damage public or private property. To redeem your coin, visit Leonardtown Library. There is a limited supply of coins. One coin per household, on a first come, first served basis. Thank you to PAXSpace Inc. for providing the challenge coins!

Bridgerton Ball

Don your finest regency inspired apparel and come celebrate the release of Bridgerton season three at Charlotte Hall Li-

brary on Saturday, June 1 from 1 - 2 p.m. Enjoy tea and snacks while discussing the series. Make a craft, listen to music, and get excited about the newest season of the show with fellow fans! Register on www.stmalib.org.

SPARK: Storytime in the Park

Join the Mobile Library for an all-ages storytime in a different park each week followed by bubbles, music, and more! The Mobile Library will be open for library services as well. This activity will take place outdoors on Mondays from 9:30 - 11 a.m. Participants should bring blankets or chairs for comfort. Please register once per family group for a reminder e-mail or inclement weather notice. Walk-ins are welcome! Please check the park schedule and register on www.stmalib.org.

Information & Resources for Older Adults



- Medicare/Medical Assistance
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Physical Fitness/Life Enrichment Programs
- Transportation Services & Resources
- Financial Assistance Programs
- Home Delivered Meals
- Home & Community Based Services
- Housing Resources
- Long-Term Care Options
- Legal Referrals
- Caregiver Support
- Utility Assistance Resources

St. Mary's County Department of
Aging & Human Services

301-475-4200, ext. 1050

www.stmarysmd.com/aging

In Remembrance

Continued from page 19

William Woodburn, 88



William Robert Woodburn Sr., "Tommy", 88, of Leonardtown, MD, passed peacefully at his residence on May 16, 2024, surrounded by his loving family. Born on

January 31, 1936, in Pearson, MD, he was the son of the late Albert L. Woodburn and Bertha A. (Stone) Woodburn.

In addition to his parents, William is preceded in death by his loving wife, Ann Marie Woodburn, "Bebe", whom he married on April 11, 1955, his son-in-law, Johnny Marshall, and his 11 siblings, Edna Bell (Paul), Bus Woodburn (Hilda), Kenny Woodburn (Ruth), Elaine Ryan (Harry), Amy Tiburzi (Jim), Edwin Woodburn (Bobbie), Ralph Woodburn (Evelyn), Creighton Woodburn (Anne), Raymond Woodburn (Mary Agnes), Millie Babcock (Bob), and Audrey Simmons (Paul).

He is survived by his five children, Tommy Woodburn (Natalie) of Leonardtown, MD, Gennie Marshall of Chaptico, MD, Laura Superior (Dennis) of Leonardtown, MD, Bernie Woodburn (Sharon) of Leonardtown, MD, Peggy Cianflone (Mark) of Hollywood, MD, ten grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, and his sister, Mary Hughes (Roy), of Kenosha, Wisconsin.

A lifelong St. Mary's County, MD resident, he enjoyed farming, gardening, caring for his animals, listening to bluegrass music, playing cards, and watching sports, especially enjoying his children and grandchildren's athletic events. In younger years, he played softball and was inducted into the Softball Hall of Fame in 1987. A devoted Catholic, he was a member of the Knights of Columbus St. Michaels Chapter and a support member for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. He took immense pride in the work that he accomplished over the years as a Master Carpenter, Road Constructor, and Heavy Equipment Excavation Operator Foreman, developing positive structures for this community. However, his greatest love was for his wife and family, and he will forever be affectionately remembered as "Paw and Pop."

The family will receive friends on Thursday, May 30, 2024 from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM with prayers recited at 7:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Friday, May 31, 2024 at 11:00 AM in Holy Face Catholic Church, Great Mills, MD, with Rev. Scott Holmer officiating. Interment will follow in the church cemetery. Serving as pallbearers will be his grandsons, Jason Deaderick, Joshua Deaderick, Casey Woodburn, Mark Starnes, Corey Woodburn, Mark Cianflone and his granddaughters T.J. Redmond, Taylor Superior, Sarah Woodburn, and Kara Cianflone. Honorary pallbearers will be his great grandchildren, Waylon Woodburn,

Audrey Woodburn, Tucker Redmond, Dexter Redmond, Daniel Deaderick, Kylie Deaderick, Laina Deaderick, Cassi Deaderick, Tommy Deaderick, Trent Starnes, and Aurora Starnes.

Contributions may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in honor of Waylon Woodburn: Metro DC Chapter, 4550 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 35, Bethesda, MD 20814-3304 and/or ACTS (A Community That Shares) P.O. Box 54, Bushwood, MD 20618.

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.

Ray Gaskill, 66



Ray Edgar Gaskill, Jr, 66, passed away on May 19, 2024 at his son's residence in Leonardtown, Maryland. He was a resident of St. Mary's and Charles Counties for over 50 years.

He was born on December 7, 1957 at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland and is the son of the late Ray E & Clara B (Pritt) Gaskill, Sr.

"Big Ray" was a proud, life-long truck driver, member of the Teamsters and drove for Embassy Dairy and Safeway (Albertsons) culminating in a position as Head Security Guard at the Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship where he was once a student.

He was an avid sports fan with football being his favorite. Even at an early age he loved having a good fire going and one of his biggest joys was sitting around a blazing fire with family and friends after a good barbeque. He had a wicked sense of humor with witty comebacks. He loved to fish and spend time on or near the water. One of his favorite hobbies included tooling around the yard on his riding mower.

He is survived by his sister Debbie Gaskill Patridge of New Braunfels, Texas, his three beloved sons and their wives, Ray E (Bobby Jo) Gaskill, III, Blaine R (Amber) Gaskill and Connor P (Alice) Ryan and his six wonderful grandchildren whom he adored, Andrew Tinsley, Keith Gaskill, Makenzie (Kenzie) Gaskill, Savannah (Fern) Gaskill, Blaine (Bub) Gaskill and Addison (Addie) Gaskill.

A celebration of life will be held on Friday, May 24, 2024 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm, at The Fenwick Inn, 41685 Fenwick Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to SMAWL, P.O. Box 1232, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.



Larry Forte, 67



Lawrence (Larry) Angelo Forte, 67, of Drayden, MD, passed away at his home while surrounded by his immediate family on May 12, 2024 after a short battle with cancer.

Larry was born on September 8, 1956 to Lawrence Joseph and Ellen Josephine Mastrogiacomo Forte in Jersey City, New Jersey. After graduating from Floyd E. Kellam High School in 1974, he went on to study and work at Tidewater Community College, later finishing with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science at the University of Maryland University College.

Larry worked as a contractor at Veda, Incorporated supporting the NAS Patuxent River (PAX) E-2C/D Systems Test and Evaluation Laboratory (ESTEL) in the late 1980s and early 1990s before becoming a civil servant for the Government. Larry supported the ESTEL for over 30 years, retiring as the Technical Director.

In 1991, Larry married his sweetheart, Gabrielle Zarouba. Larry and Gabrielle went on to have two children, Lawrence E. (Sarah) and Christopher J., and three grandchildren, Bernadette, Louis, and Josephine.

In 2019, Larry retired, and spent his time writing code for his drones and helping his friend with his model airplanes. He enjoyed getting together with his friends and former coworkers for lunch. Larry loved spending time with his grandchildren and taking care of his mother.

Larry was predeceased by his sister, Gina Marie, and his father, Larry. He is survived by both his mother Ellen, and his brother Joseph (Stacy).

The visitation will be held at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Hollywood Rd, Leonardtown, MD 20650 on Wednesday, May 22, 2024 from 5:00pm to 7:00p.m. with prayers recited at 7:00p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at St. George Catholic Church, 19199 St. Georges Church Road Valley Lee, MD 20692 on Thursday, May 23 at 11:00a.m. with interment to follow in the church cemetery. It will be officiated by Rev. Alex Wyvill, a close friend of the family.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650 and St. Mary's Ryken's Scholarship Fund: Development Office 22600 Camp Calvert Road, Leonardtown, Maryland.

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

Arrangements made by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Mary Wathen, 91



Mary Ramona Wathen, 91, of Hollywood, MD passed away on May 1, 2024 at MedStar St. Mary's Hospital in Leonardtown, MD with her loving family at her side.

Born on October 30, 1932 in Pearson, MD, she was the daughter of the late Lawrence Matthews Hammett, Sr. and Alberta Catherine Coombs Hammett.

Mary is a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County and a 1951 graduate of St. Michael's Catholic High School in Ridge, MD. On August 18, 1956 she married her beloved husband, John Wellington "Jack" Wathen, Jr. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in Lexington Park, MD. Together they celebrated 34 wonderful years of marriage before his passing in 1990. She was employed for six years as a telephone operator for Bell Atlantic and then took on the role of being a devoted wife and loving mother to her children. After she raised her children, she returned work part-time as a cashier for 24 years.

She was an excellent cook and enjoyed hosting family and Holiday dinners, which was nothing short of a small feast that always included family favorites, stuffed ham, and chicken salad. She was very lively, enjoyed socializing with others and rarely sat down. She loved to dance, play BINGO, and travel on occasions. Some of her favorite destinations, were her trip to Las Vegas, as she loved the penny slot machines. She enjoyed her tour of Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls and Dollywood. She would often venture on bus trips to nearby casinos and shows, with her close friends. We all know how she enjoyed jigsaw puzzles, and framed each one. Word searches and coloring were her favorite the past years, as she was not able to travel as much. In the spring and fall, she was often pulling weeds and mulling in her flower beds. She was an avid sports fan, and her schedule was built around the times of the Orioles and Ravens games.

Her family was her greatest joy and she loved to spend time with them. She was a member of St. Aloysius Catholic Church and Parish, where she provided her children with a strong Catholic education. Mary is survived by her children: Patricia Ann Johnson (Tommy) of Hollywood, MD, M. Phyllis Greer (Ed) of Leonardtown, MD; John W. Wathen III (Michelle) of Fredericksburg, VA; Robert Hanson Wathen of Lexington Park, MD; Edward Lawrence Wathen (Michelle) of Valley Lee, MD; William David Wathen (Laurie) of Aynor, SC; and George Alfred Wathen (Pearl) of Hollywood, MD; 12 grandchildren: Derek Greer, Melissa Johnson, Angela Haak; Braden Johnson; Jonathan Wathen; Christa Wathen; Ryan Wathen; Dillon Wathen; Brianna Wathen; Gavin Wathen; Vanessa Wathen; Aaron Wathen; 16 great grandchildren: Evan, Zachary, Peyton, Yanni, Ava, Lilly, Braden, Asher, Neveah, Austyn, Chloe, Marcus, Amiyah, Alayah,

Will and Dove; and many extended family and friends. In addition to her parents and husband, Mary is also preceded in death by her brothers, Lawrence M. Hammett Jr. and John Richard Hammett.

Family will receive friends for Mary's Life Celebration on Wednesday, May 8, 2024 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m., with prayers recited at 7:00 p.m., at St. Aloysius Catholic Church, 22800 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Reverend David Beaubien on Thursday, May 9, 2024 at 9:30 a.m. at St. Aloysius Catholic Church. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens.

Serving as pallbearers will be her grandsons: Derek Greer, Braden Johnson, Jonathan Wathen, Ryan Wathen, Dillon Wathen, Gavin Wathen and Aaron Wathen. Honorary pallbearers will be her great-grandchildren.

Memorial contributions in Mary's name may be made to Hospice of St. Mary's, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or a charity of your choice.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Continued on page 20

*Thank you Lord for
Doug Delahay Woodburn
5/12/2000 - 8/3/2019
"love you pumpkin"*

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We remember your Birthday*

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In Remembrance

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Marian Ann Blair, 87



Marian Ann Blair, 87, of St. Inigoes, MD passed away peacefully on May 10, 2024 at St. Mary's Nursing Center in Leonardtown, MD.

She was born on

April 6, 1937 in Leonardtown, MD to the late Benjamin Osborne Unkle and Marian (nee: Bohanan) Unkle.

Marian Ann was raised in St. Mary's County and was a boarder at St. Mary's Academy, graduating in 1954. It was at St. Mary's Academy, that she met James Matthew "Matt" Blair, Sr. They married at St. Michael's Catholic Church on November 10, 1956, celebrating 54 wonderful years of marriage before his passing in February 2011.

She and Matt enjoyed dancing, boating and travelling. She enjoyed travelling with her daughters, especially to celebrate her birthdays. One of her greatest pleasures was her grandchildren and great-granddaughter. Marian Ann enjoyed dinners with relatives and friends, in particular her girlfriends lunch group. She was a lifelong member of St. Michael's Catholic Church, and a member of the Ladies of Charity of St. Michael's. She was a supporter of the Alzheimer's Association, and supported many humanitarian charities.

Marian Ann is survived by her daughters: Terrie Harney (Ron) of Pisgah Forest, NC, Susan Dudley (Bob) of Hollywood, MD and Betsy Blair (Hector) of Hampstead, MD; brother, Bennie Unkle (Leona) of Virginia Beach, VA; grandchildren: Bobby Dudley (Emilie), Eric Dudley (Ashley) and Sarah Dudley; great-granddaughter, Blair Dudley. In addition to her parents, she is also preceded in death by her husband, James Matthew "Matt" Blair, Sr. and her son, James Matthew "Jimmy" Blair, Jr.

Family will receive friends for Marian Ann's Life Celebration on Monday, May 27, 2024 from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., with prayers at 4:00 p.m., at Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Reverend Peter Giovanoni at 11:00 a.m. at St. Michael's Catholic Church, 16555 Three Notch Road, Ridge, MD 20680. Interment will follow in the church cemetery.

Pallbearers: Rayner Blair, Bennie Unkle, Tommy Unkle, Ricky Blair, Matthew Ridgell, and Brian Tarleton. Honorary pallbearers: Bill Bailey, Joey Blair, David Unkle, John Bohanan, Phil Cooper and Emerick Norris.

Memorial contributions may be made in Marian Ann's name to St. Mary's Nursing Center, 21585 Peabody Street, Leonardtown, MD 20650 and St. Michael's Catholic School, P.O. Box 259, Ridge, MD 20680.

Condolences may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Tim Cameron, 60



Mark Timothy Cameron "Tim", 60, of California, MD, raised in Hollywood, MD, passed away on May 13, 2024 in Leonardtown, MD just one day after a cancer diagnosis.

Born on October 29, 1963 in Leonardtown, MD, he was the loving son of Bernard Franklin Cameron Sr., "Frank", and Catherine Jeanette Abell Cameron, "Jeanette".

In addition to his parents, Tim is survived by his brother Frank Cameron Jr. and sister-in-law Sue Cameron, sister Julie Burgan and brother-in-law Jim Burgan, sister Maria Gassie and brother-in-law Ed Gassie Jr. Tim is also survived by his nephews, Nick Cameron and girlfriend Sheila Meaders, Kirk Cameron, Zack Cameron, Austin Darling, and Jake Darling, his niece Dani Walker and nephew-in-law Roger Walker. Tim also leaves behind his three great-nephews, Camden Walker, Maxwell Walker, and Jameson Walker, who loved him very much.

Tim was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County and attended St. John's School and Leonardtown High School. Tim was a skilled carpenter who took pride in his work and loved to put his skills to use for his family, whether it be building or remodeling their home, replacing their roof or adding a beautiful deck. But Tim's true passion was being a waterman. He felt at home and at peace on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. This is a passion he shared with his dad who was his best buddy and sidekick. If your phone was ringing before the sun came up, it was Tim asking you to go fishing no matter how cold it was. His family and friends reaped the benefits of his bounty. He found the most joy in sharing the beautiful rockfish or crabs that he harvested. He made every holiday meal and every family gathering even more special by providing and cooking the fish, crabs and oysters. He would patiently pick crabs so he could get his mom to prepare the best crabcakes in the county (true story). But even more than that, he made every gathering special with his gregarious personality and sense of humor. He was the loudest one in the room, and he loved to make people laugh even at his own expense. In Tim's younger days, he was an exceptional baseball player, coached by none other than his best buddy and sidekick, his dad. He also worked the tobacco fields on his grandparent's farm alongside his dad and his brother Frank. Tim was an avid Ravens fan even though his dad preferred the Redskins. It kept things interesting and lively. Tim was also an avid Orioles fan. Tim and his father could always be found watching the games together and it tended to be loud because of their shared passion for sports. Tim took great care of his mom and dad; he chauffeured them to wherever they wanted or needed to go and always brought them food from the restaurant of their choice. He had his struggles in life but was a genuinely kind and loving soul.

For Tim:

*Our lives go on without you
But nothing is the same
We have to hide our heartache
When someone speaks your name*

*Sad are the hearts that love you
Silent are the tears that fall
Living here without you
is the hardest part of all*

*You did so many things for us
Your heart was kind and true
And when we needed someone
We could always count on you*

*The special years will not return
When we are all together
But with the love in our hearts
You will walk with us forever*

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, May 29th, from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM at Mattingly-Gardiner Funeral Home in Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held at 11:30 AM with Father Ray Schmidt officiating. Interment will follow at St. Mary's Queen of Peace Cemetery in Helen, MD.

Pallbearers will be Nick Cameron, Kirk Cameron, Zack Cameron, Dani Walker, Austin Darling and Jake Darling.

Honorary pallbearers will be Roger Walker, Camden Walker, Maxwell Walker, Jameson Walker, and Sheila Meaders.

The family would like to invite friends and family to Bowles Farm in Clements, MD for fellowship immediately following the graveside service. Please join us to celebrate Tim's life and share your special memories of him.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation at cbf.org.

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

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

Thaddeus Burch, 93



Rev. Thaddeus J. Burch, S.J., was called to eternal life on May 14, 2024 in Wauwatosa, WI. He was 93 years old, a Jesuit for 75 years and a priest for 62 years. Born in Baltimore, he entered the Society of Jesus in 1948 and was ordained a priest in 1961. He earned a bachelor's degree and license in philosophy at Bellarmine College in Plattsburg, NY, a bachelor's and a license in theology at Woodstock College in Maryland, and a master's degree and Ph.D. in physics at Fordham University. He taught at Scranton Prep (1955-1958) and at St. Joseph's University, Fordham University, and the University of Connecticut from 1969 to 1976. He was professor, physics department chair, dean of the graduate school, director of special proj-

ects, and a member of high-level committees at Marquette University (1976-2016). A priority was the supervision of the Jesuit International Scholars program which since 1983 brought more than 100 young Jesuits from developing countries to pursue graduate studies at Marquette University and then return home to become leaders there. He co-authored 43 articles and 21 abstracts in the use of nuclear magnetic resonance to study ferromagnetic materials and properties. He was University Delegate to Argonne Universities Association 1977-1982. From 2000-2010 he was a member of the Medical College of Wisconsin's institutional review board that regulates medical research for the college. He moved to St. Camillus Jesuit Community in 2016 to care for his health. He was preceded in death by his parents Thaddeus and Frances (Greenwell) Burch and his brothers Rev. Francis F. Burch, S.J., and Thomas K. Burch. He is survived by his nieces Julia, Margaret, and Karli, his nephew Soren, and numerous cousins in and around St. Mary's County, Maryland.

He donated his body to medical science. Memorial Mass at St. Camillus Jesuit Community on June 3 at 11:00 a.m. His remains will be buried at Mt. Olivet Cemetery in Milwaukee.

David Berry, 73



David L. Berry, Jr., born on April 25, 1951, in Harrisburg, PA, passed away on May 11, 2024, in Leonardtown, MD, surrounded by family. David took great pride in being a husband to Elizabeth Berry, father and grandfather to his four children, Danielle (Sari, Ashleigh, Jeffrey), Kimberly (Christopher), Douglas (Cameron, Alex), and Andrew (Ja'Mi), and numerous other family members.

While the family was always his top priority, David also took pride in being called AZC Chief Petty Officer David Berry, and, after 20 years of service, retired from the Navy. He then went on to work for the St. Mary's County Government at Planning and Zoning and retired in 2013.

The love, values, and memories that David leaves behind will continue for generations. Fair Winds and Following Seas.

A service will be held at Grace and Peace OPC on Saturday, May 25, 2024 at 1:30 PM, with light refreshments following. A Celebration of Life will be held at the family home on May 26, 2024 at 4:00 PM. If you would like to attend, please contact the family for more details. An interment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider donating to one of the many Veteran Organizations and sending the family your fondest memories of David.

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

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

Wanderings of an Aimless Mind

by Shelby Oppermann



A Thankful, Grateful Day

I just want to say thank you to everyone who came out to the Strawberry Festival this past Sunday; our parishioners at Christ Church Chaptico all agreed that it was one of the best festivals ever. The cloudy, drizzly morning gave way to a beautiful sunny day. We sold out of quite a few desserts, which is always a good thing because that way we don't have much left to take to church refreshments for the following Sunday. You helped us with our waistlines. Thank you to our parish



administrator, and all the church volunteers who worked hard and very fast to make it a success. The photo along with the column is of our sweet 90 years young Betty Fuqua who came and volunteered in the kitchen which is why Betty stays so young. When I asked for strawberry pies I had no idea so many would make multiple pies all the way up to 8 pies each for a few. All the strawberry shortcakes, sliced sweetened berries, ice cream, and strawberry quarts were sold-out as well.

We had amazing vendors and crafters this year – I bought a few things, and still have to purchase something from Joanne the basket lady as a gift. And I have the cutest flowerpot turtle to put out in my fairy garden from another amazing vendor. And if you missed inhaling the aromas and buying some of Bugeye Coffee Roasters coffees then you can find Bunny and Michelle and their husbands the roasters at Bugeye Grill on Solomons Island. It was really nice to have Michelle at the festival since we've known each other since 1st grade back in Clinton.

This year was a worrisome year for obtaining strawberries because of all the rain we had. I need to give special thanks to Mike Stauffer who arranged for me to get beautiful strawberries from Joel Stauffer and Irvin Zimmerman who between them came through with 2/3rds of the strawberries we needed. Thank you for picking in the rain. I hope you visit our Loveville neighbors for your produce needs. And on a side note, Irvin Zimmerman and family off of Friendship School Road had a whole front yard filled with beautiful handmade chairs and picnic tables. I didn't think I'd get my fellow strawberry hunter Amy to leave. I looked around and there she was over at the picnic tables. And thank you to Southern Maryland Produce, who in their new location at the old St. Mary's Landing, helped us with the last flats we needed to have enough for all our amazing desserts. I hope you frequent their produce business too. And it was fun to know that they are originally from Clinton like Michelle and me.

Everywhere I went at the festival it seemed I ran into people who were regulars year after year. We so appreciate all who come and help us raise money for the three charities we support: Hospice, ACTS, and The Clements Cuties Foundation. I enjoyed meeting some of my husband's pool customers whom I normally just speak to on the phone. It's nice to put a face to the voice.

And I don't know where we would be without Mike's Bar-B-Cue and their delicious, barbecued ribs, chicken, brisket, and my favorite sliced pork barbecue sandwiches. Louise Hatcher started barbecuing for us for the Strawberry Festival 30 years ago with her first husband Mike. And after Mike's passing, Louise continued on when she met her husband Dave. The legacy continues now with Katherine and PJ taking over the family barbecue business from Louise and David. Some people don't even come to the Strawberry Festival for the desserts – they come for the barbecue.

I appreciate my dear friend Greg who arranges the live music for the day and keeps me straight and on course for the festival. Thank you to the Bushmill Band, and to Greg and his lovely wife Debs, who are the duo Folk Salad, for keeping everyone's toe's tapping throughout the day. Dan and Diana arranged for their other bicycle enthusiasts to do a ride to the festival – thank you for that. I always give thanks for my husband even when he says he doesn't want to hear another word about Strawberry Festival because he has heard it since January and for the last 22 years that I've been in charge. But of course, Robert is still there for me for everything though. Lastly, thanks to our Priest Father Peter Ackerman, I really think that extra blessing you added in for me at the altar the Sunday before the festival was an added bonus for a great festival. Thank you.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby

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

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Should estate plans be equal...or fair?

When you're creating your estate plan, your biggest priority may be taking care of your family — your spouse, grown children, grandchildren, and other loved ones. And as you think of where you want your assets to go, you also may be thinking about how to be fair — but is that the same as treating everyone equally?

In estate planning, "equal" doesn't always mean "fair." Let's consider some factors that can help explain the difference:

- **Need** – It's highly unlikely that the individuals you want to include in your estate plan — especially your adult children — have the same family and financial situations. For example, you could have one child who is extremely successful and has no children of their own, while another child earns much less income and supports three children. Clearly, your two adult children have vastly different financial needs — so, you need to consider whether you want to treat them equally or fairly. If you decide you want to treat them fairly, you may want to divide your assets in a way that provides more help to the child who needs it most.
- **Abilities** – You may well have some assets that you believe are more suitable for one child over another. This can be especially true if you are planning on passing on a family business. If you know that one child is the most capable of running the business or has been primarily involved in the business, then you may want to give that child control as a next-generation owner. Yet, this may not seem fair to another child, who might also express interest in the business, so you may want to look for ways to provide this child with enough assets to help make the overall inheritance more equal.
- **Practicality** – In some instances, you might think you can meet both the "fair" and "equal" criteria. Suppose, for instance, that you have a cabin or other vacation home that you think two of your children could share. In theory, this joint ownership might sound good, but in practical terms, it could cause problems. Are both children equally willing and capable of paying taxes and upkeep on the cabin or vacation home? What if one child wants to sell their share? And then, there's the question of who gets to use the property at various times of the year. All these issues should be resolvable, but they can also cause great stress within the family.

There's no simple formula for solving the fair-versus-equal dilemma. But keep this in mind: Communicating your wishes to your loved ones while you are drawing up your estate plan can help reduce confusion — and hopefully lead to fewer hard feelings — when you are no longer around. By their nature, fairness and equality issues related to estate plans can trigger a range of emotions, and addressing these feelings beforehand can help provide a great service for your loved ones.

You might also find that some objectivity can be valuable. That's why, when creating your estate plan, you may benefit by working with a team of professionals, including your legal, financial and tax advisors.

When developing your estate plan, you might well strive for equality and fairness but above all, you want to get things right. And careful planning, open communication and appropriate guidance can help go a long way toward this goal.

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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Stars and Stripes Festival Highlights Memorial Day Weekend

Chesapeake Beach Event Named for George Owings

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The 13th Annual Stars and Stripes Festival in Chesapeake Beach this Saturday, May 25, will feature the beginning of a new tradition. The festival will now be known as the George W. Owings, III Stars & Stripes Festival in honor of the late Maryland veteran's secretary and delegate, who passed away last October. The festival this year will also feature a Memorial Day parade, following the traditional remembrance at Veteran's Memorial Park.

Mayor Pat Mahoney told The County Times, "First and foremost, George was a big friend of the Twin Beaches all of his life. And he's given to both towns over and over. But also, George was the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. George was our state delegate. But I would say, basically, George was one of us. George was a beach kid, made good. He was obviously a patriot. He loved the flag. He loved veterans. He loved his country. So it was very easy for us to make that decision."

Former governor Larry Hogan will be on hand to honor his veteran's secretary and to dedicate the event in Owings' name.

"Governor Hogan had a special relationship with George, who worked for him for eight years as his secretary. But if you go



Chesapeake Beach Veteran's Memorial Park

back and look at the memorial service that we had at the American Legion post for George in December, if you heard the way Governor Hogan spoke of him, Governor Hogan was in true tears that day. There's tears and then there's real tears, and he was in real tears that day. He was definitely choked up and like the rest of us, just really missed George."

After Owings death, Hogan said, "He was a dedicated public servant, tireless advocate for our veterans, father, grandfather, and close friend."

Mahoney said the former governor

jumped at the chance to come to Chesapeake Beach and honor his friends.

Mahoney observed, "In fact, in speaking with his staff, they said, it's Larry's birthday, but Larry wanted to make it clear, no matter what his plans are that day, he's wiping his slate and he will be there."

In addition to Hogan, Major Brandon Temple will speak at the ceremony that begins at 10 a.m. at the veteran's park.

According to the town, "The event will begin with the Town's annual memorial ceremony at the Chesapeake Beach Veteran's Memorial Park and will lead to our annual

Family Fun Day at Kellam's Field. The theme for this year's event is "The Fallen" in honor of the brave men and women who gave their life for the freedoms we enjoy.

"The Town of Chesapeake Beach is proud to host a Patriotic Parade on May 25th, at 12 p.m., starting at Kellam's Field! Show off our Nation's colors through colorful floats, wagons, marching bands, community groups, and more to showcase our American pride. We invite you to come dressed in your best Red, White, and Blue attire in honor and respect for our Fallen Heroes.

"Families, community groups, and residents of all ages are welcome to participate, observe, and enjoy a fun-filled day celebrating our Fallen Heroes and the freedoms we enjoy every day as a result of their sacrifice."

Mahoney said of why the town started the Stars and Stripes Festival, "One of the unique things about this town and the county as a whole is we're very patriotic. We built a veteran's park right in the middle of town, right down from the American Legion Post 206. We welcome veterans and veteran families to live here. It's the fabric of our town. And so, when we had those brainstorm, I was on the council then, it was just a joyous way for us to celebrate those that gave, that made the ultimate sacrifice, right here in town."

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Remembering Astronauts Michael Smith and Dave Brown

By Dave Spigler
Contributing Writer

Each year The County Times writes a story for Memorial Day, which commemorates those in the military who have lost their lives in the line of duty in service to their country. Astronauts Michael Smith and Dave Brown were two such service members.

Recently, Cable News Network [CNN] featured a four-part documentary over two weekends on the horrific loss of Space Shuttle Columbia on February 1, 2003. This tragedy was the second major accident in NASA's long history in space exploration and, like the Challenger explosion in January, 1986, these devastating events had direct ties to our area as crews on both of these flights had men who were previously assigned to the Navy's Test Pilot School [TPS] here at NAS Patuxent River. Viewing this documentary brought back many sad memories for many of us who knew these gentlemen. I was privileged to have gotten to know one very well. We became good friends before he left Pax for training in Houston. Both of these bright men were talented Naval aviators who qualified for our country's difficult space program. They were very down to earth individuals that appeared normal in every way with no indication of the heroes they would become.

First let me speak of Captain Michael T. Smith. Captain Smith, was a graduate of the US Naval Academy Class of 1967 and became a Navy jet pilot. He later graduated from TPS and was chosen as one of three Mission Specialists assigned to the Challenger flight. He was a skilled naval aviator who was well liked and respected by all during his tour of duty here. A large spectacular mural titled "Naval Aviation in Space" painted by local artist George McWilliams was dedicated to Captain Smith and the Space Shuttle Program in 1986. The mural was displayed above the front entrance of the Naval Air Station's Officer's Club for years and was later relocated to the Patuxent River Naval Aviation Museum upon demolition of the Club building in 2018. This 12x22 painting is a "must see" at the Museum located next to the north gate of the air station.

I was especially saddened to relive the Columbia disaster as Captain Dave Brown was a good friend of mine who I completely admired for his special talents and wonderful personality. He was a joy to be around and always displayed a smile for everyone he met. A multi-talented individual, he was one of a very few medical doctors ever to qualify for Naval aviation flight training, earn the Navy Wings of Gold and become designated as a Naval Aviator.

Dave grew up in the DC area and was an only son. He graduated from Yorktown High School in Arlington, VA. and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the College of William and Mary in 1978 and followed it with attaining his Doctorate in Medicine from Eastern Virginia Medical school in 1982. He later joined the Navy following an internship at the Medical University of South Carolina. He was sent to Flight Surgeon training and upon completion of that training was assigned as the Director



Capt. Michael Smith

of Medical Services at the Naval Hospital at Adak, Alaska. Following this tour, he received orders to sea duty with Carrier Airwing Fifteen aboard the aircraft carrier USS Carl Vinson in the western Pacific. It was during this tour he was recommended and accepted for pilot training, the only Navy Flight Surgeon to be selected in over ten years. Even more remarkable, Dave graduated number one in his class!

He then commenced training and carrier qualification in the A-6E Intruder and received orders to the Naval Strike Warfare Center at Fallon, Nevada and served as the Strike Leader Attack Training Instructor and Planning Officer. He later qualified on the F-18 Hornet, a fighter aircraft made famous in the motion picture "Maverick." In 1992, Dave went to sea aboard the USS Independence as a member of attack squadron VA-115. At this point he had logged over 2700 flight hours of which 1700 hours were performed in military high-performance aircraft. In 1995, Dave reported to NAS Patuxent River as the Flight Surgeon at the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School.

At the time I was serving as the Deputy Aircraft Maintenance Officer at a Test and Evaluation Squadron now known as VX-20. I also held a part time job as a realtor with a large Southern Maryland Real Estate firm. I often received referrals for military personnel being assigned to NAS Pax and through a friend, I met Captain Dave Brown and learned he was looking for a property to relocate his two private aircraft. He presented me with a real challenge and we spent many weeks scouring potential sites in St. Mary's, Calvert, and Charles Counties. There were a few airstrips in lower St. Mary's that offered homes either on or nearby the airstrips. We looked at many homes located close to St. Mary's airport, and investigated potential properties up in Charles County and across the river in Calvert. We were close to making an offer for a home on an airstrip in Lusby that had a large carport suitable for parking both of his airplanes. Dave needed just a more time...

We spent days swapping "sea stories" about our Navy adventures and places overseas we had visited. I learned he had been a gymnast in college and often spent his idle hours riding a bike or jogging through Leonardtown. He was well known by the folks there who often waved when he passed by. He treated everyone with the same kindness and friendliness he showed me. I grew to admire Dave as one of the nicest people I had known. Over lunch



Capt. Dave Brown

I learned he had never married as he had so many goals to achieve with his chosen career that he had not had time for relationships. He later confessed "he had not met "Ms. Right" as yet!" [I later learned he met a woman while training as an astronaut in Houston that he really liked]. He spoke lovingly of his parents up in Arlington, VA. He was an only child and his parents were elderly and he was now able to visit with them often. But his greatest attention was his dog that was truly his best friend. We agreed that once we found the right property and had his planes here, he would take me up one day and teach me how easy it is to fly a small plane!

And then I received a phone call from him, a call I will never forget...he started by

saying "Spiggy, I have bad news to report! I just learned I was selected for the Astronaut Program and will be receiving orders to attend training in Houston very soon!?" My gosh was this a big surprise as he never mentioned he was being considered for this new role! It was a "grin and bear it moment" for me. I hated that we would not enjoy some plans we had discussed for when he settled into a place here, but I thought I would be able to tell my friends I was best friends with an astronaut one day! So here I am sharing the details of my short relationship with this wonderful gentleman.

We followed his progress through this new training and were very excited to hear he was selected as a Mission Specialist for flight STS-107 onboard Space Shuttle Columbia. Sadly, Dave's dog died a few days before lift-off. We know this took some of the excitement out of the flight for Dave but the seven members of the crew launched safely on January 16 for a 16-day flight dedicated to conduct research and science studies. And like millions of Americans who followed this flight, we watched anxiously that Saturday morning as Columbia headed back to Cape Canaveral. And we watched in horror as this special mission unfortunately ended 16 minutes short of touchdown. It is a memory that I will never forget. We lost six great Americans and one Israeli that morning including Dave, Commander Rick Husband, Kalpana Chawla, Pilot William McCool, Laurel Clarke, Michael Anderson, and Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon. May they rest in peace.





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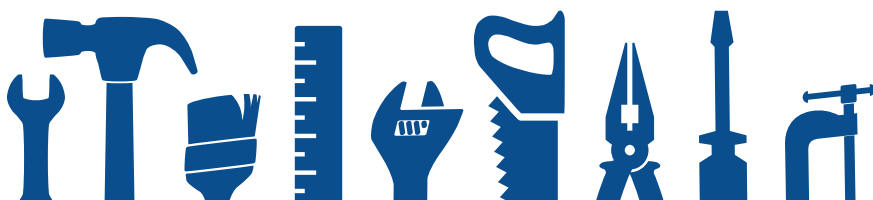
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Waugh Remembers Losing Comrades to War

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Dr. Steve Waugh, a former state senator for both St. Mary's and Calvert counties remembers becoming a Marine attack pilot flying AV-8B Harriers back in 1988.

In just two short years the country would be at war with Iraq over its invasion of Kuwait and many of Waugh's comrades would be sent over to serve in combat in that conflict.

It was decided he should not go, since he and his wife were about to start a family.

Waugh said he was angry at not being involved in what would become known as the First Gulf War.

But it wasn't long before he started seeing pilots he knew, his friends, being paraded on Iraqi television as prisoners of war after being shot down in combat, he said.

A little over a decade later, in March of 2003, it would be Waugh's turn to fly in combat.

Operation Iraqi Freedom was his last overseas deployment in the Marine Corp, he said.

It was here he would lose friends like MSgt. Ken Hunt, a Marine who was wounded in an IED [improvised explosive device] attack and who later died while in hospital back in San Antonio, Texas.

"He was a wonderful guy," Waugh, who runs a defense contracting business in St. Mary's, said. "He was a great leader, a great Marine."

But Hunt wasn't the only friend and service member Waugh lost.

Even before the First Gulf War — known as Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm



Steve Waugh, standing, fifth from left

— friends of Waugh's had died in training accidents.

One had crashed and died while trying to land, while one had died in an infantry training exercise when the vehicle that they were in turned over and killed many Marines, Waugh said.

It was a poignant reminder, Waugh said, that service members risk their lives on the job every day whether they are in combat or not.

Waugh said he has lost 24 of his friends while they were in military service.

"They were mostly aviators, but a few others, too," Waugh said. "Whether they lost their lives in combat or on a training exercise they all still paid the price."

"We would not be where we are today without them."

In the second invasion of Iraq, Waugh would be a senior officer in his AV-8B Harrier squadron — a lieutenant colonel — providing close air support to Marines on the ground during the war. When Marine infantry did not need Harrier support, he and his comrades took to the air to seek out targets of opportunity and destroy them.

AV-8B Harriers are aircraft capable of taking off vertically and landing just the same by the use of directional nozzles on the side of the aircraft instead of the normal exhaust ports on the back of a jet aircraft.

He destroyed enemy fuel trucks and tanks as well as arms and fuel caches in the desert, Waugh said.

In one instance he and members of his

flight were flying over an Iraqi town when they noticed a flashing light in the middle of a traffic intersection; Waugh continued to fly in a circular pattern and notice the light followed them.

It was an anti-aircraft gun, he realized.

"He was shooting at us," Waugh said with a laugh. "Can you imagine what it must be like to shoot at an enemy and have absolutely no effect?"

But the gun still posed a danger, Waugh said, so he dropped ordinance on it, taking it out.

"You don't feel bad about that," he said.

Flying the Harrier was a dangerous task in and of itself, since its vertical takeoff- and-landing could be unstable and unpredictable.

"I've had my hand on the ejection lever three times in the Harrier," Waugh said. "I've had a couple of times in that plane where I said to myself 'OK, I die.'"

The Harrier had an accident rate several times greater than that of the F/A 18 while in Marine Corps use.

Waugh looks upon his own time in combat as just a small piece of the overall war effort he was involved in.

He has referred to it in the past as "rolling in, releasing weapons and rolling out."

"For me it was pretty clinical," Waugh said.

What stays with him, though, is the memory of those who served and gave their lives.

"There are a lot of people to remember," Waugh said. "It's about their sacrifice and what we do to make it worth it."

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MedStar St. Mary's Earns Prestigious Magnet® Recognition

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital has become the fifth MedStar Health hospital to be Magnet® recognized for its excellence in nursing care. Presented by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), Magnet Recognition is one of the highest and most prestigious distinctions a health-care organization can achieve in the United States with fewer than 10% of hospitals nationally holding the designation.

"We are honored to be named a Magnet-Recognized hospital," said Mimi Novello, MD, MBA, FACEP, president and chief medical officer of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. "We have an incredible team that has embraced the principles of Magnet to build a culture of exceptional quality and care. I am extremely proud of the amazing care provided at our hospital every day and the tremendous dedication of our staff."

To achieve Magnet Recognition a hospital must demonstrate excellence in nursing leadership, clinical practice, innovation, and patient outcomes. Hospitals must meet and exceed national standards for nursing practice and create an environment of professional growth and commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in nursing practice.

Research shows Magnet-recognized hospitals typically provide a higher quality of patient care, including lower mortality rates and increased patient satisfaction. Magnet hospitals also experience lower turnover and lower rates of dissatisfaction among nursing staff. The recognition is also directly linked to a hospital's ability to attract and retain qualified, highly educated nursing staff.

"Our team has worked very hard to meet the standards of the Magnet recognition

program," said Dawn Yeittrakis, MS, BSN, RN, NEA-BC, vice president and chief nursing officer of MedStar St. Mary's Hospital. "The journey to this moment has been one of discovery and incredible growth and this recognition highlights the great work our nursing and hospital team does every day."

MedStar St. Mary's was recognized by the ANCC with eight exemplars—one for Structural Empowerment and seven for Exemplary Professional Practice. Exemplars underscore exceptional performance in the various elements of the Magnet model.

"This Magnet designation is not just a recognition of past achievements," said Yeittrakis, "it is a commitment from our team to continue to excel and innovate our nursing care. We are steadfastly dedicated to continuing to improve patient care as well as the overall healthcare experience for all those we serve."

About ANCC's Magnet Recognition Program

The Magnet® Recognition Program—administered by the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the largest and most prominent nursing credentialing organization in the world—identifies healthcare organizations that provide the very best in nursing care and professionalism in nursing practice. The Magnet Recognition Program serves as the gold standard for nursing excellence and provides consumers with the ultimate benchmark for measuring quality of care. For more information about the Magnet Recognition Program and current statistics, visit NurseCredentialing.org/magnet to learn more.



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Twelve Quilts of Valor Awarded



PAX Sound of Freedom awarded 12 Quilts of Valor (QOV) on May 18, 2024, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Lexington Park. PAX Sound of Freedom is the local chapter of Quilts of Valor for St. Mary's and Charles Counties. Shown in the photo, left to right, are: Heidi Marlatt (Army - 17 years), Joseph Russell (Air Force - 20 years), Christopher Schumacher (Navy - 21 years), Shannon Romero (Marine Corps - 4 years), Salvador Marcus Romero (Marine Corps - 20 years), Jeff Turner (Navy - 25 years), David Whiteman (Navy - 4 years), Russell Savoy (Air Force - 22 years), Anthony Dittami (Navy - 24 years), Ronald Ansell (Air Force - 27 years), Jenette Thompson (Air Force - 22 years), and John Thomas Clinkscales, Jr. (Air Force - 23 years).



NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Navy Advances Development of Air Force's New Joint Simulation Environment

Engineers from the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) successfully installed core software in the Air Force's future Joint Simulation Environment (JSE) facility at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada bringing the service closer to operating its own next-generation training and test facility.

Nellis is the Air Force's premier training and test center for advanced combat aviation.

"The Joint Simulation Environment is the only training range where tactical aviators can fight like they would in real air combat," said NAWCAD Executive Director, Steve Cricchi. "NAWCAD's JSE is capability advantage helping American warfighters keep pace with the changing character of warfare—its importance cannot be overstated."

The JSE's core software includes the digital elements that make up the facility including simulated variables like weather, the electromagnetic spectrum, surface and subsurface platforms, enemy aircraft and weapons systems. The software also includes weapons systems like the Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile, AIM-9 Sidewinder, Small Diameter Bomb, and more.



"NAWCAD's JSE is critical to advancing air superiority and improving service interoperability," said NAWCAD JSE Director Blaine Summers. "Standing up robust, multi-platform training and test capabilities at Nellis underscores our Navy's commitment to partnering with the Air Force."

The JSE is the DOD's next-generation

digital test and training range made up of cockpits, domed simulators with 4K projectors, and aircraft software. NAWCAD's JSE enables tactical pilots to fly wartime scenarios in a near-exact virtual environment, and aircraft developers to push air systems to extreme limits beyond the safety constraints of open-air ranges.

NAWCAD is leading the DOD's effort to scale the capability across the services. The warfare center installed enemy air systems at Nellis in 2023 and will enable F-35 and F-22 operations this year.

Navy and Air Force fighter pilots will begin training together in NAWCAD's JSE this summer, and the JSE is now part of the DOD's formal curriculum for its tactical weapons schools. This includes the Navy's TOPGUN and Air Force's 6th Weapons Squadron, who currently train in the JSE at the warfare center's Patuxent River headquarters. NAWCAD's JSE also trains domestic and allied fighter squadrons stationed across the world as pilots fly more sorties in the JSE over a week than they can on open-air ranges in a year. The command surpassed more than 1,000 F-35 pilots trained in the JSE in March 2024.

NAWCAD will incorporate additional test and training cockpits including the F/A-18 Hornet, EA-18 Growler, and E-2 platforms in its Patuxent River facility, and deploy its second training system onboard a Navy carrier, USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72), this year.

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Letters ^{to} the Editor

'A community league in the truest sense'

Thank you SMCYO, a great community baseball league. As we move towards the end of the spring youth baseball season and into the heat of summer, I wanted to take a few moments to send a big Thanks You to all the folks in the St. Mary's County Youth Organization (SMCYO) for another great season of Tee Ball and Baseball! My children had an absolute blast this season, and are already on the lookout for when Fall Baseball sign-ups open! For those who might not be familiar, SMCYO is a recreational youth baseball league in St. Mary's County. It's a community league in the truest sense, locally founded and locally run, singly focused on youth baseball in and for St. Mary's County. Teams put together by locality means that kids (boys and girls) can play on teams with their neighbors and classmates, at parks close to home. The work done by the league to honor team preferences means that family friends, pals from 4H, siblings, cousins and all can grow and play together on a team over the years. My kids have made amazing friends and learned to love the game of baseball in an atmosphere that is friendly, inclusive, and focused on growth and achievement in the sport. A special thanks to the Board of SMCYO for all the work you do to make each season the best it can be for each kid. Thanks for rescheduling around rain-outs and making sure we can get as much baseball as possible during the season. Thanks for the work you put it scheduling base-

ball playoffs and Tee Ball All Star Games. Thanks for the hours you spent making sure every team and player has the gear they need, including speedy delivery of a left handed catcher's mitt less than a day after the player decided he wanted to try catcher! Thanks to all the Coaches who put in the hours to teach the kids how to be good ball players, and importantly, how to be good teammates. From the cold and rainy days in March up until the heat of June, you've worked to keep alive the kids' enthusiasm and love for the game. You're teaching all parts of the game to every kid, and giving each one the chance to explore their interests and talents, and the value of your work can't be overstated. Thanks to all the other parents who took the time to get your kids to practices and games, find lost hats, and re-tie cleats. You're kind. You're welcoming. And you're excited for the kids to have the chance to play. As my daughter's team cheers after every Tee Ball Game, "Thanks Mom and Dad!" So for all those reading this, if you're looking for some fun watching Tee-Ball and Youth Baseball, SMCYO League Championships and the Tee Ball All Star Game are on June 8th at Baggett Park; and if you've got some kids that want to learn, grow, and play with their friends and neighbors through America's Favorite Pastime, take a look at SMCYO. Fall baseball sign-ups open soon, and I know I'll be signing my kids up again. Great Baseball, and a Great Community.

A flawed voting process

On May 14th, Maryland held its primary election. One that I wish more Americans would participate in their civic duty. As most of you know, the primary in Maryland is a closed primary. That means each party decides which candidates to be on the ballot in the general election against the other party's selection. In principle, I agree with this system as I feel each party should select their candidate of choice. The Independent or "Unaffiliated" voters are not allowed to participate in that selection. I even agree with that concept.

Where I differ is, I do not believe Judicial Offices should be considered "partisan" politics. Unfortunately, at all levels of government, our justice system is far too influenced by partisan politics. All you have to do is watch what is currently happening at the national level to understand that. But let me get back to my point of the flawed voting system. On the primary ballot this year was the selection of candidates to choose our Circuit Court Judge. In the case of St. Mary's County we had two republican candidates vying for the position. The incumbent, placed there by Gov. Hogan was running against another local resident. Again, both are registered republicans. So in theory, during a closed primary, the registered republican voters should have selected the candidate they wanted to be on the ballot in November. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case. The Democrat voters were able to cast their ballot also for the same two candidates. So if both parties were able to vote for the same candidates, why couldn't the independent voter have a voice?

The official State Board of Elections response to my inquiry was quote "Except for board of education and retention elections, all offices including judge of the circuit court are partisan elections in Maryland" unquote. They did not answer my question as to why democrats could vote for republican candidates or vice versa.

According to the Board of Elections, there are 16,756 registered "unaffiliated" or independent voters in St. Mary's County as of 2022. (2024 numbers are not available to the public) That is a lot of voters and equates to approx. 22% of all registered voters. That's right almost 1/4th of county

residents could not be heard concerning this important position. Post election voter numbers for the 2024 primary have not been posted yet, another flaw in the system, so the impact of unaffiliated voters is unknown. This is 2024 and everything is done electronically, final numbers should be available within 3 days after the election. But that flaw is not my point. The point is probably about a 1/4th of primary voters could not have a say in who should be serving on the bench of the Circuit Court. To me, that is extremely flawed and should be corrected. If the state of Maryland doesn't want to hear the voice of the citizens that are not party affiliated for Circuit Court Judges, then do not allow for the cross party selection of judicial candidates. The other option is to make judicial positions the same as school board, non-partisan. The last option is to remove judicial candidates from the primary ballot and only have them on the general election, when all voters can vote.

Please do not interpret this has a slight against our local election board. They do great work within the system they are given. It is the system that is flawed not our local employees.

If you think the independent voter isn't crucial, then why do all the presidential candidates want that vote? It is because the independent voters have an impact on the results.

Now, you might be thinking this would be a great non-partisan issue for our commissioners, our state delegates and state senators to take up to ensure more Marylander voters can be heard. Unfortunately, they would probably consider this a minor point and are too busy plotting on ways to increase our taxes and fees. In my opinion, that is all they care about, power and money and a forced two party government. Change in Maryland voting laws is way overdue.

One can only hope that one day, we will remove judicial positions (and law enforcement) away from partisan politics and let ALL voters decide. That would remove another flaw in the system that many feel is already rigged.

Thank you,
Ron Verbos

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County Times
St. Mary's County • Calvert County

Deputies Make Arrests Following Stolen Vehicle Pursuit

On Monday, May 20, 2024, at approximately 1:30 a.m., a motor vehicle was stolen from a Great Mills, Maryland residence. At approximately 2:47 p.m., Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office (SMCSO) attempted to initiate a traffic stop for the stolen vehicle at the Three Notch Road and Mechanicsville Road intersection in Mechanicsville. The vehicle operator refused to stop and continued traveling north on Three Notch Road to elude police. The stolen motor vehicle caused a motor vehicle collision on Three Notch Road near Golden Beach Road.

The motor vehicle collision involved the

stolen vehicle and four additional vehicles. Three suspects, aged 15, 16, and 22, were transported to the hospital for precautionary measures. Additionally, occupants of the other involved vehicles were transported to local hospitals for non-life-threatening injuries.

The investigation into the stolen vehicle and motor vehicle collision is ongoing.

Anyone with information about the stolen vehicle or who may have witnessed the collision or any events leading up to it is asked to contact Deputy First Class Max Schell at 301-475-4200, ext. 8161, or Max.Schell@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Lexington Park Man Arrested in Hit and Run

On Saturday, May 18, 2024, Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to a call for a motor vehicle accident with injuries in the 21000 block of Great Mills Road. Several witnesses reported the operator of one vehicle had fled the scene of the accident on foot.

Upon arrival, deputies discovered a head-on collision involving two vehicles. The operator of the at-fault vehicle was confirmed to have left the scene. Witnesses provided information to the deputies, who then, through a subsequent search, located and identified Patrick Shawn Daly Jr., 35, of Lexington Park, as the driver who fled.

The driver of the second vehicle sustained injuries and was transported to MedStar St. Mary's Hospital for treatment.



Patrick Shawn Daly, Jr.

County Government Operations for Memorial Day

All St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Monday, May 27, 2024, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Tuesday, May 28, 2024.

The May 27 closure includes:

- All three St. Mary's County Libraries (Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park)
- All three Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), and there will be no home-delivered meals
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS)
- Department of Recreation & Parks indoor programs and facilities (exclusions below)
- The six Convenience Centers and the

St. Andrews Landfill

- The Animal Adoption & Resource Center

The following SMCG operations will be open on May 27:

- Great Mills Pool (11 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- Wellness & Aquatics Center (6 a.m. – 12 p.m.)
- The St. Clements Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum (open for visitors from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)
- The Wicomico Shores Golf Course and Riverview Restaurant

For more information on SMCG programs and operations, please visit: stmaryscountymd.gov.

Jury Convicts Man for Kidnapping and False Imprisonment

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that a St. Mary's County Jury found Joshua Terrell Trippett, 28, of Lusby, Maryland, guilty of kidnapping and false imprisonment for an incident that occurred on November 16, 2023.

"The defendant kidnapped a car dealership employee under the guise of a vehicle test drive. He drove dangerously and refused to return to the dealership despite the victim's multiple pleas to do so. The defendant maliciously exploited the employee's good faith. Preying on the trust of others is reprehensible, and I hope the verdict brings the victim a sense of justice," said State's Attorney Sterling.

The defendant faces a maximum penalty of 30 years in prison and will continue to be held without bond pending a sentencing hearing.

Detective Andrew Burgess of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office was the lead investigator.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Sarah



Joshua Terrell Trippett

Proctor prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

The Honorable Joseph M. Stalanonis presided over the case.



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Legal Notices

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Leonardtown Mayor and Town Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 4:15 pm at the Town Hall, 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD to hear comments on Resolution No. 2-24 request for Annexation of three parcels of real property owned by Cedar Lane Senior Living Community III, Inc., as follows: 1) Tax Map 40, Grid 6, Parcel 71, Tax Identification No. 03-036065, consisting of 25,894± square feet of land; 2) Tax Map 41, Grid 1, Parcel 220, Tax Identification No. 03-017044, consisting of 3.9100± acres of land; and 3) Tax Map 40, Grid 6, Parcel 133, Tax Identification No. 03-040186, consisting of 1.3400± acres of land, which properties are contiguous and adjacent to the corporate boundaries of the Town of Leonardtown.

All interested parties are encouraged to attend or to submit written comments by 3:00 p.m. on June 10, 2024 to the Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Special accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities upon request.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

COMMISSIONERS OF LEONARDTOWN NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Leonardtown Mayor and Town Council will hold a public hearing on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 4:30 pm at the Town Hall, 22670 Washington Street, Leonardtown, MD to hear comments on Resolution No. 3-24 request for Annexation of a parcel of real property consisting of 19.51± acres of land shown on Tax Map 41, Grid 1, Parcel 195, Tax Identification No. 03-016781, and owned by Alfred S. Mattingly and Joan C. Mattingly, which property is contiguous and adjacent to the corporate boundaries of the Town

All interested parties are encouraged to attend or to submit written comments by 3:00 p.m. on June 10, 2024 to the Commissioners of Leonardtown, P.O. Box 1, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Special accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities upon request.

By Authority: Laschelle E. McKay, Town Administrator

If you would like to place a legal notice,
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or email aldailey@countytimes.net

County Times
St. Mary's County - Calvert County

High School Teacher Claims Transgender Status

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Kenneth Rountree, a teacher of British literature and mythology at Chopticon High School recently announced that he was a transwoman and wanted to be referred to as Sinead Rountree by both students and staff.

"I have known that I was a trans woman for quite some time," Rountree wrote in a letter to staff and students. "I will occasionally dress differently, and will be asking to be referred to as Ms. Rountree or just Rountree by students," the teacher wrote. "You [other teachers] may either call me the same or Sinead if students are not around.

"I fully understand that people will slip up and call me by my legal name, but I appreciate you making the effort."

Rountree made the announcement near the end of the school year, after students who took the British literature class had become used to calling him Mr. Rountree.

"It's only natural that students might have questions," Rountree wrote. "Though I might be changing the way I dress and the way [to which] I'm referred, the details of those questions will largely be private.

"I think most students are worried about

the end of the year and will not worry themselves about an English teacher they likely do not even know."

Rountree said the message was written so that other teachers would "be prepared" in case of questions from students.

"I only ask that you request students refer to me in the same manner of respect due to any staff member in this building."

In the letter Rountree stated their preferred pronouns were she/they.

When asked about what restroom facilities Rountree could use as well as any discipline towards anyone who did not refer to them as they wished, Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith gave a curt answer.

"All of our buildings have dedicated private staff restrooms for use by staff members only," Smith told The County Times. "All students are held to the student code of conduct.

"SMCPS is federally mandated to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, in part, prohibits discrimination in the workplace on the basis of sex. In 2020, the Supreme Court held that this protection also extends to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in *Bostock v. Clayton County*. That is SMCPS's official statement."

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Commissioners, MetCom Mull Solutions for Failing Septic Systems



An example of a package plant for waste water treatment

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

There are communities of small size throughout St. Mary's County that are miles away from the nearest public water and sewer services, yet some of the septic systems continue to fail as they age and the Metropolitan Commission (MetCom) has been looking for ways to solve the problem for years.

At a joint meeting between the county's public water and sewer service provider and the Commissioners of St. Mary's County this week, a potential solution was presented.

"Package treatment plants are really good for small communities and individual properties," said MetCom Executive Director George Erichsen. "If you look at all of the communities we've identified... they all qualify."

Erichsen said a package treatment plant is currently in use at the Charlotte Hall Veterans Home to provide service.

There are 20 such communities, Erichsen said, spread throughout St. Mary's that could benefit from package plant usage there.

The systems are easy to install, he said, are odor free and can be adjusted to handle sewer flows as low as .002 million gallons per day or as high as half-a-million gallons

per day.

The package plants, which are miniaturized versions of their much larger counterparts designed to services whole cities or towns, can be staffed for just two to three hours per day to ensure they function, according to MetCom.

The veterans home plant, Erichsen said, was "very quiet" and "non-invasive," while Commissioner President James "Randy" Guy, who had also seen it in operation, said the ponds into which the plants discharged treated water that "was as clear as could be."

Package plants necessitated having the sludge they removed from waste water disposed of elsewhere.

"It's not just the physical plant," Erichsen said. "You have to be able to dispose of it."

"When the sludge gets generated at the end you have to have a place to dispose of it."

The sludge would have to be disposed of in either a landfill, Erichsen said, or applied to a site.

"They typically last 50 years as long as they are well maintained," Erichsen said of the package plants.

Package plants are self-contained and pre-manufacture, he said.

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County to Move on Skate Park Improvements



Nicolet Skate Park

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

County-owned skate parks — located at Nicolet Park in Lexington Park and one soon to be located in Chaptico — are set to get improvements now that the county has received funding from the state to the tune of nearly a quarter-of-a-million dollars.

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County approved an application for the funds back in March from the state's Program Open Space and the state's Board of Public Works approved the request at its May 1 meeting.

The county agreed to accept \$274,000 of the funding in addition to the \$850,000 already budgeted with county tax payer money in the capital construction budget, according to county finance documents.

The total cost to renovate the Nicolet Park location, to include a new concrete skate pad, and build the one at Chaptico Park is \$1.2 million.

"We are well on our way," said Arthur Shepherd, director of the Department of Recreation and Parks regarding the momen-

tum of the projects. "Hopefully, we'll get all that together soon for our final construction proposal [for Chaptico]."

Nicolet Park will receive the first of the renovation work, though, Shepherd said.

That work will be to expand the existing park out to Bunker Hill Drive, Shepherd said, and then the renovation work will begin.

Shepherd explained that, in the final fiscal analysis, the county would be paying about 10 percent of the cost for the total project while the state would be paying about 90 percent.

"So, a 90/10 split; that's a heck of a deal," said Commissioner Mike Hewitt.

The facility at Chaptico Park already has a BMX track, Shepherd said, and the prospect of adding a skate park there was an exciting one for local recreation opportunities.

"There are bikes, skates and skateboards at Nicolet Park," Shepherd said of the multiple uses at the Lexington Park location.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Survey: Blue Crab Numbers Down Again



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The state's latest numbers on the native hard crab population show another drop in female crabs and crabs as a whole across the Chesapeake Bay region.

Local watermen in St. Mary's County are reporting that crabbing right now is slow going indeed.

"Nobody's doing very well right now," said John "Willy" Dean, president of the St. Mary's County Watermen's Association. "It's slim pickings."

Currently the native crab population are shedding, Dean said, and as such are not "potting well."

Moreover, cool winds from the east have lowered temperatures in the water and recent rains have reduced its salinity.

Crabs tend to thrive in warmer, salty water. "We'll see what happens after this latest shed," Dean said. "There's an old watermen's saying about that wind that the east is least and the west is best."

The Chesapeake Bay Blue Crab Winter Dredge Survey, a cooperative effort between the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) was released May 22.

It estimates there are 317 million blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay in 2024, compared to 323 million crabs last year.

The number of spawning age female crabs decreased from 152 million crabs in 2023 to 133 million crabs in 2024, but is still well above the management threshold of 72.5 million crabs, according to a statement from the Department of Natural Resources.

The threshold indicates whether the female crab population is being overfished or not.

Adult male crabs also experienced a slight decrease from 55 million crabs in 2023 to 46 million crabs in 2024.

The number of juvenile crabs in the Chesapeake Bay has been below average for the past four years, but rose to 138 million juvenile crabs in 2024. Blue crab reproduction is naturally variable and influenced by many factors such as oceanic conditions, available nursery habitat, predation, and other environmental impacts.

"An increase in juvenile recruitment is certainly welcome news, and the stock and population as a whole remains healthy,"

said Maryland DNR Fishing and Boating Services Director Lynn Fegley. "However, the continued relatively low recruitment numbers warrant a closer look at our approach moving forward."

Dean said he and other watermen would watch closely what the state would do next.

"I'm sure they're going to have meetings on it," Dean said. "Our new regulations don't go into effect until July 1."

The study reported that consecutive years of low juvenile abundance prompted the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee to plan a new stock assessment for blue crabs, which will begin this summer. The new assessment will allow fishery managers to take an in-depth look at their understanding of the ecology of this species, how it is modeled, and whether the reference points used for management should be revised.

Mandy Bromilow, DNR's blue crab program manager, noted there has not been an overall reexamination of the data that contributed to the 2011 stock assessment on blue crabs in the Chesapeake Bay.

"We haven't had a real evaluation of the assumptions we have in the model, and there are new analytical methods that could be applied to the data," she said. The stock assessment is set to be completed and published in March 2026.

In the meantime, the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee will review the survey results for this year and provide their scientific advice for management. Following their advice, DNR will begin discussions with the state's Blue Crab Industry Advisory Committee to provide guidance concerning management options for 2024 that promotes the health and sustainability of the Chesapeake Bay blue crab population and its fisheries.

The Winter Dredge Survey has been conducted cooperatively by Maryland and Virginia since 1990, and the results are reviewed annually in an effort to have consistent management efforts across the jurisdictions. Throughout the survey, biologists use dredge equipment to capture, measure, record and release blue crabs at 1,500 sites throughout the Chesapeake Bay from December through March.

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Commissioners Pass Tax Increase with Operating Budget



Commissioner Eric Colvin



Commissioner Mike Hewitt

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

With the passage of the fiscal 2025 budget this week by a majority vote of the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, residents will see their income tax rate increase to the maximum allowable under state law.

Four out of five commissioners voted to increase the income tax rate to 3.2 percent in order mostly to raise revenue to increase teacher salaries to match the requirements of the state's Blueprint for Education, which requires base teacher salaries to reach \$60,000 by 2026.

Commissioner Mike Hewitt was the lone commissioner to vote against the tax increase; he had been against the increase throughout the late budget process.

The entire fiscal 2025 budget is \$330.1 million, with \$134.3 million going to the county Board of Education.

Hewitt did vote to approve tax increases for the volunteer fire departments in Ridge, Leonardtown and Mechanicsville to 5.6 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

The sheriff's office received the second largest portion of the county's operating budget at \$66.5 million, while the Department of Public Works and Transportation received \$25.4 million.

Commissioner Eric Colvin said the budget process was not an easy one this year; he was the one who proposed increasing the

income tax rate to 3.2 percent.

"Although it wasn't unanimous, every single commissioner up here spent time working on the budget," Colvin said. "And from here we move on, we're one board, we move forward."

Colvin said the budget was "forward looking" and that it supported education and public safety.

"It is a good budget," Colvin said. "It wasn't an easy budget; it's a fiscally conservative budget... in that we took the steps we needed to take and we minimized the impact on our residents."

Though the property tax rate remained the same at .8478 per \$100 of assessed value but with increased property value assessments — sometimes as high as 25 percent higher this year — increases in property tax payments are virtually assured for most home owners.

In all property tax revenue is estimated to increase by \$3.2 million to \$133.6 million in the new budget.

Hewitt disagreed with Colvin's assessment. "I didn't vote for this one, it doesn't mean that I don't support everything in it," Hewitt said. "I made it known I do not support a tax increase."

"I still believe times are too tough; we still need to get through this Presidential election to find out which way this country's going."

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9:30-10:30 a.m.

Planning Ahead

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Presented by: Rachael Okun, LCSW-C, Hospice of St. Mary's County

11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Mission BBQ Lunch provided - 12:30 p.m.

Informational Displays & Health Screenings include:

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital - Blood Pressure and Body Composition Screenings

Lions Club - Vision Screenings

St. Mary's County Health Department

St. Mary's County Recreation & Parks

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For more information, contact Sarah Miller

Phone: 301-475-4200, ext. 1073 - Email: sarah.miller@stmaryscountymd.gov

Hollywood Housing Project Approved

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

In a split vote the county planning commission approved a concept site plan for an 18-town house project on Mervell Dean Road in the Hollywood Town Center, over some community opposition to the project over traffic congestion concerns.

Among the conditions for the approval of the project from the planning commission was to have the Board of Zoning Appeals approve a variance to allow the developer of the project to reduce the required amount of open space from 50 percent of the lot area to 20 percent to allow for more parking space there.

The owner of the project and the site is FDR Holdings LLC, represented by Jay Hopson of J. Hopson Consulting, LLC.

The project consists of 3.7 acres in the residential mixed-use zone on K and R Way just off Mervell Dean Road; Hollywood is outside the county's main development district of Lexington Park but is its own county-designated growth area.

Rick Benefield, owner of FDR LLC, said the developer had taken some of the planning commission's suggestions to improve the project site, to include more sidewalk and curbing as well as a bus stop and increase the size of the project's playground area.

"We believe we had a pretty good shot at the appeals board for that reduced open space," Benefield said at the May 20 plan-



Artist's rendering of the planned townhouses

ning board hearing.

The hearing for the project was continued from March.

"I've lived in that area for almost 40 years," said Hollywood resident Rick Wood, speaking on the project. "I'm very familiar with the traffic...my biggest concern is kids in the neighborhood walking up to the dollar store or the ice cream place.

"The county's going to have some big responsibilities on that county road."

Mervell Dean Road is often used by people

who want to get off of Route 235 headed north, Wood said, only adding to the traffic congestion on the narrow community road there. Lillian Mattingly, though, said she liked the idea of a "walkable town center" and believed the project could be beneficial in providing affordable housing for young people looking to make St. Mary's County their home.

"My only concern is overdevelopment," Mattingly said. "Putting a 10-pound sack in a five-pound box."

That section of Mervell Dean Road has

seen rapid growth in the past several years and is already a compact community; there are also plans to build several shops behind the popular Bruster's Ice Cream shop there.

Five members of the planning commission voted to approve the concept site plan while one member, Joe Van Kirk, voted in opposition.

The board chair Howard Thompson abstained from the vote.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

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Jaymi Sterling
State's Attorney for St. Mary's County

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“I MADE IT KNOWN I DO NOT SUPPORT A TAX INCREASE. I STILL BELIEVE TIMES ARE TOO TOUGH.”

COMMISSIONER MIKE HEWITT ON VOTE AGAINST THE FISCAL 2025 BUDGET



LOCAL 5
Town house project approved in Hollywood



LOCAL 8
Crab numbers down again



ON THE COVER
St. Mary's celebrates Memorial Day

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St. Mary's County Circuit Court Judge, 7th Judicial Circuit
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WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, MAY 23 PM Thunderstorms Hi: 80° Lo: 65°	FRI, MAY 24 AM Showers Hi: 82° Lo: 64°	SAT, MAY 25 Scattered Storms Hi: 81° Lo: 65°	SUN, MAY 26 Partly Cloudy Hi: 82° Lo: 66°
MON, MAY 27 Scattered Storms Hi: 78° Lo: 60°	TUE, MAY 28 Mostly Sunny Hi: 76° Lo: 60°	WED, MAY 29 PM Showers Hi: 73° Lo: 56°	THU, MAY 30 Sunny Hi: 72° Lo: 57°



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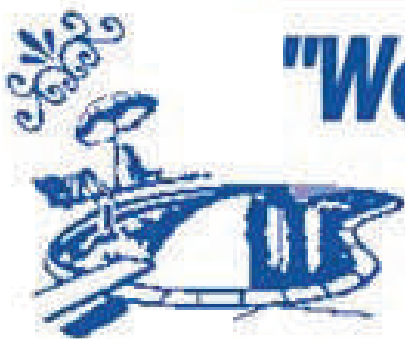
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