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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2025

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**Zoning Ordinance
Passes on Split Vote**

**School Board Surveys
Teachers, Support Staff**

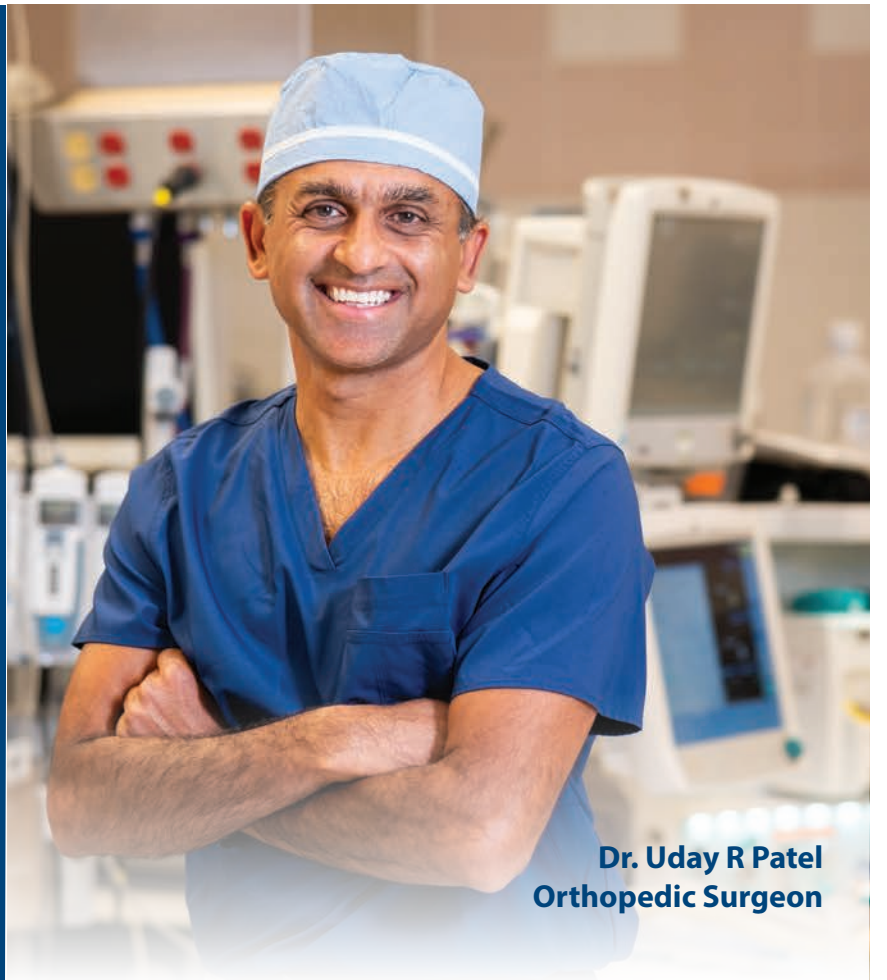
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“...AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF STUDENTS SAID THAT OUR TEACHERS ARE LACKING SUPPORT.”

STUDENT MEMBER OF THE BOARD GRACE MINAKOWSKI



LOCAL 4
Commissioners approve zoning ordinance update



LOCAL 7
School board looks to elementary school safety



ON THE COVER 5
High winds lash Calvert County

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, FEB 20	FRI, FEB 21	SAT, FEB 22	SUN, FEB 23
 Cloudy Hi: 30° Lo: 24°	 Sunny Hi: 39° Lo: 23°	 Mostly Sunny Hi: 41° Lo: 26°	 Sunny Hi: 47° Lo: 30°
MON, FEB 24	TUE, FEB 25	WED, FEB 26	THU, FEB 27
 Partly Cloudy Hi: 51° Lo: 38°	 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 55° Lo: 38°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 56° Lo: 38°	 PM Showers Hi: 53° Lo: 36°

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Zoning Ordinance Update Approved on 3-2 Vote

Developer Agreements Prove Controversial

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

After more than two years of meetings and rewrites, in the end the final vote on the update of the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance hinged on a new provision that allows for the commissioners to get concessions from developers in exchange for exceeding zoning requirements.

The idea when it was introduced last year was called a Community Benefit agreement or CDBA and was touted as one way for the county to snag coveted data centers for economic development.

When the vote finally came after a Feb. 18 commissioner public hearing, Commissioner Catherine Grasso suggested a name change to Community Enhancement District (CED). All of the commissioners went along with that.

But it was Grasso's motion that the new overlay district only be allowed in industrial zones that drew the controversy. The proposal presented at the hearing would have allowed the agreements in commercial and institutional zones as well.

Commissioner Vice President Todd Ireland offered an amendment that would restore commercial and also add mixed use development to the zones in which the new CEDs would be allowed.

Commissioner Mike Hart said Ireland's proposal would allow developers to get agreements that would allow a big increase in housing density in then mixed-use zones.

Ireland then amended his motion to cap any residential development created in a CED to no more than four units per acre, the maximum allowed in town centers under the new zoning ordinance.

Commissioner President Buddy Hance supported allowing the agreements in commercial zones. He said if a developer was proposing a large shopping center, it would allow the county to get some concessions from them.

Hance said town centers encourage walkability, and allowing CEDs in mixed use developments would aid that goal.

The amendment was not enough to dissuade Grasso and Hart from opposing Ireland's motion, and they voted against the overall zoning ordinance.

The formerly called CBAs drew comments and opposition during the public hearing from several speakers. Former planning and zoning director Gret Bowen



Commissioner Vice President Todd Ireland

was one who urged the commissioners to stick with only industrial zones for the overlay zoning agreements. Other speakers said the agreements were too open-ended and invited misuse.

The new zoning ordinance included a reduction in allowable density in town centers, including in the areas adjacent to the town centers. The maximum allowable density in town centers is capped at four units per area as opposed to the previous 24 allowable units per acre.

"There is a very significant reduction in density potential I the current regulations," said Planner III/Zoning Wil Hager, the lead staffer in the zoning ordinance update.

In all, 21 people spoke and the majority praised the commissioners and staff for restricting development.

The commissioners also heard from representatives of several watershed groups, including Hunting Creek and Mill Creek and the American Chestnut Land Trust (Parker's Creek) urging further protections of the county's streams.

In addition to the vote on the zoning ordinance, the commissioners unanimously approved ten other resolutions involving the county's master plan and town center plans. Included was the elimination of architectural review committees for the town centers. The county has been having difficulty getting quorums for most of the committees. In the future staff will conduct the architectural reviews.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

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Falling Tree Damages Homes

Woman Rescued by Firefighters



By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

High winds on Sunday afternoon, Feb. 16 caused trees to fall on two houses in northern Calvert County. In one of the incidents the home's occupant and a pet were trapped and had to be extricated by the North Beach Volunteer Fire Department.

The department reported on its website, "The most significant incident occurred at 1718 hours (5:18 p.m.) when crews were dispatched for a tree on a house with entrapment in the 7400 block of Dakota Avenue in Chesapeake Beach. Units arrived to find a

large tree that had fallen into a single-family dwelling with the dwelling's sole occupant and one of the pets trapped under the tree and debris of the house. The crew from Squad 1 quickly accessed the occupant and was able to extricate the occupant and the pet. The occupant was transported to Capitol Regional Trauma Center by Paramedic Ambulance 219 with non-life-threatening injuries. The pet was uninjured and was taken in by neighbors."

On the department's Facebook page, Sean Stone posted, "Thank you fire department. That was my stepmom's (Jamine) house. I appreciate you taking her to hospital. Also,

to the neighbor who got her dogs today and another coming by my house to let me know. She is getting discharged tonight. I told her she can stay with us. Looks like the house is totaled. Tomorrow (I'm) going to get a bed and couch to try to make it semi-normal. But thank you again for taking care of her (and taking her) to safety. She said she was stuck and must have been scary."

A GoFundMe account has been established to assist her at <https://www.gofundme.com/help-janine-rebuild-after-tree-disaster>

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Teachers, Staff Respond to Survey

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of Education on Jan. 30 surveyed teachers and support staff. The survey said it was “part of our commitment to community and staff engagement.”

Board President Jana Post presented the survey results at their Feb. 13 meeting. She said, “These results will not only help the board during this budgeting process but will guide us as we work with (Superintendent) Dr. Townsel on the future of CCPS!”

The teacher’s results are as follows:

- *Q: Do you feel the student/teacher ratio in your classroom is manageable?* Yes, 66 percent; No, 38 percent; NA, 12 percent.
- *Q: Do you feel the student/teacher ratio in your classroom is manageable?* Yes 34 percent; No, 25 percent; NA, 40 percent.
- *Q: Should social emotional learning be treated like an intervention where we target students’ SEL instruction based on their needs?* Yes, 63 percent; No, 28 percent; NA, 9 percent.
- *Q: Do you support giving a student a 50% for turning in no work?* Yes, 12

percent; No, 84 percent; NA, 4 percent.

- *Q: Are there CCPS-purchased instructional technologies or programs available to you that you have never used?* Yes, 45 percent; No, 38 percent; NA, 16 percent.
- *Q: Are there technologies or programs you do not have access to that would make you more productive or better support your students?* Yes, 47 percent; No, 37 percent; NA, 17 percent.
- *Q: Are there technologies or programs you do not have access to that would make you more productive or better support your students?* Yes, 28 percent; No, 30 percent; NA, 41 percent.
- *Q: Is the collaboration with the technology integration specialist enhancing your use of technology in writing lesson plans, while also challenging the students to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the material through those assignments?* Yes, 46 percent; No, 35 percent; NA, 19 percent.
- *Q: Do you need more help in the classroom?* Yes, 51 percent; No, 45 percent; NA, 4 percent.

Post felt the overwhelming response about grading needed further attention.

The support staff questions are as follows:

- *Q: Are there aspects of your job you feel could or should be handled by someone else?* Yes, 34 percent; No, 55 percent; NA, 11 percent.
- *Q: Are there CCPS-purchased technologies or programs relevant to your work that you have never used?* Yes, 18 percent; No, 61 percent; NA, 22 percent.
- *Q: Are there technologies or programs you do not have access to that would make you more productive in your role? (If you’re unsure about the access, please answer “yes” and explain what the technology could.* Yes, 25 percent; No, 53 percent; NA, 23 percent.
- *Q: Are there time-consuming tasks in your role that could be revised, improved, or automated?* Yes, 37 percent; No, 50 percent; NA, 13 percent.

Board Vice President Lisa Grenis said, “Our goal is to ensure that CCPS staff has a voice in the budget process. This board values our employees. We value your dedication to our students and are committed to provide the support you need to better out system.”



School board Vice President Lisa Grenis

She added, “Teachers said more help needed in the classroom in elementary school. From the survey results it is clear more help is needed at the elementary and middle school levels. By providing the services for our youngest learners, we can potentially alleviate the challenges of issues that occur in the middle and high schools.”

dickmyers@countytimes.net

School Board Urged to Protect Immigrant Children, Parents

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

With the Trump Administration following through with its promise to crack down on illegal immigration, schools across the county have expressed concern they may be targeted. The Calvert County Board of Education has been challenged to protect immigrant children and their parents.

Joseph Cormier of Owings, a special education advocate and frequent speaker at school board meetings, spoke on the subject at the Feb. 13 school board meeting. He said, “The new presidential administration announced it would reverse previous guidelines and now allow federal immigration agencies to carry out enforcement at places like churches and schools. This decision is deeply troubling and has created fear and uncertainty for many of our immigrant neighbors.”

Cormier added, “As parents and community members, we stand with our immigrant family neighbors. Schools should be a trusted place where everyone should feel safe and not a place of fear. While we work to understand what this change means, we want to be clear. Our neighbors deserve to feel safe and supported. We’re calling on you to take a stand in protecting the dignity and safety of all the members of our community.”

Cormier told the school board, “We

urge you to publicly reaffirm that our local schools, our trusted institutions, remain spaces of safety and inclusion.

“We also encourage you to support policies that uphold the rights of our immigrant neighbors and ensure that they’re not subjected to unnecessary harm or fear. We hope to see your commitment to ensuring that all members of our community feel safe, valued, and supported. No child should be worried that their parents are going to get picked up on a school bus line. No student should worry about not being able to go to a sport because their parents might get picked up. We need to make this a safe place for our students and our families.”

Cormier also noted, “You’re going to hear from all these supervisors here about the budget (see separate stories). I need you to remember that these kids and these staff members are not just numbers on a spreadsheet. We can’t just say that there’s 37 hours of speech at this school. We’re going to need one speech pathologist because it’s not just service hours, it’s evaluations. It’s meeting with teachers to do differentiated instruction. It’s IEP meetings, it’s reporting, it’s Medicaid billing. It’s all those things. It’s more than just numbers on a spreadsheet, and we need to take care of these kids.”

As is the school board’s practice, they did not respond to the comments.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Students Log in on Budget Priorities

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

As the Calvert County Board of Education reviews the school superintendent’s proposed budget, the Student Member of the Board (SMOB) Grace Minakowski has presented her peer’s priorities.

Minakowski, at the board’s Feb. 13 meeting, said, “I met virtually with my Student Advisory Council, hosted a roundtable discussion at our January Calvert Association of Student Councils meeting, sent emails to club leaders from every high school and also created a shareable survey to collect concern and feedback related to the budget.”

Minakowski added two caveats. “No. 1, I fully recognize that I’m a student and I am not a taxpayer and my advocacy in no way seeks to undermine the priorities of our staff or parents. And secondly, I also understand that I am a student, and I have so much to learn about this process. So, I hope I can embody that role and ask questions, which I’m sure many members of the public have as well.”

She said, “Our current budget situation requires our board to put people, i.e., our staff and students first. When I ask students what in our school system requires fiscal attention, an overwhelming majority of students said that our teachers are lacking support. And when that message comes from students themselves, it is a testament to the ways that our educators and staff bend over backwards for our school community.”

She added, “It is a basic market princi-

ple that paying our teachers fair salaries in Calvert and continuing to pay them fair salaries in Calvert will attract new teachers to our system and improve attainment. And some of the complaints I heard are that teachers have to spend their own money on space heaters and fans to keep the climate in their classroom bearable. And we also feel as students that teachers should be compensated justly for their sponsorship over coaches or clubs, and they should be equipped with curriculum aligned textbooks and materials for experiments and activities.”

She continued, “Secondly, on the student side, our student programs need support. Many students share that what they’re not asking for is new laptops, smart boards, programs, or flashy technology. Simply put, students are asking for support for the arts, STEM, and sports. These are the places and spaces where students connect one another with one another. One of the things I hope the board can look at this year is the money we designate for after-school activity funds, which principals can use to help students who can’t afford to participate in extracurricular programming to overcome that financial barrier.”

She added, “I also hope we can discuss areas that we invest in which are not yielding the intended benefit for students and look at how we can reinvest that back into student programs.”

dickmyers@countytimes.net

School Board Sees Priority for Elementary Safety Advocates

High School Vape Detectors Discussed

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County elementary schools do not have safety advocates, although there are some school resource officers supplied by the sheriff's office. School board member Melissa Goshorn says she has heard from the community about the value of safety officers and the other members seem to agree.

Whether they will be added to the budget for all or some of the 13 elementary schools before it's submitted to the county commissioners remains to be seen. The positions were discussed during a presentation on the Student Services portion of the budget during an almost four-hour meeting on Feb. 13. The school board has an additional budget work session scheduled for Feb. 20 and a budget decision meeting on Feb. 27.

"I've heard from many people that safety advocates are an invaluable part of our school system. And if we can try and get a safety advocate in every building, I think that that would really be a great support for our staff and our students," Goshorn said.

"We have only increased in safety advocates and that has been a priority for us to continue to do so. So, we are at staffing capacity for safety advocates and would love more," said Student Services Director

Cecelia Lewis.

The board asked for an estimate of how much the extra safety advocates will cost.

Earlier in the meeting the board was told that vape detectors have been installed at all middle schools but only in one bathroom in each of the four high schools. The board also asked for the cost of fully equipping the high schools.

Lewis said her budget includes "school counselors, pupil personnel workers, school nurses, school psychologists, school social workers, safety advocates, and home and hospital teachers."

She was asked about school psychologist vacancies. She said, "We very interested in hiring as many psychologists. Everybody on the tv please, send your friends. We unfortunately have been unable to hire and maintain school psychologists through the traditional route. We currently have four vacancies based on our allocation. But we do have four contracted psychologists, who are not filling those four vacancies because that was already set aside for additional support. But every school needs a school psychologist."

She was asked if salaries were the issue. She said, "We certainly have been looking at those types of potential reasons. Looking at the market, it is extremely competitive. A lot of school psychologists come from a clinical

background where there's a huge change when you shift to an educational market. So, we have some market demands that we don't have the ability to meet at a school level with the school system."

School board member Lisa Grenis, a former teacher, asked about substitutes. She said, "We're in the middle of a huge substitute shortage. What they're doing is taking substitutes and putting them into long-term positions, and that's creating shortages. But my understanding is that we used to, if a substitute covered five days, they would get paid for six. Do we still do that? And would that help ease the substitute shortage?"

Lewis responded, "During the pandemic, we actually put that incentive in place... because many times on Fridays and Mondays, we were not getting substitutes. So, in order to do five days, you would get additional pay. It crossed over Fridays and Mondays, Last year at some point, the actual hourly rate for substitutes increased. And when they increase that rate, they determined that the incentive was no longer necessary."

Why the shortage? Lewis said, "I think we have had a shortage for many years. So, we continue to have a shortage. With substitutes we've tried a lot of different things. We have a lot of substitutes on the books, but



Director of Student Services Cecelia Lewis

one of the benefits to substitutes is they can pick and choose when they want to work. So, if they don't want to work on a particular day, then they choose not to do that. And that's one of the reasons why they like to do that. So, we try to increase as many substitutes as we can. But certainly, our human resources department continues to work with our schools to try to determine what we might be able to do to increase the number of subs every day. We realize it's an issue."

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2025 Green Bag Appointments Delivered

Calvert Names Included in the Bag



Gov. Moore with the Green Bag.

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Governor Wes Moore on Feb. 18 announced the Moore-Miller Administration’s 2025 Green Bag Appointments. According to a press release, “The appointments reaffirm the administration’s commitment to maintaining Maryland’s historically diverse leadership on key boards and commissions across the state.” Secretary of Appointments Tisha Edwards delivered the appointments to the Maryland Senate.

Calvert County appointments include Superintendent of Schools Dr. Andrae Townsel to the Juvenile Services Education Board.

Janet Saunders Currie was appointed to the University of Maryland Medical System Corporation Board of Directors.

Celeste Junine Alexander-Frye was appointed to the College of Southern Maryland Board of Trustees.

Appointed to the Calvert County Board of Electrical Examiners and Supervisors were:

- David Lee Swann
- Robert Francis Heinrich
- Steven Schuster Jr.

Appointed to the Calvert County Board of License Commissioners were:

- Beth Elaine Swoap
- John Herman Smack
- Lewis A. Robinson

Jamil Stanley Jones was appointed to the Calvert County Plumbing Board.

The appointments are subject to approval by the Senate Executive Nominations Committee.

“I want to commend the more than 200 Marylanders who have raised their hands to serve our people through leadership roles on key boards and commissions,” said Gov. Moore. “These patriots define what it means to participate in progress. Together, we are building a stronger, more durable government that looks like the communities it serves and leads with excellence.”

The press release said, “The Moore-Miller Administration has continued its commitment to create a government that looks like the State of Maryland. To date, a total of 3,321 appointments have been made to the state’s boards and commissions. Of Governor Moore’s Green Bag appointees today, 51 percent are women and 63 percent are people of color.”

The administration will submit additional appointments in late February.

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of February 3, 2025 – February 9, 2025, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,131 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 48
- Disorderly: 14
- Domestic: 26
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 41
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 1034
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 31
- Traffic Complaints: 56
- Traffic Stops: 434
- 911 Hang Ups: 56
- ARRESTS: 56

Damaged Property: 25-9697 On February 4, 2025, Deputy Gadwill responded to the Rod 'n Reel located at 4160 Mears Avenue in Chesapeake Beach, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised unknown suspect (s) defaced a concrete wall in the parking garage with red, black, and white spray paint sometime between 4 p.m. on Feb. 3 and 8:30 a.m. on Feb. 4. The estimated value of damaged property is unknown at this time.

Damaged Property: 25-10285 On February 6, 2025, DFC Savick responded to the 8900 block of Erie Ave in North Beach, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised unknown suspect (s) broke out the front passenger window on a vehicle parked outside residence sometime between 9:30 p.m. on Feb. 5 and 8 a.m. on Feb. 6. The estimated value of damaged property is \$100.

Damaged Property: 25-10907 On February 8, 2025, Deputy Gadwill responded to the North Beach Post Office located at 9132 Bay Avenue in North Beach, for the report of property destruction. The complainant advised an unknown suspect (s) put two holes in the wall near the mailroom. The estimated value of damaged property is unknown at this time.



Bobby James Endres

Disorderly Conduct:

25-10677 On February 7, 2025, DFC Shoemaker was on patrol in the area of the Patuxent Plaza Shopping Center in Solomons, where he observed **Bobby**

James Endres, 38 of Huntingtown, wanted for open warrants. Upon making contact with Endres, he began to flee. Endres was eventually taken into custody and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center where he was charged with Resisting Arrest, Disorderly Conduct and Obstructing and Hindering.

Theft: 25-11245 On February 9, 2025,

DFC Claggett responded to the 5900 block of Sunderland Drive in Sunderland, for the report of a theft. The complainant advised sometime between Feb. 6 and Feb. 9, a silver Hitachi air compressor was stolen from the residence. The estimated value of stolen property is \$1000.



Lionell Victor Garrison



Tawny Nicole Atkins

as 29-year old **Lionell Victor Garrison** of District Heights, claimed the purse belonged to his girlfriend. He was seen forcefully pulling the purse from the employee's hands. Further investigation revealed that while Garrison eventually returned the purse to the customer, several of her credit and gift cards were missing. In addition to the purse theft, Garrison and a female accomplice, 28-year-old **Tawny Nicole Atkins** of Chesapeake Beach, were captured on store surveillance stealing multiple items from Walmart. They exited the store without paying, bypassing all final points of sale. Inside the store, they had also abandoned a shopping cart filled with \$546 worth of merchandise. When questioned, Garrison became agitated and disorderly, causing a disturbance in front of customers. He was subsequently charged with Robbery, Disorderly Conduct, Theft: Less than \$100 (Shoplifting), Theft: Less than \$100, Obstructing and Hindering, Resisting/Interfering with Arrest, and Fraud—Personation to Avoid Prosecution. Atkins was charged with Theft: Less than \$100 (Shoplifting) and was released at the scene.

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

Theft: 25-10076

On February 5, 2025, Deputy MacWilliams responded to Walmart located at 10600 Town Center Blvd. in Dunkirk for a reported theft. The complainant stated that a customer had left her purse in a shopping cart, which was later retrieved by a Walmart employee and placed into store custody. A male suspect, who initially provided a false name but was later identified

as 29-year old **Lionell Victor Garrison** of District Heights, claimed the purse belonged to his girlfriend. He was seen forcefully pulling the purse from the employee's hands. Further investigation revealed that while Garrison eventually returned the purse to the customer, several of her credit and gift cards were missing. In addition to the purse theft, Garrison and a female accomplice, 28-year-old **Tawny Nicole Atkins** of Chesapeake Beach, were captured on store surveillance stealing multiple items from Walmart. They exited the store without paying, bypassing all final points of sale. Inside the store, they had also abandoned a shopping cart filled with \$546 worth of merchandise. When questioned, Garrison became agitated and disorderly, causing a disturbance in front of customers. He was subsequently charged with Robbery, Disorderly Conduct, Theft: Less than \$100 (Shoplifting), Theft: Less than \$100, Obstructing and Hindering, Resisting/Interfering with Arrest, and Fraud—Personation to Avoid Prosecution. Atkins was charged with Theft: Less than \$100 (Shoplifting) and was released at the scene.

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

Prince Frederick Man Pleads Guilty to Murder

Thomas Eugene Harris, II, 28, of Prince Frederick, pleaded guilty on Feb. 14 in Calvert County Circuit Court to first degree premeditated murder. Sentencing will occur on May 1, 2025, before Judge Mark S. Chandler.

The charges arose from an incident that occurred on February 15, 2024. Shaquille Quadry Braxton, 30, was found unresponsive in a field near Fairground Road in Prince Frederick. It was determined that he had been stabbed multiple times. He later died from his injuries.

Investigators from the Calvert County Sheriff's Office soon learned that the victim and Harris had gotten into an argument over the victim's attempts to visit his child. The mother of the child was in a relationship with Harris. When the victim went to see the child, Harris approached him and stabbed him with a knife. Harris then fled to Prince George's County with his girlfriend and the child. He later turned himself in to authorities.



Recardo Jerome Robert Futrell

Harris has been detained at the Calvert County Detention Center since the date of the incident. He is facing life imprisonment.

Press Release from Calvert County State's Attorney

Guilty Plea Entered to Animal Cruelty

Recardo Jerome Robert Futrell, 36, of Fort Washington, pled guilty on Feb. 14 to attempted aggravated animal cruelty. The charge stems from an incident on August 11, 2024, when a small dog was discovered abandoned inside a commercial-size dumpster at Mutual Elementary School on Ball Road in Port Republic.

An investigation by Calvert County Animal Control and the Calvert County Sheriff's Office revealed that Futrell intentionally threw the dog into the dumpster following a domestic dispute.

Futrell faces three years' incarceration and a \$1,000 fine. Sentencing is scheduled for May 14, 2025, at 1p.m. before the Honorable Mark W Carmean.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant State's Attorney Christopher Monte.



Recardo Jerome Robert Futrell

Press Release from Calvert County State's Attorney

Public Safety Issues Animal Safety Alert

In light of severe cold temperatures and weather forecasted in Calvert County, the Department of Public Safety has issued an animal safety alert effective through Friday, Feb. 21, 2025. During this period, animal owners or custodians are required to provide the following actions to protect their pets and livestock:

- Dogs and cats should be brought inside. If a dog or cat is left outside, they must have free access to a solid structure that is heated or is set against the prevailing winds and allows the dog or cat to maintain their core body temperature.
- Livestock and farm animals should have free access to protection from the weather that allows animals to maintain their core body temperature.

- Livestock and farm owners should provide access to additional food to allow animals to recover from the loss of additional calories.
- All animals outdoors must be continually monitored for signs of distress.
- All animals must have access to clean, unfrozen water at all times.

Failure to comply with these safety measures may result in penalties, including fines up to \$1,000 or 30 days in jail.

To report concerns, citizens may contact the Animal Control Division at 410-535-1600, ext. 2526, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. After hours, concerns may be reported to the non-emergency line at 410-535-3491.

Legal Notices

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
WATER AND SCIENCE ADMINISTRATION
Preliminary Decision to Grant Categorical Exclusion (CE #639)**

Project Name/Number: Beaches Water Co-op Reducing Lead in Drinking Water Service Line Replacement/DWBL-1087-05L

Project Applicant: Beaches Water Co-op

Project Location/County: 5901 Hillside Rd,
St. Leonard, Calvert County, MD 20685

Total Project Cost/Loan: \$1,500,000.00

Project Description: The proposed project involves the design and construction of waterlines and all necessary appurtenances to replace the existing aging and deteriorated water distribution system in the existing Beaches Water Co-op Community in Calvert County. The system was first installed in the 1930s and serves 800 homes with old galvanized and polyethylene piping and five water pumping stations. The piping has deteriorated due to age that has allowed lead contamination to seep into the water distribution system. The new piping will replace the existing old, deteriorating, and lead contaminated piping in the Beaches Water Co-op community. The proposed improvements will provide residents with safe and adequate drinking water, including fire protection.

The Beaches Water Co-op has applied for financial assistance under the Maryland Department of the Environment’s State Revolving Loan Fund for the proposed project as described above. In accordance with requirements for complying with the State Environmental Review Procedures (SERP) under COMAR 26.03.11 for such assistance, a review has been performed by the Department on the applicant’s request for a Categorical Exclusion from a comprehensive environmental review under SERP. The Department has determined that the proposed project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion pursuant to COMAR 26.03.11.04 because it involves minor rehabilitation of existing facilities and functional replacement of equipment or structures and will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. This determination is based upon a careful review of the supporting documentation provided by the applicant and other documents available to the Department. In concert with this preliminary determination, the Department has also found the project to be consistent with the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning policy in accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1992.27, and Maryland’s Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Policy, in accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1998.04.

As a result of the above determination, the applicant will not need to prepare and/or finalize an Environmental Information Document, and the Department is prepared to approve the applicant’s request for financial assistance without further environmental review.

Comments supporting or disagreeing with this preliminary decision may be submitted for consideration by writing to:

Rajiv Chawla, Division Chief
Region I Project Management Division
Engineering and Capital Projects Program
Maryland Department of the Environment
1800 Washington Boulevard
Baltimore, Maryland 21230

Written comments should be submitted within 20 days from the date of this notice. After the close of this twenty-day open review period, and upon evaluating any written comments received, the Department will make a final decision.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary’s Metropolitan Planning Organization, C-SMMPO, will conduct a Public Hearing virtually on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 10 a.m. to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on behalf of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) for MD 4 Corridor Improvements in Solomons/California.

The Meeting ID is 430 427 6617, the call-in number is (301) 715-8592, and the link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=85095997914>.

This public hearing is required by law to allow all interested parties the opportunity to present evidence and public comment regarding the C-SMMPO documents. A decision will be made solely on evidence and testimony presented during the public hearing. Public meetings are open to the public. Members of the press may attend.

Written comments, questions, and suggestions may be submitted on or before March, 10, 2025, to C-SMMPO, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD, 20650 or Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov. All timely submissions will be considered by the Calvert – St. Mary’s Metropolitan Planning Organization Council at the Public Hearing. Information submitted after the public hearing record is closed will not be considered.

An electronic copy of the plans may be requested by contacting Karly Maltby by phone (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507, via e-mail: Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov, or by visiting <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

Public Hearing Guidelines are subject to change. For more information on viewing, listening to, or submitting comments via telephone or video clip, please call (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507.

All content of these proceedings is subject to disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act. Photographic and electronic audio and visual broadcasting and recording devices are used during the meetings. These are public meetings and attendance at these meetings automatically grants St. Mary’s County Government permission to broadcast your audio and visual image. Any person requiring special arrangements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act shall notify the C-SMMPO no less than 72 hours prior to the date of the scheduled meeting so that necessary special arrangements can be made in order to facilitate participation.

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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, Feb 20

Song Circle

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
6-7:30 p.m.

Whether you're a musician, singer, or just love to hum along, this event is for you. Lead or learn folk and acoustic tunes in a casual, welcoming jam session. Bring your instrument, voice or enthusiasm. Spectators are welcome to come enjoy the music, energy and community spirit! 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Social Security Administration: Ask An Expert

Calvert Library, (Zoom)
Hosted by Charles County Public Library
5:30-6:30pm.

In this open forum, community residents will have the opportunity to ask questions about Social Security benefits. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Feb 21

Maritime Performance Series – ASH & ERIC L'ESPERANCE

Calvert Marine Museum
7 p.m.

Coming from the heart of New England, husband and wife duo Ash & Eric L'Esperance bring us songs that feel like a warm welcome at the end of the day. Performance is in the museum's Harms Gallery; doors open at 6 p.m. with beer and wine for sale. Tickets are \$20 online, up to one day prior and \$25 the day of the concert, online and at the door.

Urban Ag Farmer Meet-up

SMADC Office
15045 Burnt Store Road, Hughesville
5-7 p.n.

The Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC), a division of the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland (TCCSMD) invites urban agricultural farmers, gardeners, and

homesteaders to this meet-up. It will provide an opportunity for networking, sharing experiences, and learning from fellow farmers. Tickets are priced at \$10 per adult and include dinner. Kids are welcome at no additional cost, with a special coloring corner set up for them. Only 15 tickets are available, so don't miss your chance to connect with like-minded individuals

Sat, Feb 22

Pop-in with Poppie

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

Make your Saturday 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 the 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. Included with museum admission.

COSMIC Symphony Concert

Chesapeake Church
6201 Solomons Island Rd., Huntingtown
3 p.m.

Song & Dance will feature the vocal talents of their 2024 Young Artist Competition winner, Ellyanna Tyson, and an enchanting classical program including Tchaikovsky's overture from Romeo & Juliet and several of Brahms' Hungarian Dances.

Sun, Feb 23

Beyond the Displays: Artifact Stories

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

Join Lori for an insightful exploration of the museum's artifacts, uncovering their origins and significance. Discover the history behind the emblem from a paddle wheel boat, the tools found in the blacksmith shop,

and the Gov. R. M. McLane name board. Hear captivating stories about WWII's impact on the Solomons community and uncover hidden pictures within the museum murals. It's a unique opportunity to delve into local history and see these artifacts in a new light. Learn something new every tour. Included with museum admission.

Mon, Feb 24

Monday Night Movie Musings- Double Feature

Calvert Library (Zoom)
6:30-7:30 p.m.

This month's movies are: "Mikey and Nicky," and "Past Lives," both are available on Kanopy through Calvert Library. Watch either movie before the event and join us for a lively discussion on Monday night. Please register to receive an emailed link to the Zoom event an hour before it begins. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, Feb 25

Book Discussion

Calvert Library, (Online)
8-9 p.m.

The Seven Year Slip. An overworked book publicist with a perfectly planned future hits a snag when she falls in love with her temporary roommate. A link to the virtual discussion will be sent out to registrants the morning of the event. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Free for All: The Public Library: Film Premier & Discussion

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

Friends of Calvert Library partner with Calvert Library, Maryland Public Television and Indie Lens PBS to give you a chance to see this film before it debuts! Hear about how public libraries shaped the country and continue to be a sanctuary for Americans

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

Wed, Feb 26

Changing Careers Workshop

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

Learn how to navigate the process of changing your career path. Identify your strengths and transferable skills. How to begin the career-change process efficiently and effectively. 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Job Seeker Resources

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

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

Chess Club

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
5-6 p.m.

Enjoy playing chess? Looking to sharpen your chess skills? Come drop in and challenge new opponents! All skill levels and ages are welcome. Please bring a chess board along if you own one. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Spotting Financial Scams

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

Learn to spot scams and discover effective methods for preventing them. How can we navigate the digital world safely? 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

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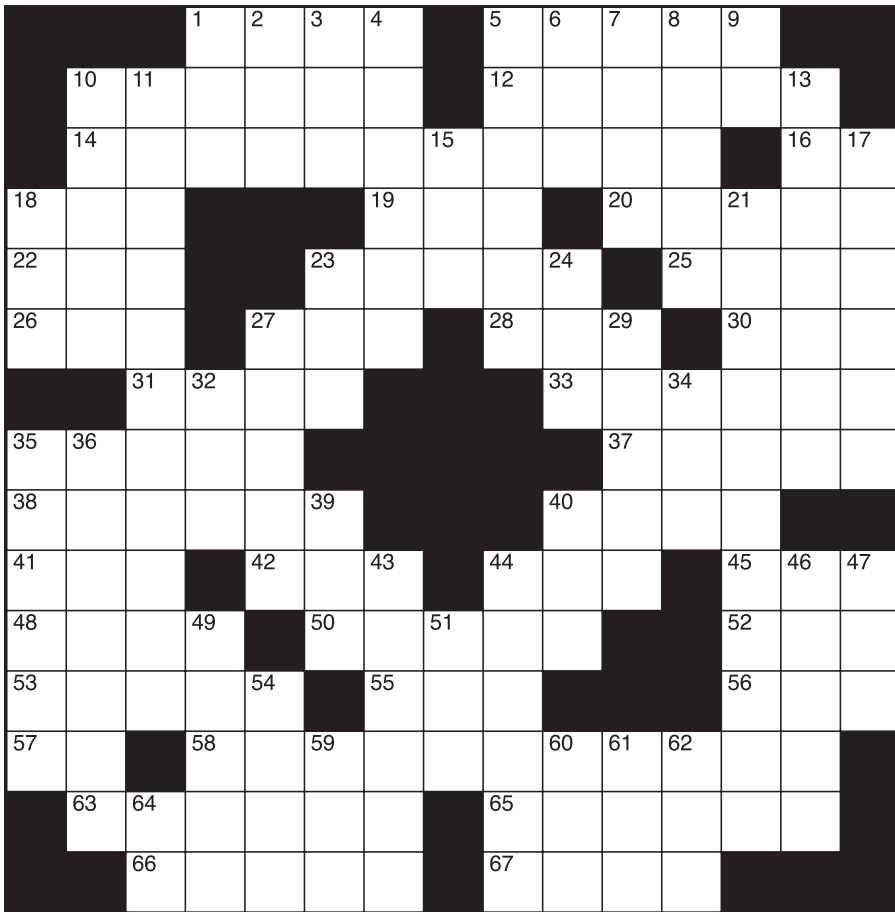
The County Times is a weekly newspaper providing news and information for the residents of St. Mary's and Calvert County. The County Times will be available on newsstands every Thursday. The paper is published by Southern Maryland Publishing Company, which is responsible for the form, content, and policies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

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



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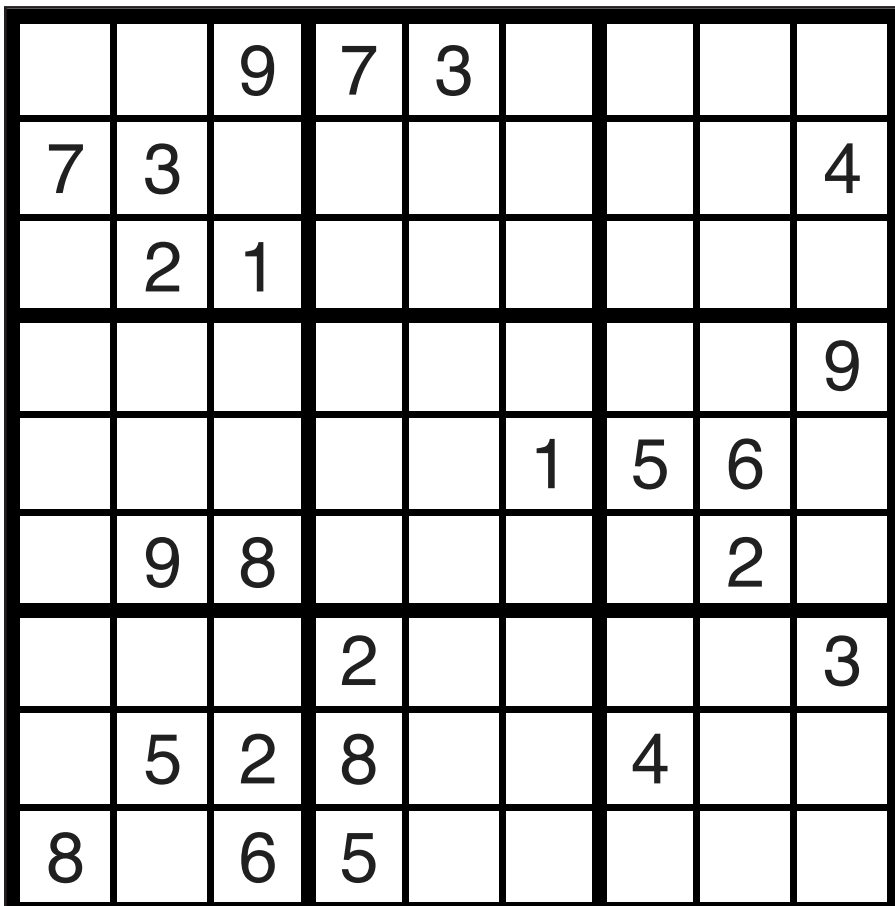


CLUES ACROSS

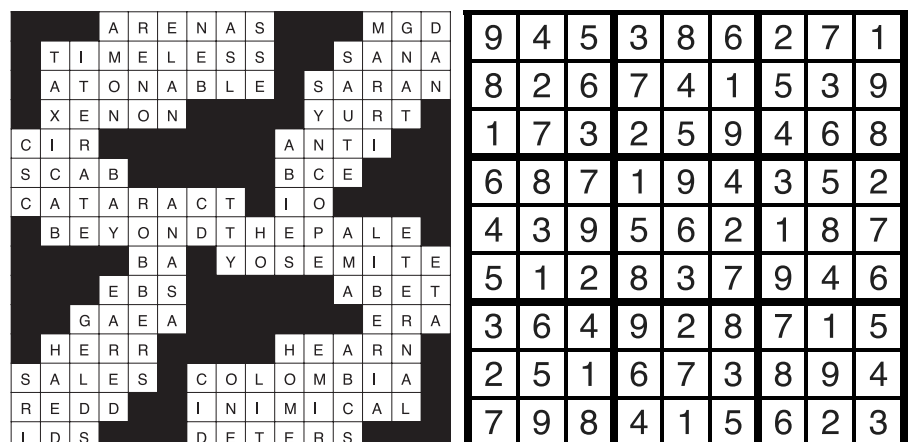
- 1. Tropical Asian plant
- 5. Yankees' slugger Judge
- 10. Helps to preserve food
- 12. Plant disease
- 14. One who predicts
- 16. Equally
- 18. Burundian franc
- 19. Pouch
- 20. Arizona city
- 22. Surround
- 23. Hard, heavy timber
- 25. Witnessed
- 26. They ___
- 27. French river
- 28. A way to drink
- 30. Small constellation
- 31. Peruse a written work
- 33. Type of wound
- 35. Plant of the goosefoot family
- 37. Evade or escape
- 38. A way to confine
- 40. Volcanic crater
- 41. Weekday
- 42. Women's service organization (abbr.)
- 44. Local area network
- 45. Sensory receptor
- 48. Posted
- 50. Tibetan pastry
- 52. Licensed for Wall Street
- 53. Very willing
- 55. Golf score
- 56. Consume
- 57. Touchdown
- 58. Tends to remind
- 63. In a way, smoothed
- 65. Poke holes in the ground
- 66. Herbaceous plants
- 67. Taiwanese river

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Body art
- 2. Boxing's GOAT
- 3. Film for posterity (abbr.)
- 4. Prayer
- 5. Calculating machine
- 6. Keyboard key
- 7. Outburst
- 8. Man-eating giants
- 9. New Hampshire
- 10. Type of sword
- 11. Counting
- 13. Pants style
- 15. Political action committee
- 17. U.S. government legislative branch
- 18. Civil Rights Act component
- 21. Contractors take one
- 23. Spanish soldier
- 24. A person's brother or sister
- 27. Expressed pleasure
- 29. Song of praise
- 32. Shock treatment
- 34. Patti Hearst's captors
- 35. Counteract
- 36. Goes over again
- 39. Popular Dodge truck
- 40. Male adult
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Rope used to lasso
- 46. Become less intense
- 47. Subway rodent
- 49. Lead alloy
- 51. Japanese honorific title
- 54. Advise someone
- 59. Famous NYC museum
- 60. Ocean
- 61. Cathode-ray tube
- 62. Cologne
- 64. It starts with these two



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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Fri, Feb 21

Designer Bag Bingo & Basket Raffle

St. John's School
43927 St. John's Rd., Hollywood
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Come join us for a night of Designer Purses, Bingo, Great food & Drinks, Silent auction and raffles. All proceeds benefit the students at St. John's School in Hollywood, MD.

You can pre-register with the following link: docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeOC5kmzRajj9BD0C6VagR0rtgPMPsepqwtwhh81OBqtQzsA/viewform

Games start at 7 pm but doors will open at 5:30 p.m.

Sat, Feb 22

Spaghetti Dinner Dine-In or Carry Out

2nd District VFD & RS
45245 Drayden Rd., Valley Lee
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Menu consisting of: spaghetti with meat sauce or veggie sauce, green beans, garden salad, garlic bread & dessert

Adults—\$15.00;
Children 6 to 12—\$7.00;
Children 5 & under are free

Proceeds from this fundraiser & the past fundraisers benefit the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad to continue keeping our community safe. Thank you for your Support! Sponsored (and prepared) by the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad Auxiliary. For more information call: 301-904-1656

Mon, Feb 24

Texas Hold 'Em Tournament

St. Mary's County Elk's Lodge
45779 Fire Department Ln., California
7 p.m.

Buy-in: \$35.00. Blinds will start at 25-50 and progress every 20 minutes. Please enter

through the side of the building. For any question or additional details contact:

James Dean
240-577-0828
jdeanjunior@gmail.com

Tue, Feb 25

Scouting America Cub Pack 560 Southern Maryland

Greenview Knolls Elementary School
45711 Military Ln., Great Mills
6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Join our meeting to find out what our pack can offer you. We're all about encouraging boys and girls to make friends, be helpful to others, and do their very best no matter the outcome. With the help of powerful learning projects and exciting outdoor activities, we aim to teach children that doing their best can be a fun and rewarding experience—no matter the difficulty of the challenge.

Fri, Feb 28

SMTMD Open Mic

Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd., Chaptico
7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Acoustic musicians of all skill levels are welcome to perform their favorite tunes or enjoy a night out listening to some local talent. A keyboard can be made available by prior arrangement. Contact Chris Dudley in advance (ccdudley@rocketmail.com) to sign up as a performer.

Doors open at 7 pm with performances beginning promptly at 7:30 PM. Admission is \$8; children 17 and under (when accompanied by a paying adult) and performers are admitted free of charge. Info: smtmd2@gmail.com, www.smtmd.org/new-events/



ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

UPCOMING EVENTS



Expungement Day
Williams, McClernan & Stack LLC will offer free legal help to those seeking Maryland expungements of criminal records. Lexington Park Library, Friday, February 21 from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Appointments will be at Lexington Park Library and will last approximately 20 minutes. Please bring any paperwork relating to the case if the case was dismissed because the lawyers will be unable to see it on CaseSearch. Please note: registration information will be shared with Williams, McClernan, & Stack so that the attorney can assist you during your appointment. Maryland Expungements Only. Register on www.stmalib.org.

The Growing Brain: Childcare Provider Workshop Series
FREE Core of Knowledge training for childcare providers. The Growing Brain is an innovative course from Zero to Three that provides a toolkit of how the brain develops step-by-step, neuron-by-neuron. Units 1 & 7 are in-person at Leonardtown Library on Saturdays from 9:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; doors open at 9 a.m. Units 2-6 are on-

line via Zoom on Tuesday nights from 6-9 p.m. The Zoom Room will open at 5:50 p.m. Licensed childcare providers will receive 3 Core of Knowledge Hours for each unit completed. Units 1-6 provide 3 hours in Child Development; Unit 7 provides 2 hours in Child Development & 1 hour in Curriculum. Register on www.stmalib.org

Meet Dr. King
Bright Star Theatre explores the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., from a young boy facing racism for the first time, to meeting his wife Coretta, becoming a pastor, & leading a national movement. Lexington Park Library on Sunday, February 23 from 2 - 3 p.m. This Black History Month special event is presented in partnership with the NAACP St. Mary's County Branch 7025, and the Unified Committee for Afro-American Contributions. No registration.

The French & Indian War: On the Eve of the American Revolution - A Series
Looking to learn more about the American Revolution? Join us for a virtual presentation! Dr. Jim Gibb will discuss specific events that contributed to the French & Indian War. Virtual event on Monday,

February 24 from 7 - 8 p.m. In this series of presentations, we'll uncover the stories of the American Revolution! From January through May, we will explore the individual actions and events leading to the Continental Congress declaring independence from Great Britain. Living conditions in Colonial Maryland on the eve of the Seven Years War (French & Indian War) provides our starting point. Presentations will include some archaeological findings in Maryland and elsewhere, but most of our discussions will examine specific events and documents, including shots fired at Lexington and Concord, removal of French Canadians from Acadia, paintings of the Anglo-American assault on French Canada, and the Declaration. This presentation will be held live over Zoom. It will also be recorded and uploaded to the St. Mary's County Library YouTube channel. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Oyster Restoration in Southern Maryland
Learn about the history of the oyster industry in the Chesapeake Bay, the decline of the oyster, and community led efforts to revive the local oyster population in the St. Mary's River and Breton Bay.

Leonardtown Library on Thursday, February 27 from 6 - 7 p.m. Oysters filter water, provide habitat, and are a vital part of our local economy and culture. Restoration work is staffed by community volunteers and led by local non-profits St Mary's River Watershed Association (SMRWA) and Friends of St Clements Bay (FSCB). Find out what's happening with oyster restoration, why it matters, and how you can help! Register on www.stmalib.org.

Perks Partners
St. Mary's County Library is excited to announce a partnership opportunity for businesses! Through our Perks Partners program, the Library will spread the word about your business through our network, including social media, in-library messaging, and email messaging. In return, your business will offer a 10% discount to library card holders. Perks Partners are welcome to sign up on the Library website: <https://www.stmalib.org/about-us/perks-partners/>. After you sign up online, a library staff person will contact you to bring you a window decal to display in your place of business.

In Remembrance

Continued from page 17

friends. Carole collected Longaberger baskets, was very creative, and her gift-wrapping skills were unmatched. She was an excellent cook and loved to host parties. She loved socializing and having a good laugh. To know Carole was to love Carole. She had a contagious laugh and a beautiful smile.

Carole's greatest accomplishment was loving and raising her two sons. She was a wonderful, dedicated mother. She couldn't wait to be a grandmother so she could spoil her grandchildren. While she was waiting for grandchildren, she practiced spoiling and doting on her many nieces, nephews, and Godchildren. Carole loved nothing more than spending time with her family. She loved deeply and was unapologetically herself.

The family will receive friends on Monday, February 24, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM in the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. Prayers will be recited at 7:00 PM by Deacon Joe Lloyd. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated on Tuesday, February 25, 2025, at 10:00 AM in Holy Angels Catholic Church, Avenue, MD with Father Kevin Fields officiating. Interment will follow at Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery, Bushwood, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Brian Farr, Patrick Farr, Timmy Farrell, Travis Farrell,

Lois Leicht, 86



Lois Ann Wood Leicht, 86, peacefully passed away on Monday, February 3, 2025, in Leonardtown, MD. Born on September 23, 1938, in Leonardtown, MD,

she was the daughter of the late Thomas and Mabel Wood. Lois was the loving wife of the late Raymond Leicht. She is survived by her children, Deborah Shepherd, Richard Pilkerton, Joyce Petrovich, and Shari Leicht, her 14 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, and four great-great grandchildren. She was predeceased by her children, James Pilkerton, Brenda Cusic, and Larry Leicht.

At the family's request due to inclement weather, services have been rescheduled. The family will now receive friends on Monday, February 17, 2025 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 Tuesday, February 18, 2025 at 9:30 AM in St. Aloysius Catholic Church, Leonardtown, MD with Father David Beaubien officiating. Interment will follow at Queen of Peace Catholic Cemetery, Helen, MD. Serving as pallbearers will be Julian Leicht, Thomas Pilkerton, James Pilkerton III, Josh Combs, Kyle Russell, and Dana Wood. Honorary pallbearers will be Tammy Lewis, Melissa Russell, Shauna Modlin, Patricia Thomas, Rachel Kahl, Sheila Granger, Deanna King, Alycia Cook, and Victoria Brewer.

Memorial donations may be made in Lois' name to Colby's Crew Rescue, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, St. Aloysius Catholic Church, or St. Mary's Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

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.

Lisa Nyalko, 60



Lisa Jane Nyalko (née Pfanneschlag) passed away on January 21, 2025, leaving behind a legacy of professional excellence, community service, and cherished memories with family and friends.

Born on April 7, 1964, in Baltimore, Maryland, Lisa was the youngest of four children and instantly captured the hearts of her family. Growing up in Reisterstown, she attended the local public schools and graduated from Franklin High School, where she excelled academically and was an active member of the National Honor Society, Student Government Association, cheer-leading squad, and yearbook team.

Lisa earned a Bachelor of Science in Aerospace Engineering from the University of Maryland in 1986. She continued her education, earning a Master of Science in Engineering Management from the Catholic University of America in 1990 and completing the Naval War College Non-Resident Seminar Program at the College of Naval Command and Staff in Newport, Rhode Island in 1994. Additionally, she graduated from the Defense Systems Management College and Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Senior Executive Management Development Program.

Lisa began her distinguished civil service career in 1987 at NAVAIR as an advanced design engineer, focusing on Strike Warfare and Advanced Short Takeoff/Vertical Landing (ASTOVL) aircraft design. Over the years, she took on increasingly significant roles, including Integrated Product Team Leader for the ASTOVL program, Air Vehicle IPT Leader for the Joint Strike Fighter program, and Staff Assistant to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Air Programs.

In June 2001, Lisa was selected as the Principal Deputy Program Manager for Air-to-Air Missiles (PMA-259) at Patuxent River, Maryland. She later joined the PMA-265 (F/A-18 and EA-18G) Program Office, where she led a team through the successful Milestone B decision for the EA-18G in less than 12 months. Her exceptional leadership led to her selection as Principal Deputy Program Manager for PMA-265, overseeing various aircraft programs, including Foreign Military Sales.

In April 2007, Lisa was inducted into the Senior Executive Service as Deputy

Program Executive Officer for Tactical Aircraft Programs [PEO(T)], where she managed acquisition, engineering, and technical services for numerous Navy programs. Her remarkable achievements earned her multiple awards, including the Meritorious Civilian Service Award, Superior Civilian Service Award, and recognition as a finalist for the Naval War College Outstanding Graduate award.

While at NAVAIR, Lisa met her soulmate, Col. Michael A. Nyalko (USMC). They were married on May 20, 2000, and built a beautiful life together in Leonardtown, Maryland. For over 20 years, they cherished their home, the breathtaking views of the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, and the welcoming community of Saint Mary's County. They enjoyed frequent trips to Islamorada in the Florida Keys, fishing off their boat in Maryland, celebrating holidays, especially Christmas, and spending time with their family and friends.

Lisa lovingly supported Mike during his 23-year battle with lymphoma until his passing on May 26, 2023.

A firm believer in giving back, Lisa was a dedicated volunteer in her community. She served with the Leonardtown Auxiliary Rescue Squad, organizing its annual cake auction, and gave her time to the Good Samaritan Lutheran Pantry, where she worked weekly to serve those in need.

Lisa was predeceased by her husband, Michael A. Nyalko; her parents, Alfred John Pfanneschlag, Sr., and Ruthann Theresa (née King) Pfanneschlag; her brother, Alfred John Pfanneschlag, Jr.; her paternal grandparents, Frank and Dorothy Pfanneschlag; her maternal grandparents, Thomas and Ruth King; and her granddaughter, Lydia Raine Nyalko.

She is survived by her sister, Theresa McLeod (husband, Robert); her brother, Charles Pfanneschlag; sister-in-law, Nancy (nee: Nyalko) Guzy; her stepson, Michael J. Nyalko (wife, Rebekah); her beloved grandsons, Michael and Nathan Nyalko; her nephew, Patrick McLeod; her niece Kimberly McLeod (husband, Kevin Faust); her uncle, Edward Prus; many dear cousins; and a tight knit community of lifelong friends.

Lisa will be remembered affectionately for her intellect, warmth, and unyielding dedication to her family, career, and community.

The family will receive friends on Saturday, February 22, 2025 from 12:00p.m. to 1:00 p.m. with services beginning at 1:00 p.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A., at 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. Interment will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please send contributions or donations in her name to the Wounded Warriors Project, P.O. Box 758516, Topeka, Kansas 66675-8516 and the Leonardtown Volunteer Rescue Squad, P. O. Box 299, Leonardtown, MD 20650.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

David Thompson, 77



David L. Thompson (Worm), 77, of Sandgates passed away peacefully at home on February 7, 2025, due to heart, lung, and kidney complications. He was surrounded by

his loving family.

He was born on December 23, 1947, to Joseph Zach and Catherine Frances Thompson, both deceased. He had three older brothers - Joseph Wilson, James Howard, and Francis Leroy - also all deceased.

For 44 years Worm was an independent owner/operator of a dump truck and was a heavy equipment operator. He was a talented mechanic, repairing and reviving many gas engines. He also rebuilt his own diesel engine more than once. In his younger years he attended many NASCAR races and fire house dances with friends. He liked to play cards and watch the Dallas Cowboys.

He thoroughly enjoyed driving. He was always available to drive if you had some place to go. If you were broke down somewhere all you had to do was give him the address, and he would shortly be there for you with old country music playing on the radio. His theory was that you were never lost as long as you had road in front of you. He was generous with everyone and would give you anything he had if you needed it.

Worm is survived by his loving wife, Patricia (Mrs. Worm) of 57 years; daughter Donna Pleger (Bruce); and son Donald (Duck) (Trish). He had two grandsons, Brad Pleger (Jharline) and Matthew Pleger (Kadesha), and one great-grandson, Caelan Pleger, with another great-grandchild expected in July.

The family would like to express their heart-felt appreciation to the nurses and aides from Hospice for their support during this time with a very special thank you to Sheronda from Visiting Angels, who he had an immediate connection with.

Family will receive friends on February 25, 2025, beginning at 10:30 am at Brinsfield Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD. Burial will immediately follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD. Pallbearers will be J.F. Williams, Brad Pleger, Matthew Pleger, Margaret (Monkey) Ford, Dennis Buckler, and Joe White. Honorary pallbearers will be Minor Buckler, Bruce Pleger, Buddy White, Danny White, Marvin White, and Tom White.

Everyone is invited to join the family at Olde Breton Inn, Leonardtown, MD, following.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Hospice of St. Mary's County, P.O. Box 625, Leonardtown, MD 20650, or your local rescue squad in memory of Worm.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

In Remembrance

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

Mary Cusic, 101



Mary Hazel Cusic passed onto eternal life on February 13, 2025, at the age of 101.

Mary was born Mary Hazel, daughter of Joseph (Cap'n Joe) and Mary Frances (Fanny) Pillsbury on August 1, 1923, in Compton, Maryland, into a large Catholic family. She graduated from Margaret Brent High School and, during World War II, obtained a job in Washington with the National Geographic Society where she was in the Mail Department, which sent maps for the military in Europe and Asia. In her job, she played a major role in the United States winning World War II!

She married the love of her life, Lloyd Francis Cusic, on January 12, 1946, and began her life as a homemaker, bookkeeper, and cook for the people who worked on the farm. Her children consider her role as a mother as her greatest accomplishment, describing her as a one-in-a-million mom.

The house in which Mary and Lloyd settled is popularly known as the "Three Bears House" on Bull Road in Leonardtown. Later, the family moved to a farm in Compton owned by Buck Briscoe where Lloyd raised tobacco, soybeans, corn, wheat, and raised cattle and hogs to feed the family and send to market. In the early 1970s, they moved back to the Bull Road property where they built their home. Neighbors often expressed surprise to see "Miss Mary" still mowing the grass on her riding mower every summer despite her age.

Mary was resourceful, intelligent, witty, and an inspiration to many.

She was a member of St. Francis Xavier Church for her entire 101 years; she often volunteered and took a special pride in arranging flowers from her garden for the altar. She lived her entire life, other than the years spent in Washington, within a 10-mile radius of where she was born. She always loved the water and her family loved the way she could cook crabs in all kinds of ways (hard crabs, Devil crabs, crabcakes, soft crabs etc). She also loved to have cabbage, another favorite food, on her cake.

Mary gave birth to three accomplished children: Don (Jackie), Nashville, TN; Faye Chandler, Tucson, AZ; and Cindy (Lambert) Rosenbaum, Renfrew, PA, who all survive her as well as eight grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren who all love her dearly and will miss her unflinching love, enduring positive outlook on life, great sense of humor, and her enthusiastic desire to play the card game "Pitch" whenever they visited.

Mary's children wish to thank their cousins — Gail Fletcher, Ben Cusic, and Debbie Swann — for looking after Mary in her later years when her eyesight was failing and she needed help getting to doctor appointments and grocery shopping. Their love and care for their "Aunt Mary" is deeply appreciated.

Mary loved flowers and flowers are wel-

come at her funeral. If you wish to donate to a charity in her memory, the family encourages you to support the Leonardtown Volunteer Fire Department.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, 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 Thursday, February 20, 2025, at 1:00 PM, in St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, Leonardtown, MD. Interment will follow at the church cemetery.

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.

Barbara Swann, 93



Mrs. Barbara Ann Thompson Swann, of Oxford, NC passed away peacefully on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, at the age of 93. She was born on March 10, 1931, St. Georges Island, MD to her late parents Richard E. Thompson and Madge I. (Crowder) Thompson.

Barbara was a woman of strong faith and fortitude. She was a remarkable woman, radiating kindness and grace both within her home and in the hearts of all who knew her. She shared a deep and loving bond with her late husband, Benjamin "B.G." Gorman Swann, Jr., and together they built a beautiful family that was the heart of her life. Barbara took immense pride in raising her three daughters, Donna Jean Swann Landry, Tina Marie Swann Davidson, and Janet Irene Swann Ross (Andy). She deeply believed in family and always desired her family close.

Barbara is also survived by her sister, Mary Diane Thompson Hurley and was predeceased by four older brothers, Erskine Thompson, Frank Thompson, Vernon Thompson and Floyd (Bernard) Thompson.

The greatest joy in Barbara's life came from her grandchildren: Heather Landry Whitehead (Trey), Nikki Eubanks, DeLauren Jeffreys (Ryan), Laci Davidson, and Jesse Griffin (Sarah). To her grandchildren, she was more than just a grandmother; she was a source of wisdom, warmth, and love, earning the affectionate title of "Grandma" from many, reflecting her generous spirit that knew no bounds.

Barbara's heart also overflowed with love for her great-grandchildren—Ava, Cade, Reagan, Benjamin, Kennedy, Zoey, Cayden, and Stella—whose laughter and joy lit up her life.

Each moment spent with all her family, extended family and friends created precious memories that will forever be cherished.

In celebration of her remarkable life, a Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Thursday, February 27, 2025, at St. James Catholic Church at 11:00 am, followed by

a time of visitation in the Fellowship Hall.

Flowers are welcome and accepted, or the family invites you to consider making a donation to a hospice facility of your choice, honoring the compassionate care that Barbara and her loved ones received.

The Swann family is receiving care and support from Gentry-Newell & Vaughan Funeral Home, located at 503 College Street, Oxford, NC 27565. As we remember Barbara, let us carry forward her legacy of love, kindness, and family. She will be deeply missed but never forgotten.

Frances Quade, 93



Frances Lee Cooksey Quade, 93, of Leonardtown, Maryland passed away peacefully on Thursday, February 13 at St. Mary's Nursing Center. Frances was born in Washington, D.C. to the late William and Frances Cooksey of La Plata, MD.

Frances was raised in La Plata, Maryland and graduated from Sacred Heart School at the age of 16. In her early twenties, Frances met the late James Carroll Quade at a church dance and they were married on December 28, 1953. Together during their 65 years they raised four children, Marylee Russell (Russ) of Leonardtown, Wayne Quade (Cheryl) of La Plata, Diane Briscoe (John) of Hollywood, and Vicki Hoffman (Frank) of La Plata.

Frances spent a lifetime giving back to others and the Leonardtown community. She worked as the administrative assistant to the director of St. Mary's Social Services for over 20 years until retirement. In her spare time she was an active member of the St. Aloysius Catholic Church community for over 60 years volunteering for the Ladies of Charity and The Father Andrew White Chapter of the Catholic Daughters. Frances also spent many hours volunteering in the gift shop at St. Mary's Hospital, St. Mary's County Library, and The Heavenly Presents Catholic Gift Shop. She gave her time to countless other charities and individuals in need. She was an example of kindness and a charitable giving heart to all those she encountered.

Frances was incredibly proud of her family especially her grandchildren with whom she enjoyed spending time and will be remembered as their treasured "Nana." She is survived by her grandchildren Becky Root, Adam Russell, Jenna Briscoe, Haley Shlagel, Hannah and Lily Hoffman and five great grandchildren. Other notable survivors of Frances include Tommy Cooksey, her nephew, Ann Quade and Agnes Pilkerton, her sisters-in-law and Glenda Quade, former daughter-in-law, with whom she shared a special bond.

Family will accept friends on Wednesday, February, 26, 2025 from 10-11 am at St. Aloysius Church in Leonardtown followed by a Mass of Christian Burial at 11:00 am. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens. Pallbearers will be John Briscoe, Frank Hoffman, Adam Russell, Jason

Root, Luke Shlagel and Jacob Svobodny. Honorary pallbearers will be Frances' granddaughters Becky Root, Jenna Briscoe, Haley Shlagel, Hannah and Lily Hoffman.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in her name to the St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Aloysius Catholic Church SVdP, P.O. Box 310 Leonardtown, MD 20650, 301-481-2942, svdp@staloyusiuschurch.org or St. Mary's Nursing Center.

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

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

Drew Foster, Jeff Reynolds, Joe Staloni, and Ethan Staloni. Honorary pallbearers will be Austin Farr, Madelyn Farr, and Maxwell Farr.

Contributions may be made to the Seventh District Volunteer Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 7, Avenue, MD 20609 and the Seventh District Optimist Club P.O. Box 53, 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.

Carole Farr, 71



Carole Ann Farr, 71, of Avenue, MD, passed away on February 15, 2025, in Leonardtown, MD. Born on September 28, 1953, in Leonardtown, MD, she was the

daughter of the late June Louise Owens (Ellis) and Irving Bernard Owens, Sr. Carole was the loving wife of the late George Leonard Farr, whom she married on October 7, 1972 in Holy Angels Catholic Church, Avenue, MD. Carole is survived by her son, Matthew Farr (Amy) of Mechanicsville, MD, daughter-in-law, Laura McKinney Woodburn (Patrick) of Clements, MD, three grandchildren, Austin Farr, Madelyn Farr, and Maxwell Farr, and her siblings, Donna Cross (Robert), Bernie Owens (Kathy), and Don Owens (Kathy), as well as many nieces, nephews, and Godchildren. She was preceded in death by her son, Todd Farr.

Carole was a lifelong resident of St. Mary's County, MD and graduated from Chopticon High School in 1971. She was a Licensed Beautician, working for Frances "Sookie" Goldsborough at the Pretty Parlor in Leonardtown, MD until the birth of her first child. While staying home to raise her two children, Carole also cared for the children of many family, friends, and neighbors. She also continued doing hair in her home for her many loyal customers.

Carole enjoyed volunteering with the Seventh District Optimist Club, where her husband George was a member. She also sang in the choir at Holy Angels Church for many years. She loved to travel and had many fun adventures with family and

Continued on page 18

FINANCIAL FOCUS®

What to know before “un-retiring”

After working for decades, you may have been looking forward to retiring. But what if you decide to “reverse” your retirement?

You could rejoin the workforce for any number of reasons. You might need the added income to help pay for your living expenses, but you also might miss the social interactions with co-workers, or simply desire more purpose or stimulation in your life.

And if you do un-retire, you'll have plenty of company. More than 13% of previously retired baby boomers returned to the workforce in 2023, the highest level in five years, according to data from LinkedIn, the online career networking platform.

When pondering the decision to go back to work, you'll want to evaluate the advantages and the possible drawbacks.

First, let's look at the benefits of rejoining the workforce. By improving your cash flow, you may be able to do more of the things you enjoy, such as traveling. And you might also be able to reduce your debt load, which can free up even more cash. You might also use the extra money for other purposes, such as contributing to a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan for your grandchildren.

Furthermore, depending on where you're returning to work, and whether you go back full- or part-time, you might gain access to your employer's benefits programs. If you aren't already enrolled in Medicare, you could find it financially advantageous to sign up for your employer-sponsored group medical plan. And you may also be able to contribute to your employer's 401(k) or similar plan. Even if you're not eligible for an employer-sponsored retirement plan, you can contribute to an IRA if you have any earned income.

And here's something else to think about: By bringing in income from employment, you may be able to take less out each year from your existing 401(k) and IRA, giving them a chance to potentially grow more. (Once you turn 73, or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later, you'll have to start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA and 401(k). With a Roth IRA and 401(k), you're not required to take withdrawals at any age.)

Now, let's consider some potential areas of concern about returning to the workforce. If you've been taking Social Security, your 2025 benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$2 earned above \$23,400 if you haven't reached your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67. In the year in which you do reach your full retirement age, your benefits will be reduced by \$1 for every \$3 earned above \$62,160. Starting in the month in which you reach your full retirement age, you can earn as much as you want without losing benefits. (Also, Social Security will then recalculate your payments to give you credit for the months in which your benefits were reduced due to your earned income.)

Another area of concern might be your Medicare premiums. Because these premiums are based on your income, they could rise if you start earning more money. Also, if your income increases enough, you might be pushed into a higher tax bracket.

Ultimately, you'll want to weigh the pros and cons of returning to work. If it seems the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, you may well enjoy embarking on your “second act” in the working world.

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

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Contributed by David McDonough

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A View From The BLEACHERS



MENTAL REPROGRAMMING

By Ronald N. Guy
Contributing Writer

The offensive display delivered on every expectation. The performance included casual moves in the paint, deft passing, other-worldly ball handling, impossibly long Eurosteps that seeming covered the ground from the three-point line to the basket, and long-range shooting (including three-pointers on three consecutive possessions) that are typically reserved for players of much shorter stature. The brilliance prompted only a few measured smiles and head nods that indicated little more than, “Yup, as advertised.” As a multi-decade, insatiable sports fan, the guilt from my muted response was detectable; this moment deserved more.

While the performance was very much “on-brand”, there was nothing matter-of-fact about it. It should have stirred emotions and generated one of those “My gosh, I've never seen this before” childhood reactions that age makes increasingly harder to spark. No, the offensive effort didn't do that, the consequence of high expectations. But fear not, the game did deliver such a response, surprisingly when the night's main attraction was playing defense.

Last week my favorite son (there's at least a chance that's not because he's my only son) and I attended the San Antonio Spurs and Washington Wizards game. I wish I could say we went because of the home team, but for the vast majority of my life, attending Bullets/Wizards games has been more about the star power of the opponent than love for the star-power lacking 'Zards. This night was no different: Our weeknight trip to D.C. was all about seeing Victor Wembanyama, the “7'3” Spurs phenom.

Wembanyama's offensive game should have left me in awe. The vertical giant, with an incredible eight-foot wingspan, seemed to be in all places at once. He dribbled the ball into the front court and distributed like a point guard, he drained threes like an off-guard sniper, he scored in the paint, he covered ground on the court and got shots off at angles previously beyond human capabilities.

Which was great. But it was his impact on the defensive end that made the unexpected impression. He was everywhere. You could sense the internal conflict with Wizards players. As they attempted passes on the perimeter or drove the lane, the confusion was apparent. These are moves and situations they had done/been in thousands of times and their minds knew exactly what to do: an extra dribble here, pull up for a jumper there, make a dish to a cutting teammate here, finish at the rim there. But a virus had infiltrated their operating systems and was wreaking havoc. The virus was Wembanyama's size and athleticism. He cut down passing lanes and threatened shots like no one the Wizards had experienced. They were tentative. They lacked answers for this strange new reality. They were glitching. Hoops lifers. Professional basketball players. The best of the best. Befuddled by something they had never seen.

Filing out of Capital One Arena, the image of those Wizards players looking so uncomfortable on a basketball court, a place that could actually be more comfortable for them than their own homes, was racing through my mind. There are Wembanyama's in real life – disruptors, reality re-setters, brain scramblers, routine destroyers. They arrive in many forms. Perhaps it's a lateral professional move: same job but with entirely new team of people. A family that moves to a new house and city: same people, completely different place. A dear friend who drifts away from a long-held shared interest or set of ideals: commonality lost. The first dinner with a sibling and his post-divorce significant other. All things familiar – and strange.

The confused faces of Wizards players encountering Wembanyama last week were a metaphor for the strange hands that life, the grand experience of sharing this planet with eight billion other humans, often deals. There are few constants. Everything is susceptible to being recoded, generating distinct life before/life after moments. Acknowledgement and adaptability are key, with patience and time being the best catalysts for significant paradigm shifts requiring a mental reprogramming. It's impossible to know yet if Wembanyama will produce a lasting inflection point on the court, but for now, he's at least a reminder of the inevitable disruption off of it.

Send comments to RonaldGuyJr@gmail.com

Piney Point Lighthouse Museum Announces Spring Break Program

St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division is pleased to announce the Junior Historian program for Spring Break. Designed for children aged 7 to 10, the Junior Historian program at Piney Point Lighthouse Museum will run for 3 hours per day from April 14 to 17, offering an exciting blend of outdoor exploration and hands-on history lessons. Our young adventurers will discover the past in a whole new way as they explore local history and nature. This program is a fantastic combination of learning, history, and outdoor activities.

Activities will include, but are not limited to, a hands-on archaeological dig, creating a river model, fishing, and crafting a bird or bat box. Upon completion of the program, each participant will receive a "Junior Historian" badge to commemorate their achievements.

"Because Piney Point has so many interesting things for kids to explore, we thought it would be great to continue to offer this fun, yet educational, multiday Junior Historian program for children to take part in while off school for spring break this year," says Karen Stone, Manager of the St. Mary's County Museum Division. "With

such a broad range of topics, they're sure to find lots of fun things to do while enjoying the outdoors at the lighthouse."

Parents are encouraged to reserve their child's slot soon, as each program is limited to 12 participants to give each child the best hands-on experience possible. Book online at JuniorHistorian2025.eventbrite.com; the cost is \$75 per child for the entire 4-day program.

For more information about the program or other Museum activities, please email Olivia Flack at Olivia.Flack@stmaryscountymd.gov, call Piney Point Lighthouse Museum at (301) 994-1471, or visit www.facebook.com/1836Light.

For more information on hours of operation, programs, events, admission prices, and more, following our museums on Facebook at:

- St. Clement's Island Museum: Facebook.com/SCIMuseum
- Old Jail Museum & Visitor Center: Facebook.com/TheOldJailMuseum
- Piney Point Lighthouse Museum: Facebook.com/1836Light
- U.S. Colored Troops Interpretive Center: Facebook.com/USCTCenter

Rec & Parks Summer Camp Registration Opens March 3

St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) is pleased to announce that registration for 2025 Summer Camps and School Age Care programs for the 2025-26 school year will open at 9 a.m. on Monday, March 3, 2025.

Summer camps will operate from June 23 – August 15, 2025, serving children aged 4 through rising 10th graders. A wide variety of traditional day camps, sports camps, sports academies, and therapeutic camps are offered. Learn more about all the wonderful options to meet the needs of your children this summer in the Summer Scoop at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/Scoop2025. This and more information will be posted online at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/camps.

Traditional day camps (Summer Fun Camp) will operate Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and will be held at Hollywood, Carver, and Margaret Brent Recreation Centers. Sports camps will be held at a variety of park and St. Mary's County Public School locations.

Camp Discovery, a Therapeutic Recreation Summer Camp, will run in July (location to be determined). Camp Discovery's dedi-

cated, qualified and professional staff and innovative and specialized programs give campers a summer filled with fun activities, the development of positive peer friendships, and a therapeutic learning experience.

Registration for School Age Care (SAC) to secure your child's spot for the 2025-26 school year will require a one-time deposit per family. SAC will be offered at Chesapeake Public Charter School, Duke Elementary School, Evergreen Elementary School, Lettie Dent Elementary School, and Leonardtown Elementary School. The School Age Care program at Hollywood Recreation Center for Hollywood Elementary School is scheduled to re-open for the 2025-26.

Registration can be completed online at www.stmaryscountymd.gov/recreate or by visiting the R&P office in Leonardtown. For questions or assistance, please contact R&P at (301) 475-4200 ext.1800 or via email webtrac@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Never miss an update! Follow R&P on social media at: www.instagram.com/stmarysrecandparks and www.facebook.com/stmarysmdrecreation.

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Five Recent SMCM Graduates Named Fulbright Semi-Finalists

Five 2024 St. Mary's College of Maryland graduates were named Semi-Finalists in the prestigious Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Four candidates have been moved forward as potential English Teaching Assistants (ETAs)—to spend a year teaching English in a foreign country—while the fifth is in the running for a Study Award to pursue a master's degree in Belgium.

Professor of English Jennifer Cognard-Black, PhD, the inaugural director of national fellowships and awards at St. Mary's College, had this to say about this year's Fulbright Semi-Finalists: "It is an achievement in and of itself for a Fulbright applicant to be selected as a Semi-Finalist. Each year, upwards of 4,000 student applicants compete for Fulbright Study Awards, while over 5,000 pursue Fulbright ETA grants. Thus, to be named a Semi-Finalist is truly outstanding!"

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program provides recent graduates and young professionals with opportunities to conduct research, pursue graduate studies, or teach English abroad. The program's mission is to foster cross-cultural connections, academic growth and global understanding by supporting projects that promote meaningful engagement within diverse communities around the world.

Current St. Mary's College students and alumni may apply for Fulbright awards to teach English abroad, pursue graduate

study abroad or engage in an individual research project for the 2025-2026 cycle beginning this March. A timeline for the application process—including the deadline for pre-proposals—may be found here: <https://www.smcm.edu/ie/ways-to-study-abroad/fulbright/>.

Anyone who would like to find out more about Fulbright opportunities or the application process may contact the new director of national fellowships and awards, Professor Jennifer Cognard-Black, at: fellowships@smcm.edu.

The selected Semi-Finalists include:

Cooper Clendenin '24: Semi-Finalist for an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in Spain

Cooper Clendenin, a 2024 magna cum laude graduate, majored in international languages and cultures: Spanish, with a minor in sociology. Cooper is about to embark on a new chapter of post-grad life in Portland, Maine, where he'll be living with his sister Marley. If awarded a Fulbright grant in Spain, he is eager to deepen his passion for language education, intercultural communication, and foreign immersion. Cooper says, "I am incredibly grateful for the support I've received at St. Mary's College and honored to be a Fulbright Semi-Finalist."

Nicole Gibson '24: Semi-Finalist for an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in Argentina

Nicole Gibson graduated from SMCM in May 2024, majoring in political science and public policy with a minor in Spanish. Nicole now works as a legislative assistant for the Delaware State Senate Majority Caucus. Nicole says, "I am ecstatic to have been selected as a U.S. Fulbright Semi-Finalist for the English Teaching Assistant (ETA) Award in Argentina, and I am incredibly grateful for the support of my mentors, professors, family and friends throughout this process."

Lily Riesett '24: Semi-Finalist for a Study Award at the University of Ghent in Belgium

Lily Riesett graduated from St. Mary's College in 2024 with a major in political science and a minor in environmental studies. Now she is a member of AmeriCorps, working on food access and educational projects with the Green Mountain Farm-to-School program in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. Lily says, "The Fulbright application process gave me the skills to apply for prestigious grants properly, something I will use throughout my professional career. It was also beneficial to think about how I can act as a global scholar and represent my country on the world's academic stage. This type of reflection has helped me grow as a

student and world citizen."

Mortimer Shiflett '24: Semi-Finalist for an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in Benin

Mortimer Shiflett was a transfer student to St. Mary's College of Maryland from Montgomery College, and graduated in the fall of 2024 with a major in history. Mortimer says, "Regardless of whether I am awarded a Fulbright grant or not, I am honored to have been deemed worthy by the Fulbright program, and I am thankful to all of my professors and friends who helped me on my journey."

Eleanor "Ellie" Walter '24: Semi-Finalist for an English Teaching Assistant (ETA) in Spain

Ellie Walter is a 2024 graduate of St. Mary's College with a double major in neuroscience and Spanish, and double minors in environmental studies and music. Since graduation, Ellie has been working as a youth rehabilitation specialist at a nonprofit organization, supporting children diagnosed with mental illness. This role has enabled her to build meaningful relationships with young children and to create engaging learning environments. Ellie says, "I hope to create a Fulbright supplementary project in Spain that will inspire young children to stay connected to their natural environment, while learning about the benefits of healthy living."



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Auditions Announced for Summerstock Musical



St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) is thrilled to present TARZAN®: The Stage Musical for the 43rd production of Summerstock. Performances will be held at Great Mills High School on July 18–20 and July 25–27, 2025, with a total of 8 shows.

TARZAN®: The Stage Musical is based on Disney's 1999 animated film of the same name, which in turn was based on Edgar Rice Burroughs' classic 1912 novel, Tarzan of the Apes. Adapted for the stage by Tony Award-winning playwright David Henry Hwang, this unforgettable theatrical experience features high-flying excitement and hits, with heart-pumping music by Hwang and rock legend, Phil Collins, including Collins' Academy Award-winning song, "You'll Be in My Heart," along with "Son of Man" and "Two Worlds." The musical features all five songs written by Collins for the movie, and nine new songs penned by Hwang.

This production tells the story of an infant boy adopted by a tribe of apes and raised as one of their own. Tarzan is a man of two worlds which come together when a group of explorers introduce him to strangers like himself for the first time. Among the explorers is the beautiful young Jane, who captures Tarzan's imagination and heart. Tarzan struggles to navigate a jungle, thick with

emotion, as he discovers his animal upbringing clashing with his human instincts.

Casting auditions will be held at Great Mills High School on Friday, April 4 from 5–9 p.m. and Saturday, April 5 from 10 a.m.–2 p.m. Young actors and actresses aged 13–21 are encouraged to audition for roles. Additionally, there is one role for a 10-year-old boy, allowing boys aged 9–11 to audition.

Opportunities for organizations and businesses to support Summerstock are available through a variety of sponsorship options. Learn more at: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/docs/SponsorshipPacket.pdf.

TARZAN®: The Stage Musical was originally produced on Broadway by Disney Theatrical Productions. Music and lyrics by Phil Collins; book by David Henry Hwang. This production is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). TARZAN® owned by Edgar Rice Burroughs, Inc.

For general show inquiries, please contact our Summerstock Producer via email at Chris.Lengle@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Stay up to date on Summerstock news and more by following R&P on social media at: www.instagram.com/StMarysRecAndParks and www.Facebook.com/StMarysMDRecreation.

PTSD Group Supports Local Veterans

The Band of Brothers of SOMD PTSD/Suicide Prevention Group is holding their meeting on Saturday, February 22, 2025, at 9am at the Flashback Cafe in Lexington Park, MD. For more information contact Nick Gravelle at (301) 481-6752.

The Band of Brothers are a Veteran to Veteran Support Group of military brothers and sisters helping one another and the community through general community outreach and homeless veteran outreach.

For Christmas, the group gave presents to students at Lexington Park Elementary School and donated money for toys for the hurricane victim children in Asheville, NC.

Now, they are taking the initiative to raise money to pay the electric bills of Asheville hurricane victims.

Members of the group have been helping veterans for nine years and haven't lost any one to suicide yet. Nationally, 22 veterans a day die from suicide.



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Register online at <https://events.nwtf.org/203420-2025>

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Local Arts & Craft Vendors Sought for Wine & Arts Festival

St. Mary's County Government's Museum Division, in partnership with local First Landing Wine Trail wineries, are seeking arts and craft vendors who are located or sell in St. Mary's County, to participate in the First Landing Wine & Arts Festival at St. Clement's Island Museum on Saturday, April 12, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To apply, interested vendors must review and complete the one-page vendor application, available online at: <https://bit.ly/VendorForm2025>.

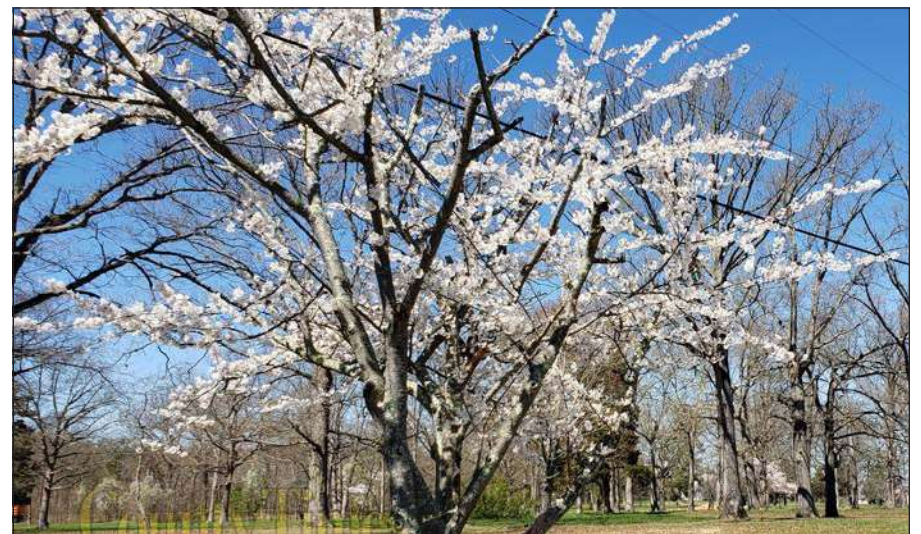
Completed applications should be submitted no later than March 31, 2025, via email with 2 to 3 photos of merchandise they plan on featuring, to janet.cooper@stmaryscountymd.gov or by mail to St. Clement's Island Museum, 38370 Point Breeze Road, Colton's Point, MD 20626.

The First Landing Wine & Arts Festival is returning for its fifth year in 2025, with the exciting addition of ALL craft beverage businesses in St. Mary's County from Liquid Assets, including beer, wine, craft spirits, coffee, and more. Visitors are invited for a full day of fun on the waterfront lawn of the museum. Guests can enjoy food and live music; purchase locally grown and produced wine by the glass or bottle from Port of Leonardtown Winery and Corteau Vineyard; purchase and taste other craft beverages from St. Mary's County; browse locally crafted items and art; take part in kids' activities; visit the museum or take a boat ride to St. Clements Island; and more on the scenic shores of the Potomac River.

For more information, call (301) 769-2222 or visit [Facebook.com/SCIMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/SCIMuseum).

Save the Date for the Annual Cherry Blossom Festival

Recreation & Parks Seeks Event Sponsors & Vendors



St. Mary's County Government's Department of Recreation & Parks (R&P) is pleased to announce that the annual Cherry Blossom Festival will be held on Saturday March 29, 2025, from 12 – 4 p.m. at Lexington Manor Passive Park in Lexington Park, MD.

The Annual Cherry Blossom Festival is a free event offering fun for the whole family, featuring a variety of vendors, local community organizations, activities, demonstrations, food trucks, and so much more! Additional event details will be made available online in February.

The department is currently seeking sponsors and vendors for this event. Those interested in sponsorship information

can view the sponsorship package online at: www.stmaryscountymd.gov/docs/SponsorshipPacket.pdf.

Online registration for returning vendors is now open. New vendor applications will be considered beginning March 1, 2025. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4vnkr932> to secure your space.

For questions or more information, please contact R&P at (301) 475-4200 ext.1800 or via email to Christina.bishop@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Never miss an update! Follow R&P on social media at: www.instagram.com/stmarysrecandparks and www.facebook.com/stmarysmdrecreation.



NAVAL AIR STATION PATUXENT RIVER *News*

Retired AV-8B II+ Finds New Home at Arizona Air and Space Museum

A retired and demilitarized AV-8B Harrier II+ was inducted into the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, Arizona, Feb. 14, 2025.

"This is a unique opportunity to preserve and share a vital chapter in aviation history while playing a valuable role in inspiring future generations," said Col. Mark Amspacher, AV-8B Weapon Systems Program Office (PMA-257) Program Manager. "I hope this piece of Marine Corps history and embodiment of innovation, courage and dedication motivates younger generations to consider a career in aviation and service within the Marine Corps."

This aircraft, BUNO 165574, initially entered service on Jan 14, 1986 as an AV-8B Day Attack aircraft and was later remanufactured as an AV-8B II+ Radar aircraft on July 31, 2001. It flew with Marine Attack Squadrons (VMAs) 311, 223, 214, 513, and 231, logging 1,539 combat flight hours and a grand total of 9,671 flight hours in support of multiple Marine Expeditionary Unit deployments, Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, humanitarian efforts and Request for Forces.

This is the second AV-8B Harrier II+ to be inducted into a museum as the Harrier



continues to sundown through 2026. The first, BUNO 164560, was inducted into the Hickory Aviation Museum in Hickory, N.C., on July 15, 2024.

PMA-257, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps, Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 14, and VMA-231 oversaw the comprehensive process of demilitarizing the aircraft and ensured it was safe to display. VMA-231

Aviation Maintenance Officer, Maj. Robert M. "Robin" Weede, based in Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point, N.C., flew the aircraft to the Pima Air and Space Museum where visitors can learn about the aircraft's unique engineering design and capabilities.

The Pima Air and Space Museum opened its doors to the public on May 8, 1976. It has grown to be the largest non-govern-

ment funded aviation museum in the United States encompassing over 250,000 square feet of indoor display space and a collection of over 400 aircraft representing multiple decades of military, experimental, civil and commercial aircraft, and more than 125,000 artifacts. Its slogan, "Creating unlimited horizons in aerospace education through the preservation and presentation of the history of flight" highlights the importance of Harrier's preservation initiatives.

It is a vertical/short takeoff and landing, light attack jet utilized by the U.S. Marine Corps, and the Italian and Spanish navies. In service for four decades, its mission is to destroy surface targets and escort friendly aircraft in austere conditions during expeditionary, joint and combined operations.

The platform provides close and deep air support, including armed reconnaissance and air interdiction, and conducts offensive and defensive anti-air warfare. The AV-8B Harrier II+ can operate from carriers and other suitable seagoing platforms, advanced bases, expeditionary airfields and remote tactical landing sites offering versatility, firepower and mobility to effectively counter enemies engaged by U.S. and allied ground forces.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization, C-SMMPO, will conduct a Public Hearing virtually on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 10 a.m. to amend the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on behalf of the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) for MD 4 Corridor Improvements in Solomons/California.

The Meeting ID is 430 427 6617, the call-in number is (301) 715-8592, and the link is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=85095997914>.

This public hearing is required by law to allow all interested parties the opportunity to present evidence and public comment regarding the C-SMMPO documents. A decision will be made solely on evidence and testimony presented during the public hearing. Public meetings are open to the public. Members of the press may attend.

Written comments, questions, and suggestions may be submitted on or before March, 10, 2025, to C-SMMPO, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD, 20650 or Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov. All timely submissions will be considered by the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization Council at the Public Hearing. Information submitted after the public hearing record is closed will not be considered.

An electronic copy of the plans may be requested by contacting Karly Maltby by phone (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507, via e-mail: Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov, or by visiting <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

Public Hearing Guidelines are subject to change. For more information on viewing, listening to, or submitting comments via telephone or video clip, please call (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507.

All content of these proceedings is subject to disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act. Photographic and electronic audio and visual broadcasting and recording devices are used during the meetings. These are public meetings and attendance at these meetings automatically grants St. Mary's County Government permission to broadcast your audio and visual image. Any person requiring special arrangements related to the Americans with Disabilities Act shall notify the C-SMMPO no less than 72 hours prior to the date of the scheduled meeting so that necessary special arrangements can be made in order to facilitate participation.

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La Plata Man Arrested After Alleged Gun Threat, Tire Slashing

Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office were called to the 45000 block of Carefree Way in Lexington Park at approximately 1:38 a.m. on Sunday, February 16, for the report of a subject with a gun.

Upon arrival, deputies learned that the suspect had fled the scene. According to witnesses, the suspect approached the residence, and when multiple occupants went outside to see what he was doing, he pointed the firearm at the victims, causing them to retreat inside, where they witnessed him slashing tires on a vehicle in the driveway before fleeing the area.

The suspect was identified as Adam David Chaney, 41, of La Plata. Detectives from the Criminal Investigations Division and patrol deputies located Chaney at his home. Detectives executed a search warrant, and a firearm was recovered; Chaney was arrested without incident.

Chaney was charged with first- and second-degree assault, firearm use in the commission of a felony/violent crime, and malicious destruction of property valued at less than \$1,000. He was transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, where he awaits a bond hearing.

Anyone with information about this case is asked to contact Detective Andrew Burgess



Adam David Chaney

at 301-475-4200, ext. 8041, or by email at Andrew.Burgess@stmaryscountymd.gov.

Tipsters can also call Crime Solvers 24/7 at 301-475-3333 or text Crime Solvers at 274637. In the message block, type "Tip239" and select SEND. After you get a response, continue your conversation.

Note: Tip239 is case-sensitive and must be typed in the message block as shown. With Crime Solvers, you never have to give your name. You may be eligible for a cash reward if your information leads to an arrest.

Man Arrested After Threatening Victim with Handgun

A St. Mary's County man was arrested Tuesday morning after allegedly threatening a victim with a handgun.

On Feb. 13, 2025, at approximately 8:10 a.m., deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to the 21000 block of Enterprise Road in Lexington Park for a reported incident involving threats with a firearm. Upon arrival, deputies canvassed the surrounding area and located a suspect matching the description provided by the victim near Midway Drive and Yorktown.

The suspect, identified as Akeem Grinnell-Cropper, 35, of Lexington Park, initially refused deputies' commands but was taken into custody. A Smith & Wesson .38 Special revolver was recovered from his jacket.

A subsequent check of law enforcement databases revealed that Grinnell-Cropper is prohibited from possessing firearms due to previous convictions for disqualifying crimes.

Grinnell-Cropper was transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, where he was charged with:

- First-degree assault
- Second-degree assault
- Carrying a handgun on his person
- Use of a firearm in the commission of



Akeem Grinnell-Cropper

a felony

- Four counts of possession of a regulated firearm after being convicted of a disqualifying crime
 - Disturbing the peace
 - Failure to obey a reasonable and lawful order of a law enforcement officer
- Grinnell-Cropper remains incarcerated pending a bond hearing.

Appeals Hearing on Townhome Project Continued



An artist's rendering of Riverside Townhomes

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A concept site plan to build 42 town houses in California that was denied by the planning commission back in November was to have had a hearing before the county appeals board last week but it was continued to next month.

The developer of the Riverside Townhouses project, LAHACO Investments LLC had appealed the decision rejecting their concept site plan back in December, appeals board documents show, arguing that the planning commission's decision was illegal and erroneous and was "based on generalized future traffic concerns rather than on the specific standards of mitigation... with which the appellant complied."

The project would have put 42 townhouses on the northbound corner of Route 4 and Three Notch Road in California.

The development was a permitted use in the zoning district where it had been pro-

posed but concerns over increased traffic congestion it would have caused at the county's busiest intersection led to the plan's downfall by a 4-to-2 vote.

The project was to have a single, right-in, right-out access point onto Three Notch Road as part of the original plan.

According to the traffic study, entered into the record by Lenhart Traffic Consulting Inc., the project would generate approximately 252 daily vehicle trips in addition to the traffic already in the area.

The traffic study reported this addition would amount to only a fractional increase in nearby area traffic.

But members of the appeals board held a nearly three-and-a-half-hour meeting Feb. 13, with discussions continuing on traffic concerns and the nature of a privacy fence to be built between the homes and nearby businesses.

The rescheduled hearing for March 27 will be to hear public testimony.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Home Flu/COVID-19 Test Kits Available for Free

The St. Mary's County Health Department (SMCHD) and the St. Mary's County Library have partnered to make home Flu/COVID-19 antigen self-test kits available while supplies last. The rapid antigen test check for Influenza A, Influenza B, and COVID-19 and are FREE to St. Mary's County community members. With a single swab that a person self-administers at home, the test will check for three different viruses.

Test kits are now available at the following St. Mary's County Library locations as supply allows, with a limit of two kits given per visit:

- Charlotte Hall Library
37600 New Market Rd.,
Charlotte Hall, MD
- Leonardtown Library

23630 Hayden Farm Lane
Leonardtown, MD

- Lexington Park Library
21677 FDR Blvd.,
Lexington Park, MD

St. Mary's County is currently seeing an increase in local rates of influenza A and B (flu) and COVID-19. SMCHD encourages community members to minimize the severity and spread of illness by utilizing testing resources when needed, considering treatment for flu or COVID-19 if indicated, and avoiding close contact with others when ill.

For more information on Flu, visit smchd.org/flu.

For more information on COVID-19, visit smchd.org/covid-19.



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Town to Seek Funds for Cedar Lane Expansion



Cedar Lane Senior Living community

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Leonardtown Town Council voted unanimously last week to approve an application for up to \$800,000 in community development block grants to eventually provide the management company at the Cedar Lane Senior Living community to construct a new building there.

Eric Golden, president and CEO of Cedar Lane told the town council at their Feb. 10 meeting that the latest request was part of a two-year effort to build a 70-unit multi-family building.

The tenants in the new building would be considered in the low-to-medium-income range, Golden said, or about 50 to 60 percent of the local median income.

The project would be built on about 2.3 acres by Green Street Housing, Golden said, a local developer that specializes in these

types of projects.

The overall size of the building would be 56,000-to-58,000 square feet in size, he said.

"It's something we're very proud of," Golden said. "We love talking about it."

Just over 10 years ago, Cedar Lane worked with the town to apply for a grant in the same amount in community development block grant funds and got the award to upgrade their original facility; last year Cedar Lane purchased undeveloped land next to their original building to construct an additional facility, town records show.

The new grant Cedar Lane is seeking would be in addition to \$463,000 they received in additional grant funding in 2017, town planning documents show.

Cedar Lane is also requesting town staff support in applying for the latest round of grant funding.

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As Energy Prices Rise, So Does the Freedom Caucus

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

An unseasonably cold winter has led to rapidly rising heating bills and in Maryland, argue members of the newly formed Freedom Caucus in the General Assembly, that means citizens are paying too much in the form of extra surcharges and face the specter of increasing energy costs as the state continues to import energy from outside its borders all while adhering to restrictive and expensive green mandates.

But the Freedom Caucus — headed by St. Mary's County Del. Matt Morgan — a group of Republican legislators in direct opposition to most of Gov. Wes Moore's administrative agenda, have a plan to cut those costs.

Primarily, the plan calls for rolling back some of the state's green energy legislation; and while the chances of such changes are slim, the Freedom Caucus is garnering a lot of attention by focusing on issues that hit the bank accounts of constituents.

The plan calls for reopening power plants here that have been recently closed down through federal intervention by the U.S. Department of Energy, as well as ensuring that power plants in Baltimore and Pasadena remain open.

The plan also calls for an immediate halt to the EmPOWER Program either through an executive order by the governor or through legislative amendment.

The EmPOWER program is a surcharge added to residents' electric bills to fund "Maryland's five largest electric utilities [offering] programs to help Maryland's households and businesses save energy and money through a variety of incentives, such as free or discounted energy audits, weatherization, and efficient appliances" according to the program's website.

Morgan offered a different interpretation of the program's implications years after it was enacted.

"The EmPower MD program was created in 2008 to push more efficient solutions for electricity, like switching from incandescent light bulbs to LEDs or adding more insulation to your home," Morgan wrote on a recent social media post. "Last year, St. Mary's Delegate Brian Crosby was the primary sponsor of a bill passed into law to transition the EmPower [program] into a gas reduction redistribution program.

"It's now a slush fund for you to buy someone else a new electric stove or heat pump,



Del. Matt Morgan speaking at the Freedom Caucus inaugural event

costing you hundreds of dollars a year."

Morgan, who represents District 29 A was referring to Crosby's bill HB 864 in the 2024 legislative session which altered the EmPOWER program by requiring electric companies, including the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative, to adopt stringent goals for the reduction of greenhouse gases and energy efficiency in general.

In a later interview, Morgan said the Freedom Caucus is looking for maximum exposure.

"We're just really frustrated with the direction the state is going," Morgan said. "But it's hard to change public opinion if you're on page 14 of the newspaper."

Todd Eberly, a professor of political science at St. Mary's College of Maryland in St. Mary's City, said Morgan and the Freedom Caucus — which includes just a few members of the state GOP — are small but have managed to latch onto a critical issue that drove Donald J. Trump to another term as president: how will people pay for things.

"People pay attention to what they are paying today," Eberly told The County Times. "If you want to get attention and gain political effect, the timing of this is wise."

The members of the Freedom Caucus, which include Del. Mark Fisher of Calvert County and Del. Kathy Szeliga and Del. Ryan Nawrocki of Baltimore County, are known as the most outspoken of the 39 Republicans in the House of Delegates who appeal to a conservative base with traditional stances on abortion rights and other social issues.

But their focus on the state's \$3 billion deficit, rising costs for energy and everyday household items, and fighting back against

efforts to raise taxes and fees is politically intelligent, said Eberly.

"The smartest thing is to pick one or two issues and run with them," Eberly said. "The Republicans should embrace a more broadly focused [on Maryland voters] message.

"Paying electric bills and rising tax rates fall into that; the MAGA stuff just isn't going to get far in Maryland."

Morgan said the caucus' strategy rests on a "hearts and minds" campaign, focusing on issues all Marylanders can be concerned about.

"Maryland is in bad shape," Morgan said.

"They're looking at a billion dollars or more in tax increases."

The governor's budget has tax increases for the wealthiest of Marylanders but it also opens up tax brackets for the lowest-level income earners to begin paying into the system as well; Moore has identified about \$2 billion to be cut from the budget, including money for services to those with developmental disabilities who receive aid from the state.

The problem with budgeting in fiscally perilous times, Eberly said, is that cuts and revenue enhancements become equally unpopular.

"People tend to consider public spending unnecessary or wasteful only if it doesn't benefit them," Eberly said. "So, cutting spending becomes very politically unpopular.

"So, if someone is receiving the benefit of spending, they tend to view it as totally justified."

By focusing on budget and management issues, Eberly said, the state Freedom Caucus may have found a way forward in deep blue Maryland.

"But don't think that Maryland is poised to make a shift to the red," Eberly said. "If the Freedom Caucus can make their platform more relatable to people... that harkens back to what got [former governors] Robert Ehrlich and Larry Hogan elected."

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They Said Yes!

Congratulations to the happy couples who applied for marriage licenses in St. Mary's County during the month of January. Best wishes to all!

Amanda Lyn Wood, 34, Mechanicsville, MD
Trey Tyler Carroll, 25, Mechanicsville, MD

Allison Marie McLane, 27, Mechanicsville, MD
Jonathan Brian Martz, Jr., 27, Chesapeake, VA

Elizabeth Nicole Custer, 29, Leonardtown, MD
William Joseph Doran, 30, Leonardtown, MD

Timothy Robert Blasko, 57, Scotland, MD
Rina Sua Taylor, 48, Fredericksburg, VA

Sarah Caitlin Griffin, 31, Leonardtown, MD
Timothy Austin Pilkerton, 23, Leonardtown, MD

Kirstin Marie Ellen Beck, 28, Great Mills, MD
Kristin Faith Pilkerton, 29, Mechanicsville, MD

Henry Morales Tapia, 22, Lexington Park, MD
Kelsy Carolain Ramirez Bermudez, 22, Lexington Park, MD

Merissa Pauline Miller, 33, Mechanicsville, MD
Benjamin Tyler Thompson, 34, Mechanicsville, MD

Samuel Robert Riser, 27, California, MD
Brianna Lynn Martin, 25, California, MD

Jordan Nicole Brown, 23, Saint Inigoes, MD
Chase Carington Hofer, 27, Saint Inigoes, MD

Rachel Leigh Jones, 30, Mechanicsville, MD
Samuel Jay Brock, 30, Mechanicsville, MD

Erica Salazar Ramiscal, 27, Lexington Park, MD
Debyi Barrera Tenas, 39, Pomfret, MD

Andrea Jaide Conklin, 25, Lexington Park, MD
Karleigh Elizabeth Lister, 25, Lexington Park, MD

Curtis Stephen Hufford, 35, California, MD
Lacey Nicole Dickinson, 33, California, MD

Ndeya Mariah Gray, 26, Great Mills, MD
Kamisian Cortez Castellani-Ray, 24, White Plains, MD

Erin Anne Treutler, 25, California, MD
Jordan Tyler Mirfield, 25, California, MD

Rachel Ann Matthews, 25, California, MD
Tyrell Anthony Freeman, 27, California, MD

Jeremy Clayton Venne, 27, Lexington Park, MD
Veronika Devaney Uldrich, 26, Lexington Park, MD

Stephanie Nicole Midgett, 37, Mechanicsville, MD
Dale Patrick Lilly, 49, Mechanicsville, MD

Jarena Gormah Dorbor, 20, Saint Mary's City, MD
Abdoul Latif Anoukou, 22, Lanham, MD

Kasey Ann Goldsborough, 34, Lusby, MD
Devin Andrew White, 31, Lusby, MD

Samantha Marie Schmidt, 35, California, MD
Marshall Lee Stackhouse, 31, California, MD

Kyle Edward Brownwell, 20, Virginia Beach, VA
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SCAN FOR
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County Investigates EMS Billing Problems

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

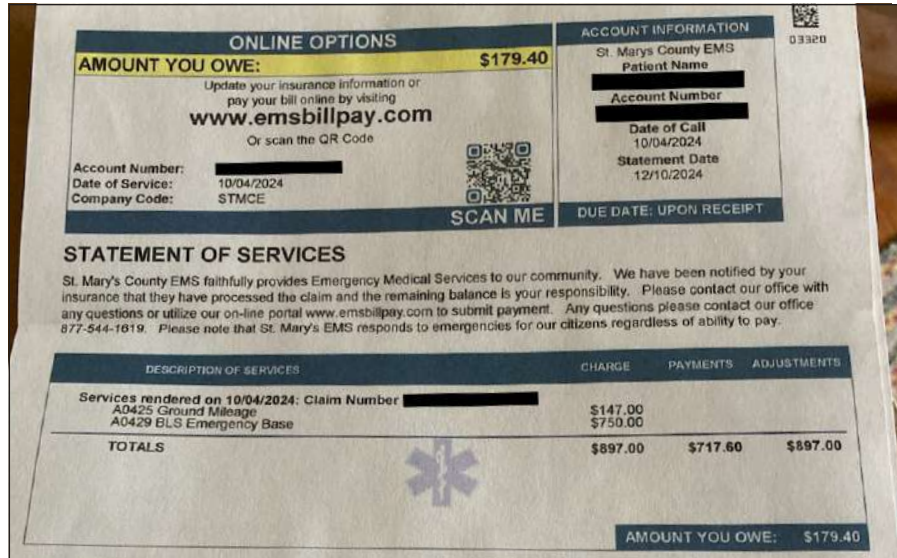
Ever since the county government established paid emergency medical services to augment the volunteer rescue squads here they have also set up a system whereby insurance companies of those who called for ambulance service would be billed and not the patient themselves.

Any charges the insurance company would not pay, residents were told time and again, would be borne by the county.

The term often used was “soft billing” in which residents could rest assured that they were never to be personally billed for an emergency ride on an ambulance.

At least that is what county elected leaders and emergency services officials have said publicly.

But The County Times has learned that bills have, in fact, been sent to some residents saying they must pay the portion not picked up by their insurance company; a resident who was concerned about senior citizens being on a limited income offered up two separate bills of their own for ambulance services rendered.



One such bill came from a call for service in October of last year, with the billing statement coming to the patient in December.

“We have been notified by your insurance that they have processed the claim and the remaining balance is your responsibility,” the billing statement reads. “Please contact

our office with any questions or utilize our on-line portal www.emsbillpay.com to submit payment.”

The statement does not mention that the county should pay for the remainder not paid by the insurance company, though it does assure the recipient that the county’s

EMS services respond to emergency calls regardless of a citizen’s ability to pay.

The billing service for St. Mary’s County EMS is located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, according to information on the statement.

The County Times brought the statement to the attention of county government; Commissioner Eric Colvin said in speaking with county administrative staff that the problem would be rectified.

“We’re working on that to get that fixed,” Colvin said of the erroneous bills sent to patients. “I’m sure people have paid it... but that was not the intent of the system from the get-go.”

Colvin said the county is investigating the matter but he did not know how long such bills had been sent out, to how many resident patients who used the ambulance service or how many had made the payments.

Colvin could not say whether the county would seek to pay back residents.

“I don’t know that we’ll be taking that step,” Colvin said. “Just that we’re going to fix the problem moving forward.”

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Bill Would Change School Board Elections



Del. Brian Crosby



Del. Jeffrie Long

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

A bill introduced in the Maryland General Assembly would change the way several counties — including St. Mary’s — would elect members of their boards of education by restricting candidates from a county commissioner district to being elected only by the voters residing in their district.

The bill, HB 0391, sponsored by Del. Jeffrie Long (D-Dist. 27B) and co-sponsored by Del. Brian Crosby (D-Dist. 29B), closely mirrors a bill that Crosby has been the lead sponsor of in past, recent sessions in which it would have made the same changes to the way county commissioners were elected in St. Mary’s and other counties.

The bill would also affect Calvert, Cecil, Garrett, Montgomery, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, and Worcester counties.

Crosby’s bill, which did not pass despite being offered up in at least two separate sessions of the assembly, was strongly opposed by other counties and the St. Mary’s commissioner board because it would have isolated districts in the county rather than foster

broader concerns among local elected officials, opponents argued.

Under the current system, commissioners — and school board members — are elected at-large with voters casting ballots for all five commissioners or school board members.

In effect, each voter has a say in the composition of both the commissioner and school board beyond the boarder of their own district.

At the time, Crosby argued that such a change in the election system would allow for districts to more effectively advocate for their own particular issues and needs.

The Commissioners of St. Mary’s County have already sent a letter to the delegation opposing the bill; Commissioner Eric Colvin said the bill was a “back door attempt” to eventually make the same change to the commissioner election process.

“Local people should decide how they want to have their elections, not someone in Annapolis,” Colvin said. “It would not improve our situation [if the bill passed].”

“It would make things more adversarial in terms of allocating resources.”

guyleonard@countytimes.net

Royal Farm Opening, Fabric Retailer Closing



The soon-to-be-closed JOANN Fabrics in California

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

One major retailer that has called the Patuxent Crossing Shopping Center — once known as San Souci Shopping Center — in California home for years will be closing its doors soon; the JOANN Fabrics located on MacArthur Boulevard is part of a nation-wide shuttering of the brands chain stores after filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in January after having initially filing for bankruptcy in March of last year.

“The last several years have presented significant and lasting challenges in the retail environment, which, coupled with our current financial position and constrained inventory levels, forced us to take this step,” said Interim CEO Michael Prendergast in a prepared statement. “After carefully reviewing all available strategic paths, we have determined that initiating a court-supervised sale process is the best course of action to maximize the value of the business.”

“We hope that this process enables us to find a path that would allow JOANN to continue operating as a going concern.”

The retailer will also be closing its store

located in Prince Frederick in neighboring Calvert County.

As one store closes locally, another is prepared to open next month; the Royal Farms gas station and convenience store located just across from Gate No. 2 of Naval Air Station Patuxent River on Great Mills Road is set for a grand opening on March 10, though a soft opening is planned for March 5 through 6, according to a press release from the corporate chain.

“We’re thrilled to bring Royal Farms to Lexington Park and become a part of this community,” said Octavia Jackson, District Leader at Royal Farms. “Whether you’re stopping by for our World-Famous Chicken, grabbing a quick snack, or fueling up, we’re here to make every visit fast, friendly, and fresh.”

The Lexington Park store joins the one already open at the northern end of the county in Charlotte Hall that recently opened.

A ribbon cutting has also been planned to commemorate the opening of the new Charlotte Hall Chick-fil-A restaurant on Feb. 25.

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“THE MAGA STUFF JUST ISN'T GOING TO GET FAR IN MARYLAND.”

PROFESSOR TODD EBERLY ON THE FREEDOM CAUCUS' FOCUS ON ECONOMIC ISSUES FACING MARYLANDERS



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LOCAL 3
EMS billing problem investigated



LOCAL 7
Townhouse appeal continued

ON THE COVER
Marylanders are paying more for heating as Republicans are looking to cut energy costs

WEEKLY FORECAST

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Cloudy Hi: 30° Lo: 23°	Sunny Hi: 39° Lo: 23°	Mostly Sunny Hi: 41° Lo: 26°	Sunny Hi: 46° Lo: 30°
MON, FEB 24	TUE, FEB 25	WED, FEB 26	THU, FEB 27
Partly Cloudy Hi: 51° Lo: 37°	Mostly Cloudy Hi: 56° Lo: 38°	Mostly Sunny Hi: 57° Lo: 38°	PM Showers Hi: 54° Lo: 36°



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County Investigates EMS Billing Problems

Changes Proposed to School Board Elections

Senior Community Seeks to Expand

FIGHTING FOR LOWER ELECTRIC BILLS