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THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 2025

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ON THE COVER

Calvert wants citizens with multiple pets to get a license

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 10



Cloudy
Hi: 57° Lo: 48°

FRI, APR 11



Rain
Hi: 54° Lo: 44°

SAT, APR 12



Showers
Hi: 49° Lo: 44°

SUN, APR 13



Mostly Cloudy
Hi: 61° Lo: 47°

MON, APR 14



Partly Cloudy
Hi: 69° Lo: 58°

TUE, APR 15



Partly Cloudy
Hi: 69° Lo: 46°

WED, APR 16



Partly Cloudy
Hi: 57° Lo: 41°

THU, APR 17



Mostly Sunny
Hi: 61° Lo: 50°



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Animal Control Regulation Changes Proposed

Would Require License for Multiple Animals

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

County staff have proposed revisions to the county's animal control regulations. The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) had concerns about some of the proposals, particularly how they would impact the agriculture community, during a presentation on April 8.

Deputy Director of Animal Services April Coleman explained "In March 2008 the BOCC adopted Chapter 7, Animals, of the Calvert County Code of Ordinances. At the time of adoption, the Animal Control division was assigned to the Calvert County Sheriff's Office. Additionally, animal sheltering was provided by Charles County's Tri-County Animal Shelter. In 2016, the Animal Matters Hearing Board, a volunteer board was vested with the authority to hear animal control appeals and provide recommendations for amendments to Chapter 7. Shortly thereafter in 2017, the Linda L. Kelly Animal Shelter opened its doors to ensure care of animals from Calvert County was provided in a state-of-the-art facility."

She added, "The Department of Public Safety, Animal Control division has worked with the Animal Matters Hearing Board and the County Attorney's Office to review and amend the entirety of Chapter 7, Animals, of the Calvert County Code of Ordinances. The revision is necessary to meet current animal welfare standards and reflect the combination role of the Animal Shelter and Animal Control Divisions."

Coleman said of the proposed changes, "It's about progress we have made as a county. It aims to modernize outdated language and align with current animal welfare standards, reflect internal restructuring within public safety as it relates to animal services, enhance public health and safety through clear enforceable guidelines, strengthen the community's ability to prevent neglect and unnecessary animal suffering, plus offer improved protections for both animals and the residents by setting consistent expectations for care and accountability."

As to proposed changes, she said, "Under the current ordinance, only breeders and boarding facilities are required to obtain an annual commercial license through animal control. These licenses serve as a regulatory tool to ensure operations involving animals are properly registered and accountable. Licensing helps enforce basic standards of care and sanitation, which supports animal welfare and the public's health. It also provides animal services with a direct point of contact for emergencies, investigations, or routine oversight. What we're proposing in the new ordinance is to add in an animal fancier license. This new license category would be introduced for individuals who own six or more dogs, cats, or rabbits. This promotes responsible ownership by ensuring that higher numbers of animals are kept in safe, healthy conditions. Limiting the number of unlicensed animals also helps prevent situations of hoarding, neglect, or unsanitary environments. The license supports personal accountability while allowing flexibility for responsible pet owners. Another new proposed license would be



for grooming facilities and rescues. Grooming businesses and nonprofit rescue organizations would now be required to obtain a license. This helps ensure all animal-related operations meet consistent standards of care, cleanliness, and housing. Annual inspections by animal control would help confirm ongoing compliance and identify any concerns."

Coleman said, "Licensing rescues is especially critical due to temporary housing of large numbers of animals at any given time."

Commissioner Mike Hart wanted to know how that would impact someone on a large farm with "a couple of dogs, couple cats they might have four or five rabbits."

Coleman explained, "You can't go over six dogs. You can't go over six cats, six rabbits without the license."

The fee for six to 15 animals would be \$75. "Any of those pets that are altered and microchipped, the county license fee is built in. They don't have to purchase a separate county license fee for it," Coleman said.

Non-profit animal rescue groups would not have to pay a fee for the license.

"A lot of folks with farms, they have a lot of animals because they need those animals. I don't want to hurt them," Hart said.

Hart said he recognized the intent of the proposal. "I'm all about that because you guys have had some horrific cases. You folks at home don't know there's a reason why this is here today. There're some atrocities happening, but there's some normal folks been going about their business for years, that animals are family."

Staff agreed to work on coming up with something different for the farming community.

"Maybe a residential license and a farm license. And that way it will distinguish between the two," Commissioner President Buddy Hance suggested.

Commissioner Catherine Grasso was sympathetic to the staff effort. "This is really to try to prevent the atrocities that have been happening to some of the animals in our county."

Coleman said, "The majority of animal control's complaints are animals kept outdoors. And when it's investigated, they tend to find the complaints where owners are not even meeting minimum standards of care for these animals."

She explained, "Facilities that obtain a license must have a written disaster plan.

This plan must include emergency contact information and a detailed strategy for animal care and relocation during emergencies such as fires, floods, or evacuations. The goal is to protect animals, ensure they're not left behind or endangered during unexpected events."

That requirement also raised concerns, and it was conceded that maybe all that was really needed was a point of contact for alternative care instead of a disaster plan.

Underscoring the potential volatility of the issue, Hance said, "I'm telling you, I'm going to hear about this."

Deputy Director for Public Safety Crystal Dowd noted, "This is going to be a requirement just for these commercial licenses. And I point out that the majority of these licenses are going to be businesses. So, these are not putting the burden back on the community if you're having a business associated with animals."

But Hance pointed out the proposal as presented covered licenses for residences as well as businesses.

The proposed regulation changes continue the requirement that every domestic pet have a county license, with a reduced fee for spayed or neutered animals, but it also gives the option of obtaining a three-year license at a reduced fee.

The proposal also has a reckless owner designation. Coleman said, "A reckless owner is someone who has violated chapter 7 of the animal ordinance three or more times within a 24-month period. These violations may involve one or multiple animals and can result from guilty findings, PBJ (probation before judgement) or fines that have been paid. While many violations that we encounter are isolated events, some individuals repeatedly disregard the law and fail to take corrective actions that are brought forth to them. These habitual offenders pose ongoing risks to both animal welfare and the public safety. The reckless owner designation helps animal services take targeted action against individuals who show a consistent pattern of neglect or unsafe behavior. When it comes to animal ownership, this designation would not be for one-time mistakes. This designation is intended to apply specifically to those who continue to violate the ordinance."

She added, "The Deputy Director of Animal

Services would make the final determination based on a thorough review of prior violations and enforcement history. This ensures the decision is fact-based, consistent, and fair to all parties involved. And anybody who is deemed as a reckless owner does have the right to appeal to the animal matters hearing board for the board to overhear this and make final determination to uphold it or determine that it was not a fair determination."

Once that determination is upheld, that person would be barred from owning an animal for four years. She said, "This restriction offers a cooling off period and prevents further harm while emphasizing the seriousness of repeated non-compliance."

"You have put the community at risk too many times. You have put your own pets at risk too many times. And that is why this designation is here," she said.

Coleman explained, "In Calvert County, animals may be classified as potentially dangerous or dangerous, which follows a thorough investigation. The designation is based on specific behaviors that are unprovoked, perceived as an attempt to attack those, a threat to public safety or result in injury or death to a person or another animal."

Coleman explained, "The updated ordinance would address vague language that is in the current one. New requirements would include a perimeter fence at least six feet tall, that's fully enclosing the dog's area. So, it doesn't have to be the whole yard, but you need to fence in the area for the dog to be able to go outside in. And it needs to have a locking gate that remains secured when the dog is outside. Or you need to construct a secure outdoor kennel that is escape proof."

Tethering is another potentially controversial issue. The proposed ordinance doesn't ban it, but Coleman said, "For owners failing to do things such as having tethers that are too short, tethers that lack swivels to prevent tangling and anchoring the tethers in positions that allows the dog to become trapped or entangled. These conditions that we find the dogs in can result in injury, distress or worse, especially during extreme weather. What this policy does is limits unsupervised long-term tethering, particularly all day or overnight situations. It requires owners or another responsible person to be home and aware of the dog while it's tethered, and it maintains existing standards for access to sheltered shade and clean water."

Hart decried the 30-day sentences for animal cruelty convictions. He said, "They need to get took down. Thirty days is a joke. If you did that to a human being, what would happen? And that's the level that this needs to go to. I mean, to do things of that nature. And the thing that you guys busted at north part of the county, that's the stuff that we need teeth in," adding, "These people are evil."

Coleman praised the recent sentences. She said, "I will say I have been proud of the way things are going," adding "We have had some jail time lately and I think that is a really big thing."

Staff will work on revising the proposal based on the commissioners' concerns and return with another iteration.

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County Adds Eight Career Emergency Medical Technicians

Hance Says All Paid is Coming

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has approved the hiring of eight additional career Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) at the annual cost of \$769,370. They will be paid using monies received from a cost recovery program from insurance providers.

The decision comes on the heels of another decision the previous week to add eight additional emergency services communications workers.

Commissioner President Buddy Hance said during the discussion, "This county is going to be fully career EMS in the very near future." Prior to the decision, during an April 8 public hearing, Deputy Director of public Safety Crystal Dowd said, "In October 2023 at the request of the BOCC, the Department of Public Safety Career EMS Division began staffing a second ambulance for Prince Frederick Volunteer Rescue Squad. This request was made due to the number of emergency medical calls in the Prince Frederick area, which required assistance from neighboring stations to meet the demand in response to basic life support. Ambulance staff with merit and temporary Calvert County employees was placed in service in January



2024. The BOCC began a cost-recovery program to receive reimbursement of ambulance response and transport fees from medical insurance companies. The revenue collected from this program is required to offset the cost of emergency medical services, salaries, operations, and equipment."

Dowd added, "Career EMS is requesting to increase staffing of emergency medical technicians by eight positions. The additional positions would ensure continued staffing of the second ambulance at the Prince Frederick Volunteer Rescue Squad. The fund-

ing for these positions may be covered by the revenue collected from the cost recovery program. Career EMS is also requesting to utilize a portion of the revenue collected from the cost recovery program to offset overtime and salary expenses to staff the second ambulance during fiscal year 2025."

The overtime allocation would increase the total budget amount this year to \$930,510.

Dowd explained, "There was a period in time when it was realized that a second career ambulance was needed to support

the number of calls that are coming in in the Prince Frederick area. Company 6 and Company 7 at that period of time were being pulled into Prince Frederick and causing longer response times for their own areas as well. So having the second fully staffed ambulance 24 hours a day allows the response times for all of the different areas to be adequate."

There are four shifts of two persons each for an ambulance, and each shift works 24 hours and is off the next 72 hours, necessitating the eight new personnel.

"Soft billing is going to be able to sustain this in these crunch times that we're having as a county?", asked Commissioner Catherine Grasso and she said it would.

But Hance warned about the future. He said, "The long-term result is that there is going to be a fiscal impact because soft billing is not going to cover it. In the current budget, the new budget we're working on now, there's a request from North Beach for another career crew. I anticipate the following year there's going to be another request because we do not have enough volunteers to meet the core requirements for EMS calls. And soft billing is not going to cover all those costs."

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Grants Would Help Non-Profits Deal with Food Insecurity

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County has applied for funds from the state under the federal COVID-19 relief program that will go to two non-profit organizations in the county to be used for food insecurity.

Department of Community Resources Special Project Manager Kiko Nash told the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) during an April 8 public hearing, "In March 2025, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development announced that \$2 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) COVID funding had been recaptured. As the funds were designated for 'preparing for' a resurgence of COVID-19, DHCD allocated the remaining funds for one-time costs to support food pantries and homeless shelters, with additional constraints to ensure timely

expenditure. The application is being processed as an extension of our existing COVID funding application and will be reviewed by DHCD on a first-come, first-served basis."

Nash added, "In the application, the Department of Community Resources is proposing to fund the following sub-recipients: St. Anthony's Food Pantry for a walk-in refrigerator for their newly renovated pantry and Project ECHO for stackable washers and dryers, dining room tables and chairs, security cameras and durable lounge seating and sofa. The remaining purchases are recommended for updated appliances and furniture for the Homeless Day Program and Emergency Weather Shelter. These projects align with the funding's purpose of enhancing food security and improving shelter conditions for vulnerable populations in Calvert County."

Nash reported, "The Department of Community Resources is requesting \$104,083 from DHCD for this application.

No match is required, but Nash added, "However, due to some feedback from the state, our funding request will actually change to be adjusted as we cannot request funding for furniture. So, the request amount will be \$88,568, no matches required. The county provides in kind administrative support for this project."

The Ladies of Charity of Calvert County operates the North Beach food pantry at St. Anthony's Catholic Church. They are building a new facility next to the church and should be moving in the middle of May.

The organization's President Kathleen Temple said at the hearing, "Should the project be funded, the ladies will benefit our programs that provide support. We are committed to improving the safety of our community and the health of our community. We are proud of the activities we have undertaken in the past, and we look forward if awarded this grant to further have success with this program."

Temple added, "In 2024, 590 families visited the Ladies of Charity, Calvert Food Pantry a total of 5,856 times. We also provided 810 holiday meals covering Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. For Windy Hill elementary and secondary schools, we provide 3,382 meals to food insecure students. In total, we distributed 205,000 pounds of food to those in need in Calvert County. We have been serving Calvert County since 1968."

Commissioner Todd Ireland told Temple, "Your building is looking great, by the way. I know you guys are very happy."

Commissioner Catherine Grasso added, "The house looks wonderful. I've been there with you, and I know Commissioner Ireland has as well, and we see how you all operate. You provide an irreplaceable service to Calvert County and its citizens. So, thank you all very much."

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Proposal: Lift Ag District Moratorium

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners is considering changes to its Agricultural Preservation Rules and Regulations, including lifting the moratorium on new agricultural preservation districts.

Rural Planner II Jennifer David, in a memo to the commissioners prior to their April 8 meeting, wrote, "On September 16, 2013, the BOCC put in place a moratorium on the creation of new Agricultural Preservation Districts (APDs) due to an unbalanced supply of Transferrable Development Rights (TDRs) in the private market which negatively affected program participation and TDR value in the aftermath of the recession and housing market collapse that began in 2007. In 2020 the BOCC requested to reconvene the Transferrable Development Right Committee (Committee) to review the county's land preservation efforts and the TDR program and to make recommendations to the BOCC for consideration. Meeting over several months the committee developed a package of recommendations designed to improve the TDR program and increase opportunities for land preservation in Calvert County. One of the committee's recommendations was to lift the moratorium after the recommendations of the Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board (APAB) were adopted into the rules and regulations."

David went on to write, "The Calvert County Agricultural Land Preservation program rules and regulations were developed by the original APAB in 1978 and have gone through several text amendments but have not had a comprehensive update since the program was initiated. The TDR Committee recognized that opportunities for additional land preservation were limited due to the long-standing moratorium. However, the program's rules and regulations needed to be updated prior to considering lifting the moratorium. The Committee recommended



the APAB review the rules and regulations and make recommendations. Since 2020, staff worked with the APAB to update the rules and regulations. The proposed changes focus on addressing legal challenges the program has faced, incorporating the APAB's interpretations and policy decisions, and ensuring consistency with the March 2025 adopted Zoning Ordinance. At their March 2025 meeting, the APAB reviewed the draft and voted to recommend it move forward to the BOCC for consideration."

Before the discussion got underway, Commissioner Catherine Grasso noted that Commissioners Hance, Cox, and Ireland own TDRs and said, "I think the public doesn't understand why the three of you don't have to recuse yourself."

County Attorney John Norris said, "Under Chapter 41 of our county code is the county ethics ordinance that's been approved by the Ethics Commission, approved by the State Ethics Commission is compliant with, one of two models. And within there are provisions for conflicts of interest. So when someone has a financial conflict of interest via for themselves or for family member, they would have to typically recuse themselves from debate, discussion and deliberations

and decision on that matter. In the instance where more than a quorum of the board is impacted, because they would all have to recuse themselves, it would leave the board with insufficient number of members to decide an issue. So, in that case, Chapter 41 prescribes that those who have conflicts of interest when there is a quorum that are conflicted, disclose to the public what those conflicts are and then must proceed to vote and participate in the matter."

Hance said, "There are certain items that come before us that provide present conflicts. All of us pay taxes in the county. Of course, we all would have to. So that's the reason for the rule is that you can't remove a majority of a quorum because of a conflict."

Commissioner Mike Hart noted it's 'a small town,' adding, "In the past, me and Commissioner Weems both had liquor stores, there were things that we'd have to walk on. It's difficult in a small venue to never run into that."

David then said, "Calvert County's land preservation programs have been preserving our rural characters since 1978 and have been a hallmark of Calvert County Planning. In 1978, the county first set a goal of preserving 20,000 acres of prime forest and

agricultural land. In 1997 it had achieved that goal, and it doubled it to 40,000 acres. To date, over 32,600 acres have been preserved through various county, state, federal, and federal land preservation programs, with the efforts of our preservation partners, land trusts and private property owners."

She added, "Our comprehensive plan continues to support the goal of permanently preserving a minimum of 40,000 acres of prime farm and forest land."

David said as a final step of its implementation effort, the TDR committee "recommended that we reopen the program. And to do that, we need to update the rules and regulations. So these are the primary objectives of the update to the rules and regulations, to supersede all previous versions and apply a uniform set of regulations to all APDs to incorporate and codify policies, procedures, and decisions into a single cohesive document to strengthen the program by addressing issues and challenges that the program has faced to provide clarification for consistent administration of the program and to evaluate program eligibility criteria in preparation for lifting the moratorium on an APD creation."

Proposed changes to the rules and regulations include:

- Reorganizes and simplifies the overall document
- Clarifies Processes and Procedures
- Includes necessary technical updates
- Updates eligibility criteria for APD designation and PAR Fund applications
- Includes the new TDR Reserve Program
- Addresses allowable density in APDs
- Codifies policies regarding the use of APDs for private and public events
- Limits amendments or modifications to APDs

The commissioners made no decision during the work session.

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CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of March 24, 2025 – March 30, 2025, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,017 calls for service throughout the community including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 39
- Disorderly: 15
- Domestic: 25
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 37
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 884
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 17
- Traffic Complaints: 75
- Traffic Stops: 482
- 911 Hang-Ups: 10
- ARRESTS: 46



Christina Lynne Worley

CDS Violation: 25-25372 On March 29, 2025, Deputy Campbell responded to SureStay by Best Western located at 75 Main Street in Prince Frederick, for the reported trespassing incident. Investigation

revealed **Christina Lynne Worley**, 62 of no fixed address, was no longer permitted on the property. Inside Worley's room, management located two cans of Spray-X Electronics Duster. Worley admitted the cans belonging to her and to inhaling the controlled dangerous substance. Worley was placed under arrest and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with CDS: Inhaling a Harmful Substance.



Keith Adrian Allston

CDS Violation: 25-25406 On March 29, 2025, at 3:17 p.m., DFC Lewis responded to the area of 940 Costley Way Prince Frederick, for the report of a male "slumped" over in a pickup truck. Upon

arrival, deputies located a single occupant, **Keith Adrian Allston**, 49 of Hughesville, passed out in the vehicle. A consent search of the truck revealed a plastic straw with white powder on both ends. A subsequent search of Allston's person revealed a metal container with several pills inside. Allston was placed under arrest and charged with CDS: Possession Not Cannabis and CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.

Damaged Property: 25-25683 On March 30, 2025, Cpl. Kelly responded to the 3000 block of Abington Manor Drive in Huntingtown for a report of property destruction. The investigation revealed that between 9:28 p.m. on March 29 and 11:12 a.m. on March 30, an unknown suspect spray-painted multiple areas of the community park pavilion. The estimated damage is valued at approximately \$2,500.

Motor Vehicle Theft: 25-25612 On March 30, 2025, Sgt. Robshaw responded

to the 11700 block of Rivershore Drive in Dunkirk, for a reported motor vehicle theft. The complainant stated that her vehicle had been left unlocked with the keys inside and was stolen from the driveway of her residence sometime between 10:00 p.m. on March 29 and 3:40 a.m. on March 30. In addition to the vehicle, several personal items were taken, including the victim's Maryland driver's license, AirPods, a computer, and a Chase credit card. The stolen vehicle is described as a 2017 black Honda Civic 4-door. The total estimated value of the stolen property is \$15,550.

Theft: 25-24967 On March 28, 2025, Deputy Campbell responded to the 1900 block of Kings Landing Road in Huntingtown, for a reported theft from a vehicle. The complainant advised that at approximately 2:41 a.m., he noticed the interior light of his vehicle was on, despite no one being inside. Upon further inspection, it was discovered the vehicle had been rummaged through, with the contents of the center console scattered throughout. Approximately \$5 in change was reported stolen. The investigation is ongoing.

Theft: 25-24994 On March 28, 2025, Deputy MacWilliams responded to 2200 block of Kings Landing Road in Huntingtown, for the report of a theft from a vehicle. The victim reported that an unknown suspect entered two vehicles parked at the residence and stole a pocket BIC lighter valued at \$3 and \$2 in cash. The missing purse was later found inside the second vehicle. Detectives continue to investigate.

Theft: 25-24991 On March 28, 2025, DFC Huy responded to the 5200 block of Huntingtown Road in Huntingtown, for a reported theft from a vehicle. The victim reported that an unknown suspect entered his unlocked vehicle and stole approximately \$35 in change, \$10 in cash, and an Avon spray deodorant bottle.

Theft: 25-24978 On March 28, 2025, Deputy MacWilliams responded to the 1500 block of Stoneleigh Court in Huntingtown, for the report of a theft. The complainant reported that sometime after 9 p.m. on March 27, an unknown suspect(s) broke into and stole items from a vehicle located in the driveway of the residence. The suspect(s) also urinated on the driver's door. The estimated value of stolen property is \$20.

Theft: 25-24996 On March 28, 2025 DFC Huy responded to the 5200 block of Huntingtown Road in Huntingtown, for the reported theft from a vehicle. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) entered her vehicle and stole miscellaneous coins, a vape pen, numerous pens and pencils, and a handmade snake ring. A second vehicle on the property was rummaged through, but nothing appears to have been stolen. While on scene, deputies located the victim's property to the right of the home. Detectives continue to investigate.

Theft: 25-25197 On March 28, 2025, DFC T. Bowen responded to the 6000 block of Stephen Reid Road in Huntingtown, for the reported theft from a vehicle. The complainant reported that an unknown suspect(s) stole a Sig Sauer P365X and \$300 in US currency from his unlocked vehicle. The estimated value of stolen property is \$920.

Theft: 25-25100 On March 28, 2025, Deputy MacWilliams responded to the 5400 block of Huntingtown Road in Huntingtown, for the reported theft from a vehicle. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) entered her unlocked vehicle and emptied her purse and its contents on the ground. The victim discovered her credit cards, driver's license, and \$40 in US currency was missing. The investigation is ongoing.

Theft: 25-25620 On March 30, 2025, Deputy MacWilliams responded to the 3600 block of King Drive in Dunkirk, for the reported theft from a vehicle. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) entered her unlocked vehicle parked in the driveway and stole a wallet and a key FOB. The estimated value of stolen property is \$90.

Vehicle Tampering: 25-24952 On March 28, 2025, Sgt. Naughton responded to the 1600 block of Maurham Court in Huntingtown, for the reported vehicle tampering. The complainant reported he received an alert regarding movement on his outdoor security camera. The homeowner looked outside and observed a black male wearing a black hoodie with white writing, light-colored jeans, a black facemask, and green gloves enter his vehicle. The complainant advised by the time he made it outside, the male was gone. Nothing appears to have been missing. Detectives continue to investigate.

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

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

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization (C-SMMPO) will conduct a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting at the Calvert Marine Museum in the Waterfront Lounge, located at 14200 Solomons Island Rd. S., Solomons, MD 20688 on Monday, April 21, 2025, beginning at 11:00 a.m. for the purpose of discussing project updates and TAC agenda items. The agenda can be viewed at <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

This public meeting is to accept public and staff comments on the regarding items on the TAC meeting agenda. Public meetings are open to the public. Members of the press may attend.

Comments may be submitted on or before Friday, April 18, 2025, and should be addressed to the Long Range Planning Division, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or Karly Maltby, Calvert – St. Mary's MPO Administrator, with St. Mary's County Government's Department of Land Use & Growth Management via email at Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov

This meeting can be attended virtually, the Meeting ID is 430 427 6617 and the call-in number is (301) 715-8592. Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=87286148130>

For questions or more information, please contact Karly Maltby, Calvert-St. Mary's MPO Administrator, with St. Mary's County Government's Department of Land Use & Growth Management at (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507 or via email at Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov or visit <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

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. 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.

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, Apr 10

Internet Safety for Families

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

A Special Agent in the U.S. Secret Service will present to parents and guardians about the latest online risks and the newest technologies to keep families safe online. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, Apr 11

Friends of Calvert Library Pub Quiz

Calvert County Fairgrounds
7pm,

It's time for Pub Quiz, your favorite Friends of Calvert Library trivia night! You can test your knowledge, have some fun and win some cash! Bowls 29 and Sassafras Farms food trucks will have dinner for sale starting at 5pm when the doors open.

All proceeds go to help Calvert Library, so put on your thinking cap and register your team today! Tickets are \$120 per team of up to 6 adults. Cash prize to the top 3 teams! A limited number of teams are allowed so pre-registration is required. Don't have a team but love trivia? You can come as a spectator and maybe get picked up by one of the teams! For more information, call Robyn Truslow at 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862.

Sat, Apr 12

Annual Duck Race

Edward T. Hall Aquatic Center
130 Auto Drive, Prince Frederick
3:30 to 4 p.m.

Calvert County Parks & Recreation invites residents to participate in the annual Therapeutic Recreational (TR) Duck Race. Participants can sponsor a rubber duck to compete in a race down the pool; attendance is not required to claim a prize. All proceeds from this event will go towards the Therapeutic Recreation scholarship fund,

which provides financial assistance to individuals with special needs who are attending TR programs, including summer camps and other life-enriching programs. For more information contact

Otter Trot 5K

Calvert Marine Museum
8 a.m.

Get ready for otterly awesome fun! You're invited to the second annual CMMS Otter Trot 5K on Saturday, April 12! Whether you're sprinting, strolling, or just really into otters, this timed race is for you. Secure your spot by March 29 before the price increases! Proceeds from the 2025 Otter Trot 5K will contribute to building a new enclosure for our beloved North American river otters, Chessie Grace and Calvert. \$30 Race Fee + \$2.80 Sign-Up Fee; Registration price increases to \$40 for non-members after March 29.

Jigsaw Puzzle Swap

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Wa
9-11 a.m.

Bring your gently used puzzles and exchange them for new-to-you challenges. It's a fun, eco-friendly way to refresh your collection and connect with fellow puzzle enthusiasts. Registration is not required but will let us know who is interested in other puzzling events! 410-535-0291 or 301-855-1862. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Internet Safety for Kids

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
2-3 pm.

Kids grades K-5 will learn about online safety from a Special Agent in the U.S. Secret Service and parents can choose to participate in Operation Safe Kids, which provides parents or guardians with a hard copy containing biographical data, a current photograph, and digitized inkless fingerprints of their children. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Annual Easter Egg Hunt

St. Leonard Polling House
5095 St. Leonard Road, St. Leonard
11 a.m.

Hunt eggs, decorate a cupcake and have a snack. Easter Egg Hunt for children 10 years and younger. Sponsored by the St. Leonard Vision Group. Weather date, Sunday, April 13, 3 pm.

Easter Hop

Freedom Hill Horse Rescue
7940 Flint Hill Road, Owings
12-2 p.m.

The Easter Hop will be a fun-filled event to celebrate Easter and Spring. Participants aged 1-12 are welcome to attend. Enjoy an afternoon of stories, decorating Easter baskets for the horses, craft time, grooming your Spring "bunny," and going on a "bunny" hop or leading your "bunny" around.

For more information and to purchase tickets, please go to www.fhhr.org/event-details/easter-hop.

BINGO for Humane Society of Calvert County

Calvert Elks #2620
1015 Dares Beach Rd., Prince Fredrick
6-10 p.m.

Come out for an evening of fun and great prizes. There will be food for purchase and a cash bar, raffle baskets, post it games and pull tabs! Purchase your tickets at humane-societyofcalvertcounty.org or call 410-353-7670. Tickets are \$40 and include 15 BINGO games.

Sun, Apr 13

Easter Egg Hunt – PHS NJROTC

Patuxent High School
12485 Southern Connector Blvd., Lusby
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Join the Easter Bunny and the NJROTC cadets/boosters for their first Easter Egg Hunt. FREE admission. Egg hunts will start at staggered times based on ages:

- 11:00 am—ages 3 and under (Parent assistance allowed)
- 11:30 am—ages 4 to 5
- 12:00 pm—ages 6 to 8
- 12:30 pm—ages 9 to 12
- 1:00 pm—ages 13 and over

Hot dogs, pizza, chips, drinks and baked goods will be available for purchase

Easter Extravaganza

Christ Church Parish Hall, 3100
Broomes Island Road, Port Republic
2-4 p.m.

Come for an afternoon of Family Fun! Enjoy an Egg Roll at 2:30 p.m., crafts, a Guided Hike on the Seven Bridges Trail at 3 p.m., snacks, and Attic Treasures. All are welcome, and this event is free. For more information visit our website—christchurchcalvert.org

Mon, Apr 14

Finding Something New in an Old Story

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

A talk by Michael W. Kauffman, Author of "American Brutus." 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Upcoming

Maritime Performance Series – Josh Goforth

Calvert Marine Museum
Friday, April 18
7 p.m.

Josh grew up in Madison County, North Carolina, surrounded by the music and stories of his ancestors. He is a highly accomplished storyteller and old-time bluegrass and swing musician, playing close to 20 instruments. Doors open at 6 p.m. with beer and wine for sale. Tickets are \$20 online, up to one day prior \$25 the day of the concert, online and at the door.

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

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



County Times

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St. Mary's Community Calendar

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

Fri, Apr 11

Lenten Fish Fry
Our Lady of the Wayside's Loretto Hall
37575 Chaptico Rd., Chaptico
5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Dine In or Drive Thru. Dine in menu includes fried fish, fish nuggets, fried pop-corn shrimp, French fries, coleslaw, green beans, rolls and iced tea. Desserts available. Adults \$20 Children 6-12 \$10 Children 5 and under free. Drive thru Carry outs \$20 except whole fish only. Drinks and desserts inside dining only. For more information contact Brenda Russell at rsbrssl@aol.com or 301-247-1871.

Sat, Apr 12

Indoor Yard Sale
Mechanicsville Rescue Squad
28120 Old Flora Corner Rd.,
Mechanicsville
7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Tables for rent (\$15.00). Please contact Angel Willer at 240-925-4882. Rain or shine.

Southern Knights 2025 Coming Out Car & Bike Show
Bowles Farm
22880 Budds Creek Rd., Clements
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Southern Knights 2025 Coming Out Car & Bike Show—April 12th, 8am-3pm. Bowles Farm, 22880 Budds Creek Road,

Clements, MD 20624. All vehicles welcome (cut-off year for cars 2000). Pre-registration \$20 by March 29, \$25 at gate. Registration cut-off noon. T-Shirts first 100 registered. Swap meet/flea market. Top 75 Cars & Top 5 Motorcycles and other awards. (Rain date April 13) Information call Bill 301-904-7430.

Three Oaks Center Annual Cornhole Tournament
Action Lounge
25470 Point Lookout Rd., Leonardtown
1 p.m.

Three Oaks Center is back for a second year to raise some FUNds for a great cause! Three Oaks Center fundraiser Switcholio at Action, \$20 per person, with 50% of the overall pot going to benefit the Three Oaks Center directly!! The remaining 50% will go to the top 3 finishers in the 8-round event, which will be ranked via PPR! (There will be no bracket, ONLY the 8 round-robin games!!) In addition to the cornhole, there will also be 50/50 tickets sold, with additional items/baskets to be raffled!

Three Oaks Center offers programs that provide people experiencing homelessness in St. Mary's County with housing, stabilization, assessment, and referral to appropriate resources so that they may return to living productive, self-sufficient lives in our community. The funds generated will help the Three Oaks Center to continue providing help and assistance to those in need! Registration starts at 12pm and bags fly at 1pm! We hope to see you there!

SMTMD Contra Dance
Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd., Chaptico
7 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.

The evening starts at 7 pm with a half hour beginner's dance workshop followed by live music performed by the SOMD Open Band and dancing from 7:30 to 9:30 pm. Check the website calendar for the lineup of dances and callers. Admission: \$8 for members; \$12 for non-SMTMD members; children 17 and under (when accompanied by a paying adult) and band members are free. *See website for rescheduled or canceled events. Info: smtmd2@gmail.com, www.smtmd.org/new-events/

Sun, Apr 13

All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast with the Easter Bunny
2nd District Social Hall
45245 Drayden Rd., Valley Lee
8 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Breakfast — all-you-can-eat, home-made, home-style. MENU: scrambled eggs, home fried potatoes, pancakes, french toast, sausage links, ham, bacon, creamed chipped beef, sausage gravy, spiced applesauce, grits & biscuits. Assorted juices, milk and coffee will be available. Adults—\$14.00; children 6 to 12—\$7.00; children 5 & under are free. Proceeds from this fundraiser go to the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad to continue keeping our community safe.

Sponsored (and prepared) by the 2nd District Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad Auxiliary.
Thank you for your support!
For more information call: 240-925-2512

Spring Craft Show
24801 Three Notch Rd, Hollywood
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Sponsored by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Hollywood Volunteer Fire Department. Bake sale, 50/50 raffle. Stuffed ham, food & beverages for purchase. For more information email craftshow@hvfd7.com

Mon, Apr 14

Low-Cost Rabies Clinic
St. Mary's County Fairgrounds
6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The St. Mary's Animal Welfare League (SMAWL) and St. Mary's County Health Department have partnered together to provide low-cost rabies and distemper vaccination as well as microchip services for cats and dogs. Find us at St. Mary's County Fairgrounds on the second Monday of every month, March through November!
Rabies vaccines: \$15
Distemper vaccines: \$15
Microchipping: \$30
Please bring current rabies certificate (not tags), if available. All animals must be restrained on leash or in a carrier.

ST. MARY'S COUNTY Library

UPCOMING EVENTS

Movie Screening of Free for All: The Public Library
This film explores the history and impact of public libraries in shaping our lives. Join us for an engaging discussion about the incredible ways the library helps us learn, connect, and grow together. Leonardtown Library, Friday, April 11 from 2 – 4 p.m. Leonardtown's film discussion will feature a panel of local women, librarians, and historians to discuss women, segregation, and racial justice in the library movement. The film, Free for All: The Public Library, tells the story of the quiet revolutionaries who made a simple idea happen – to create a place where anyone can enter and encounter a universe of ideas, free of charge. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Bike Rodeo: Safety Stampede
Saddle up and test your cycling know-how! Lexington Park Elementary School on Saturday, April 12, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Whether you're new to biking or a seasoned cyclist, all ages can practice riding right with our series of challenges. From bike safety and street smarts to skills tests and agility exercises, each activity is designed to build your confidence on two wheels - or three! Bring your bike, helmet, sense of adventure, and passion for making Southern Maryland safer for cyclists - and join the stampede! Note: This event is weather-dependent. In the event of inclement weather, this event will be rescheduled for May 3, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org to receive a reminder email or notice of cancellation due to weather. Walk-ins (and

bike-ins!) welcome.

Journey Through Indigenous Art
Dive into the fascinating world of Indigenous art with us! Discover the rich traditions and evolving practices of the Indigenous Peoples of Southern Maryland. We'll explore braintan, wampum, quillwork, clay pots, tree bark and animal pelts. You'll see amazing finished products on display and get answers to questions you're wondering about! Kids will have the chance to learn about the importance of maize, make their own corn necklace to take home, and also create a paper design for clay pots. Leonardtown Library on Saturday, April 12 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. Register on www.stmalib.org.

Family Fairy Tale Tea Party
It's National Library Week! Bring the family and celebrate the magic of libraries with classic tales of royalty, magical spells, talking animals, and other whimsy! Enjoy tea and light snacks while making crafts, listening to music, and playing games. Costumes encouraged! Charlotte Hall Library on Saturday, April 12 from 2 - 3:30 p.m. Please register each person at-

tending (children and adults). Register on www.stmalib.org.
Birds, Bees, Butterflies, and You
Join us for a Nature Walk and Citizen Science Adventure, a fun partnership between Historic Sotterley and St. Mary's County Library! Explore the beauty of nature on a guided walk with one of our local experts. Afterward, head to the Mobile Library to discover the Library's Citizen Science Kits to learn how you can contribute to real-world science from your own backyard. End the day with a relaxing stroll through the Colonial Garden, observing pollinators and putting your new Citizen Science skills to work! Perfect for nature lovers, future scientists, and families—don't miss out on this exciting, hands-on adventure! This event will take place at Historic Sotterley, 44300 Sotterley Lane, Hollywood, MD 20636 on Monday, April 14, 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Please register once per family group on www.stmalib.org and remember to bring hats and sunscreen.

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Upcoming Special Events

April 12 Easter Extravaganza with the Easter Bunny & local vendors	May 4 Spring Open Market featuring local vendors
April 12 Mad Hatter's Tea Party 12pm and 2pm	May 10 Mom's Day Out featuring local vendors & flower workshop
May 3 First Saturday of the Month featuring local vendors	May 18 Cars & Coffee car show

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Wanderings of an Aimless Mind



The Simple Things Are What Matters

By Shelby Opperman
Contributing Writer

A man and his yard implements is a sight to behold, specifically my husband and his rake. Before we had that heavy rain last week, my husband was a man with a rake in his hand and a plan. He was going to make leaf berms to hold the water and new grass seed up in front of the house. Normally when it rains the leaves, grass seed, sticks, and whatever else is in that area wash down to the side over to the electric and cable path. In that area there is beautiful, lush grass and lime green moss that makes you feel like you are in Ireland. My vinca has exploded in there too. If you need any let me know.



The plan was a good one, much like the old Dutch fairytale by Mary Maples Dodge about Hans Brinker who used his finger to plug a hole in a dike so the town wouldn't flood, but Mother Nature's downpour here had other plans causing rivers to break through spots in the berms my husband so carefully crafted. Many stayed in place so all in all his plan worked. My husband will not be deterred though and keeps putting berms around trees and floral areas which do make everything look really nice outside. The problem comes when he sits down to relax and jumps up a few minutes later when he notices renegade leaves that are not in a berm or generally where they are supposed to be (I used to be like that with housework years ago – everything had to be in its place – and I would keep getting up to fix it, I'm glad I don't worry like that anymore :). That particular day before the rain came, my husband must have jumped up 20 times to corral those leaves.

Mindy, the crazy hound dog, knows enough to be out of the way when her "dad" is in yard maintenance mode, so just as soon as he finished raking out a circular area with a small stone wall, Mindy hopped up to lay on the sun-warmed mulch in that circle right next to one of my stone dogs that looks a lot like her. My husband and I both laughed because we had never seen Mindy lay in there before.

I keep forgetting to apologize to my husband about blaming him for something I thought he did on April 1st. That day while I was answering pool calls I would look up occasionally at the clock and think oh, good its only 1:13pm, I have plenty of time to take meat out of the freezer for dinner, or do this or that, so I would go back making pool calls. It was probably a couple hours later when my husband came home and up the steps when I realized that the clock was still 1:13pm. I asked him if he took the battery out deliberately for April Fool's Day, but he genuinely looked puzzled. I changed the battery and here's my apology, better late than never.

He did give me a good laugh a few nights ago at dinner. I was working on taxes until it was close to dinner time and not paying attention to the time at all. He yelled into the office where I was working and asked if I wanted to order Chinese food since I had mentioned it a few nights before. Of course, I said yes, I love to get food from Hot Pot in Charlotte Hall, plus they deliver. I love all their meals but give me their pork fried rice and I feel like I am a child again with my parents and brothers eating at the old China Sea Restaurant on Suitland Road near the Census Bureau. Going to the China Sea was a real treat and saved for special occasions.

We always order 4 eggrolls from Hot Pot with our meals – can't forget those. My husband likes their homemade hot mustard, and it is hot! I watched while he loaded up a piece of egg roll with hot mustard knowing what was about to happen but not expecting that it would be so explosive. He was red for a bit, but did that stop him from dipping again? Sort of. After I said "You're going to add some more??", he looked at me and said there is a technique in adding hot mustard, it was all about trying to find that right amount. Well, I think he may need to keep trying to find that "right amount" because if his face had gotten any redder I was going to call the Rescue Squad. But he loves that hot mustard so that's all that matters...the simple, enjoyable things.

To each new day's adventure, Shelby

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

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How to Keep Indoor Air Clean & Comfortable During Allergy Season

Seasonal allergies can turn a warm and welcoming spring or summer day into something else entirely. Congestion, runny nose, sneezing, and itchy eyes are just some of the unpleasant symptoms of seasonal allergies, which are most often triggered by high pollen counts during spring and summer.

The Mayo Clinic advises seasonal allergy sufferers to stay indoors when pollen counts are high. But what about indoor air quality? The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America reports that eight out of 10 people are exposed to dust mites and six out of 10 are exposed to cat or dog dander. Dust mites and pet dander can each trigger allergic reactions. Pair those two triggers with higher pollen counts common in spring and summer and it's no wonder that many seasonal allergy sufferers are ambivalent about the warm weather seasons. Fortunately, steps can be taken to keep indoor air clean during allergy season.

- Close windows and doors. Many people embrace opportunities to open their windows and doors on warm days, but doing so allows outdoor allergens like pollen to get inside. Pollen can attach to furniture and clothing, and that can make time indoors unpleasant for allergy sufferers. Maintain indoor air quality by closing windows and doors



on windy days and/or days when pollen counts are high.

- Employ air cleaning devices. The AAFA notes that air cleaners with Certified Asthma & Allergy Friendly® filters can filter nearly 98 percent of allergen particles in the air. The AAFA maintains a list of certified air cleaners

at asthmaandallergyfriendly.com.

- Keep a clean home. The Mayo Clinic notes that, in most homes, items such as bedding, upholstered furniture and carpeting provide an ideal environment for dust mites, which are microscopic bugs that trigger allergic reactions in many people. The AAFA recommends

keeping surfaces in a home clean and uncluttered to control dust mites. Washing bedding and uncovered pillows in hot water each week also can help to corral dust mites and improve indoor air quality.

- Vacuum frequently. Frequent vacuuming is another way to improve indoor air quality. The AAFA maintains a list of Certified Asthma & Allergy Friendly® vacuums that have been tested and found to prevent allergens from reentering the air.
- Prevent mold and treat areas where infestations have occurred. Mold also contributes to poor indoor air quality. Dehumidifiers can be used to reduce mold and dust mites, making these beneficial additions to allergy sufferers' homes. Minimizing house plants around the house and addressing leaky fixtures immediately are some additional measures to prevent mold infestations.

It may not be enough to simply stay indoors to avoid allergic reactions on spring and summer days. Embracing measures to improve indoor air quality can be vital for allergy sufferers as well.

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How to Prepare Outdoor Spaces for Entertaining



Spring & summer is a popular time for outdoor entertaining. For many, Memorial Day weekend marks the first outdoor get-together opportunity of the year, which is certainly something to look forward to.

As outdoor entertaining season begins, homeowners can take these steps to prepare their outdoor living spaces for the first big backyard get-together of the year.

- Break out the power washer. Pressure washing is an important component of spring home cleanup. The warmer temperatures of spring allow water from power washing to dry more quickly, which can decrease the chances that mold and mildew will grow on surfaces like siding. A freshly power washed home also makes for a welcoming entertaining space. A power washer also can be used on outdoor entertaining spaces to remove dirt and debris that built up over the winter. Just make sure to read manufacturer instructions before using a power washer to clean paving stones, decks and outdoor furniture.
- Inspect outdoor furniture. Now is a good time to inspect outdoor furniture if the task was not performed in late fall or early winter before items were moved into the garage or placed in storage. Check to make sure furnishings are still safe to use, addressing any issues before guests come over for a Memorial Day weekend gathering.

Wash cushions for outdoor furniture and replace any that might be showing their age.

- Clean the grill. A thorough cleaning of the grill also is in order prior to summer entertaining season. Many homeowners do little or no grilling during winter, so now is the time to give grilling surfaces and the interior of the grill a deep cleaning. Check for leaks if using a gas grill, and scrub the interior of any grease that accumulated last season. Many grilling experts advise lighting a grill and letting it burn for roughly 20 minutes prior to putting any foods on the grates for the first time. Such a strategy allows residual fluids like soap, vinegar and de-greasing products used when cleaning the grill to burn off before food is placed on the grates.
- Inspect the landscaping, too. It's not just seating areas like patios and decks that need some investigation prior to outdoor entertaining season. Take a walk around the landscape and make sure there's no potentially dangerous spots where people could be injured when playing backyard games. Fill in any holes with soil and fresh grass seed, and inspect trees to see if any branches need to be pruned.

Summer entertaining season begins each Memorial Day weekend. Homeowners can take various steps to ensure their outdoor entertaining spaces are comfortable and safe.

How to Establish a Peaceful Backyard Retreat

Backyards have undergone quite a transformation over the last decade-plus. The days when patios and decks were all a backyard living space had to offer are largely a thing of the past, as homeowners have realized just how valuable it can be to commit to a stunning backyard.

The real estate experts at Zillow estimate that homes with backyard features such as outdoor televisions, outdoor showers and outdoor kitchens command 3.1 percent more than expected upon reaching the market. If 3.1 percent doesn't sound like a lot, it actually equates to nearly \$11,000 on a typical home. But there's more to gain than money when converting a backyard space into a relaxing respite. Such spaces can provide a welcoming escape from the hustle and bustle of daily life, all the while giving homeowners and residents a comfortable space to soak in the great outdoors. With that in mind, homeowners can take the following steps to establish a peaceful backyard retreat.

- Refresh the landscape. Even if your vision is centered on outdoor furniture and a space that accommodates movie nights under the stars, it's still best to refresh the existing landscape if it needs a little upkeep. Overgrown trees, hedges and bushes can create the same cluttered vibe that dominates interior spaces overrun with items. If necessary, work with a local tree service or landscape architect to trim, or even remove, trees and hedges that are crowding the backyard and making it feel claustrophobic or giving it an



unkempt look. Aim for a landscape that affords a balance of sun and shade so the space is as comfortable as possible throughout the day.

- Set up multiple gathering spaces, if possible. Once a backyard retreat is established, everyone who calls the property home might find the space hard to resist. Keep this in mind when planning the space and aim to set up multiple gathering spaces. An outdoor kitchen with a nearby dinner table can be a great space to enjoy al fresco dining, but a separate area to read a book or watch a movie or ballgame can make the space more versatile. Some may want to relax away from the noise of the grill area, and multiple gathering

spaces ensures there's always a peaceful spot to unwind out back.

- Add a water feature. Running water has a way of calming the nerves, and that's good to keep in mind when planning a backyard retreat. Water features run the gamut from garden ponds to koi ponds to fountains to hot tubs. Homeowners can identify which feature best aligns with their idea of relaxation and then work with a landscape architect to ensure it's installed in their backyard oasis.
- Don't forget shade. Temperatures are rising in many areas of the globe, and that's worth noting when planning a backyard retreat. Even the most ardent sun worshippers likely won't

want to be exposed to the sun at all times when relaxing in their backyards. Strategically chosen means of providing shade can make spaces enjoyable all day long. Consider umbrellas, gazebos, pergolas, and even retractable awnings to cover patios and decks when the sun is at its highest each afternoon. If you plan to spend ample time in the grass, make that more enjoyable by planting shade trees, which also can protect the grass from drought and make it more comfortable underfoot.

A relaxing backyard retreat can make for an ideal space to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life.



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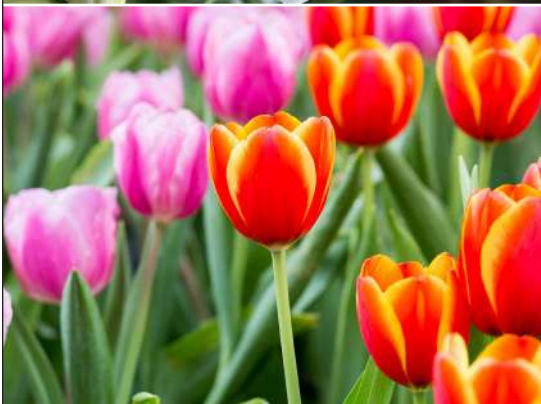
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How to Keep Kids Safe During a Home Renovation Project



Home renovation projects are significant undertakings. Some projects are simple and do not require residents to adjust much, if at all. But larger projects can take several weeks or even months, and such renovations pose a unique challenge, particularly for homeowners who have young children.

Children are curious by nature, and that curiosity can be dangerous during home renovations. Homeowners preparing to renovate their homes can keep these safety strategies in mind to protect their children during the project.

- Let contractors know there are children in the house. Keeping kids safe can be a collective effort that involves homeowners and the contractors working in their homes. On the day contractors arrive, remind the project leader there are kids in the house and request that he or she let staff know there will be curious youngsters around. Contractors can seal off rooms being worked on at the start of each day, and then do so again before leaving for the night. Many contractors have children of their own at home, so if they know youngsters are in the house they might be especially mindful of safety and less likely to leave tools or potentially harmful debris out overnight.
- Inform children certain areas are now off limits. Parents can inform and routinely remind children that spaces being renovated are off limits until the project is complete. Explain why it's important that everyone in the house, including adults, must respect this rule. Of course, kids don't always listen to Mom and Dad, so this step likely won't

guarantee kids will steer clear of sealed off areas. But explaining to kids why they need to avoid the areas can be more effective than just telling them to avoid project spaces.

- Set a good example. It can be tempting to peak in on spaces being renovated when contractors go home for the day, but parents should know children may be watching them. If you're curious about the progress, ask the project manager to see a space during the day while children are at school. If it's summertime and kids are home, you can still ask, but do so with your children so they won't think you're being sneaky, which will only add to their curiosity.
- Turn off electricity in rooms being renovated when contractors go home. Speak with your contractor and ask if it's alright to turn off the power to rooms being worked on at the end of each day. If so, this can remove the risk of kids sneaking into spaces and turning on power tools at night or getting hurt while poking around exposed electrical wires.
- Hire a cleaning service once the project is complete. Once the job is finished, hire a professional cleaning service to clean all areas that were worked on. This increases the chances that small but potentially harmful remnants, such as nails or staples, are gone before kids start using the renovated spaces.

Renovation projects can last for weeks. Parents of small children must take steps to keep curious kids safe while a home is being renovated.



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How to Find the Right Contractor for Your Home Renovation



Home renovations are significant undertakings. Though some projects require more sizable investments of time and money than others, all merit homeowners' attention and inspire some excitement when pondering the finished product.

A finished product tends to offer more appeal when the project is overseen and undertaken by a professional contractor. Small projects may be in the wheelhouse of skilled do-it-yourselfers, but most homeowners are best served leaving home renovations to the professionals. Finding the right contractor for a given job is of the utmost importance, and the following are some tips to help homeowners do just that.

- Seek word-of-mouth recommendations. Word-of-mouth advertising has long been recognized as an invaluable tool to attract customers, and for good reason. A 2025 report on the state of the roofing industry provided by Roofing Contractor, the official publication for the International Roofing Expo®, found that 79 percent of homeowners identify word-of-mouth as the top way to find a roofing professional. Word-of-mouth is so valued because homeowners can ask friends or neighbors about their experiences with a given professional in a pressure-free setting. Word-of-mouth also can help homeowners cut down on the pool of potential contractor candidates, which is no small benefit in markets flooded with renovation professionals.
- Secure multiple written estimates. It can be time-consuming to speak to multiple contractors and secure written estimates from each one, but such legwork is well worth the effort if the end result is finding the right contractor. Secure multiple estimates even if the first one provided to you is below budget. Multiple estimates allow homeowners to compare what's included, and not included, in each one. Some contractors offering low estimates may

not include materials costs or additional factors that will increase the price. Others may seem more expensive initially but may prove more affordable than competitors if their estimates include all of the costs associated with the project. Only a direct comparison of multiple estimates, which should include details specific to the project and an itemized list of what will be provided and performed by the contractor, can give homeowners an idea of what they're paying for.

- Stay local when possible. Hiring local contractors is beneficial for a number of reasons. Hiring locals keeps money in the community and thus supports the local economy. And working with local contractors can make it easier for homeowners to keep lines of communication open. Many projects also require a little post-completion upkeep or even some tweaks, which is more easily accomplished when working with contractors based nearby. And finally, local contractors will be familiar with building codes and other details specific to a given town. That familiarity can ensure a project is done in adherence to codes and not stalled by permit- or inspection-related delays.
- Confirm their insurance. Travelers Insurance urges homeowners to confirm a contractor is properly insured and bonded prior to signing a contract. Contractors should be willing to provide a certificate of insurance (COI) that indicates their provider, policy number and coverage limits. Travelers also notes homeowners can contact insurers directly to verify coverage and ensure the policy is current. Never hire a contractor who is uninsured or unwilling to provide proof of insurance.

Hiring a contractor to perform a home renovation may be a leap of faith, but homeowners can take steps to ensure they find the right professional for the job.



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Tips to Renovate on a Budget



Renovations around the house require an investment of time and often considerable amounts of money. Findings from the 2024 U.S. Houzz & Home Study show that home renovations are becoming more expensive. The median renovation spending for homeowners has gone up 60 percent since 2020. Angi, a home services website, reports the average renovation cost for homes between 1,250 and 1,600 square feet is \$51,772, but the final cost of home renovations depends on the scope of the project.

Homeowners who are conserving funds can rest assured that it is possible to make meaningful changes both inside and outside a home without breaking the bank. Here are some ways to renovate a home on a budget.

- Create a budget and don't waver. Figure out exactly what you can afford for a renovation and then make that your maximum dollars spent. Research comparable projects in your area and be honest about whether you can afford the renovation as-is or if you must adapt ideas to fit your price. Make sure to build in a cushion of around 15 to 20 percent for any unforeseen expenses that may arise once a renovation is underway.
- Maximize an existing floor plan. This Old House suggests looking for ways to maximize your current layout before you invest in major renovations like an expansion. Bring in a designer with an eye for utilizing space. For example, see how you might be able to replace shelves with pull-out drawers in the kitchen. Moving furniture around or rethinking floor plans also can help to lower costs.
- Balance DIY with hiring contractors. You can save money by tackling some projects yourself, but only if you are

confident in your renovation skills. Rather than risk making costly mistakes and having to redo things, hire well-vetted professionals but ask if there's any DIY work you can do to cut costs.

- Check clearance and resale stores. Shop discount stores for building materials to save money. For example, if a builder ordered too many cabinets they may offer them to Habitat for Humanity ReStores, which are non-profit home improvement stores and donation centers. Checking the clearance and markdown sections of other stores may yield considerable savings on items needed for a renovation. Warehouse retailers like Costco or Sam's Club also can be great places to find certain home improvement materials and furnishings.
- Take advantage of free services. Certain stores may offer things like free consultations with designers who can show you what a renovation can look like. This is advantageous to the stores because once you see the potential you're more likely to buy the products, even if it's not mandatory.
- Resurface instead of redo. Certain items can be made to look new with minimal effort. Paint is a relatively inexpensive tool that can transform walls and more. A good hardwood flooring company can buff out a floor and put a new coating instead of an entirely new floor. Kitchen cabinets can be resurfaced instead of replaced as well.

Finding ways to perform home renovations on a budget may require some creative thinking, but it's possible to get results at the right price point.

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Law Enforcement Appreciation Day Announced



Law Enforcement Appreciation Day 2024

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

Law Enforcement Appreciation Day will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 11:30 a.m. at The White Rose, located at 21030 Point Lookout Road in Callaway, MD.

The Officer of the Year from each agency will receive recognitions from the Commissioners of St. Mary's County,

Governor Wes Moore, the Maryland Senate, the Maryland House of Delegates, the Triad/SALT Council, and more.

This event is free and open to the public. The community is invited to stay for a complimentary lunch following the ceremony. Advance registration is appreciated but not required to attend.

For more information or to register, please contact Nicoletta Pollice DAHS at (301) 475-4200, ext. 1074 or nicoletta.pollice@stmaryscountymd.gov.

For more information on DAHS, please visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or follow them at [Facebook.com/SMCDAHS](https://www.facebook.com/SMCDAHS).

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Hazardous waste items accepted for collection include acids, ammonia, bleach,

cleaners, fuels, gas/oil mixtures, gasoline, household and lawn pesticides, mercury thermometers, photography chemicals, pool chemicals, solvents, wood preservatives, paint thinners and alkyd (oil-based) paint. Unacceptable items include ammunition, asbestos, explosive materials, latex paint*, medical waste, pharmaceuticals, radioactive materials, and picric acid. *Latex paint can be hardened by adding a paint hardener; once it is completely hardened, it may be disposed of at any Convenience Center or at the St. Mary's County Landfill.

For more information, please visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/dpw or contact DPW&T at (301) 475-4200, ext. 3550.



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Direct Primary Care is a simple, affordable, and relationship-based approach to healthcare. Instead of billing insurance for every visit, test, or procedure, patients pay a flat monthly fee—much like a subscription—to receive ongoing care.

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What Makes Grove Family Health Different?

At **Grove Family Health**, that Direct Primary Care model is brought to life by **Sheri Dean, CRNP**, a board-certified Family Nurse Practitioner with more than 20 years of experience. She opened the clinic to serve her community with **more time, more access, and more heart**.

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<p>4-Pk. 12-Oz. Cans Devil's Backbone Tequila Smash Strawberry Margarita</p> <p>13.99</p>	<p>12-Pk. 12-Oz., Cans Happy Thursday Spiked Refreshers</p> <p>16.49</p>	<p>12-Oz. Cans 24-Pack Yuengling</p> <p>20.99</p>	<p>12-Oz. Bottles 18-Pack Coors Light</p> <p>16.49</p>	<p>12-Oz. Cans 24-Pack Michelob Ultra</p> <p>25.99</p>
<p>750mL Hibiki Suntory Japanese Whisky</p> <p>98.99</p>	<p>750mL Rock N Roll Cristalino Reposado Tequila</p> <p>89.99</p>	<p>1.75L Crown Royal Canadian Whiskey</p> <p>45.99</p>	<p>1.75L Smirnoff Vodka</p> <p>19.49</p>	<p>1.75L Seagrams VO Whiskey</p> <p>20.49</p>
<p>1.75L Gordon's London Dry Gin</p> <p>15.99</p>	<p>750mL Bardstown Origin Series Ky Straight Rye</p> <p>54.99</p>	<p>1.75L Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey</p> <p>39.99</p>	<p>750mL Patron Reposado Tequila</p> <p>51.99</p>	<p>1.75L Bacardi Gold Rum</p> <p>22.49</p>
<p>1.75L Ryan's Cream Liqueur</p> <p>14.99</p>	<p>3L., All Flavors Summit Box wine</p> <p>14.99</p>	<p>750mL Hahn Pinot Noir</p> <p>10.99</p>	<p>750mL Piper Sonoma Brut Rose</p> <p>17.49</p>	<p>750mL XXL Sparkling Moscato Or Rose Moscato</p> <p>12.99</p>
<p>750mL Port Of Leonardtown Peach Mango Mambo</p> <p>14.99</p>	<p>750mL Talibott Kali Hart Chardonnay</p> <p>17.49</p>	<p>750mL Noble Vines 181 Merlot</p> <p>11.49</p>	<p>Wine of the Month</p> <p>750mL, Selected Menage A Trois Wines</p> <p>9.99</p>	
<p>750mL Montes Alpha Carmenere</p> <p>21.49</p>	<p>750mL Centorri Moscato Di Pavia</p> <p>11.49</p>	<p>750mL Santa Margherita Pinot Grigio</p> <p>24.49</p>	<p>750mL Force & Grace Cabernet Sauvignon Paso Robles</p> <p>25.99</p>	

WED 9	THURS 10	FRI 11	SAT 12	SUN 13	MON 14	TUES 15
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PRICES GOOD FROM
April 9 THRU April 15, 2025



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MEET BOP

Bop the Dachshund/English Setter mix was rescued from our local shelter after being transferred from a shelter in Texas. Bop is a happy little guy. He likes his foster brothers and sisters (cat and dog). He is clean in his crate and walks well on a leash. If you're interested in giving Bop his Forever home go to www.animalrelieffund.org or stop by the Well Pet Clinic Saturdays between 11am-2pm



Fill Out an Advance Health Care Directive at Law Day

Do you have an Advance Healthcare Directive? Is it up to date? If you answered no – sign up for Law Day to meet with an attorney and fill one out, free of charge! Law Day will be held on Friday, May 2, 2025, from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at four locations:

- Department of Aging & Human Services Office (41780 Baldrige Street, Leonardtown)
- Garvey Senior Activity Center (23630 Hayden Farm Lane, Leonardtown)
- Loffler Senior Activity Center (21905 Chancellors Run Road, Great Mills)
- Northern Senior Activity Center (29655 Charlotte Hall Road, Charlotte Hall)

Registration is required for this event. For more information or to register, please contact Nicoletta Pollice at Nicoletta.Pollice@stmaryscountymd.gov or (301) 475-4200, ext. 1073.

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

An Advance Health Care Directive:

- Names your Health Care Agent, the

person(s) who will make your health care decisions.

- Determines when your Agent's power becomes effective.
- States your decisions relating to life sustaining procedures if you are unable to give instructions regarding your care due to an end-of-life condition.
- Can be customized with your personal instructions and statements.
- Determines pain relief measures to relieve pain and suffering.
- States your wishes concerning organ donation or the donation of your body.
- States your desires and preferences regarding funeral and burial, cremation, memorial service, or other final instructions.

For more information on the St. Mary's County Department of Aging & Human Services, including the Senior Activity Center locations and other programs, please visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging or follow them on social media at Facebook.com/SMCDAHS.

St. Mary's Celebrates Women's History Month



The St. Mary's County Commission for Women celebrated the achievements of county women this past weekend, awarding Woman of the Year to Kimberly Wilkins McClane (left) and Tomorrow's Woman to Angela Bradley (right). McClane is a Girl Scout leader, Cheer Commissioner for the Pax River Raiders and Youth Mass Coordinator and Church Activities Director at St. Peter Claver Church. Bradley is a student at St. Mary's Ryken High School who competes on the wrestling team and is deeply involved in volunteer activities.

YARD SALE

Sat, Apr 26 • 6:30am–2:30pm

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Leonardtwn Man Convicted for Setting Fire to Local Motel

State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Anthony Cleaver Mason, 65, of Leonardtown was convicted of assault, arson, and reckless endangerment in connection with a fire that displaced several motel guests and caused extensive damage to a California, Maryland motel.

On June 3, 2024, deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office responded to a reported disturbance at a motel on Three Notch Road. Upon arrival, deputies discovered that Mason had barricaded himself inside a third-floor room, assaulted an occupant of the room, and started a fire. As the fire spread, deputies swiftly activated the fire alarm and began evacuating the building.

Firefighters from multiple departments responded to battle the blaze. Several victims suffered injuries and others lost personal property to the fire.

The Maryland State Fire Marshal's Office's investigation revealed that Mason deliberately set the fire, causing over \$750,000 in damage.

"The Defendant's dangerous actions put dozens of lives at risk, resulting in serious injuries and devastating property loss," said State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling. "Our office is committed to prosecuting those who recklessly put our community in danger."



Anthony Cleaver Mason

Mason remains held without bond pending a sentencing hearing. He faces a maximum sentence of 45 years in prison.

Senior Assistant State's Attorneys Alena Moiser and Donna Pettersen prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

The Office of the Maryland State Fire Marshal led the investigation, with assistance from Sergeant James Bare, Devin Absher, and David Katulich of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

The Honorable Amy Lorenzini presided over the case.

County Government Good Friday & Easter Operations

St. Mary's County Government (SMCG) administrative offices will be closed on Friday, April 18, 2025, in observance of the Good Friday and Easter holidays. Offices will resume normal operating schedules on Monday, April 21, 2025.

The April 18 closure includes:

- All three Senior Activity Centers (Garvey, Loffler, and Northern), and there will be no home-delivered meals.
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS), including ADA and SSTAP.

The following SMCG operations will be open on April 18:

- All three St. Mary's County Libraries (Charlotte Hall, Leonardtown, and Lexington Park).
- St. Mary's Animal Adoption & Resource Center.
- The six Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill.
- St. Clements Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the

Old Jail Museum.

- The Wicomico Shores Golf Course and the Riverview Restaurant.

- Department of Recreation & Parks programs and facilities. Please note that Recreation and Parks programs held at St. Mary's County Public School locations will not operate on April 18.

Additionally, the following SMCG operations will be CLOSED on Sunday, April 20: Department of Recreation & Parks programs and facilities.

- St. Mary's Animal Adoption & Resource Center.
- The Lexington Park Library.
- The six Convenience Centers and the St. Andrews Landfill.
- The St. Mary's Transit System (STS), including ADA and SSTAP.

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



PATUXENT RIVER JOB FAIR



@ Naval Air Museum (near Gate 1)
22156 Three Notch Road, Lexington Park, MD 20653

TUESDAY, APRIL 22 | 2-6 PM

Bring copies of your resume to share.
Professional dress or military uniform required.

Two pre-fair workshops with Maurice Wilson (NVTSI.org):

- For Job Candidates: **REBOOT™ Job Readiness workshop for military and veterans | 11 AM-12:30 PM**
This workshop will offer tools, confidence, & mindset preparation for the Job Fair.
- For Exhibitors: **Digital Recruiting for Employers | 12:45-1:15 PM**
Intro session on **Job-Set.AI**, smarter digital recruiting and how to leverage the VCIP subscription model.

Companies include:

- ASEC
- Chenega MIOS
- Dayton T. Brown, Inc.
- Functional Training Zone, Inc. (FTZ)
- Imagine One Technology & Management
- JobZone
- MD Dept. of Labor/Div. of Workforce Development
- National Veterans Transition Services, Inc.
- Precise Systems
- PSI-Pax, Inc. (an EDWOSB)
- Resource Management Concepts
- Sabre Systems
- Sigma Defense Systems
- SimVentions
- St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office
- The MIL Corporation
- Total Cyber Solutions, LLC
- Vernon Taylor Enterprises Alliance

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Legal Notices

Notice is hereby given that the following vessel has apparently been abandoned for 180 days on the property of Ted Fitzgerald, 12636 Edelman Rd, Bryantown, MD 20617, 240-320-7450. The vessel is described as: Hull #BYQA15FMA797, Bayliner 27', white and blue. Application for title will be made in accordance with Section 8-722 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Natural Resources Article if this vessel is not claimed and removed from the above property within 30 days of this notice.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Calvert – St. Mary's Metropolitan Planning Organization (C-SMMPO) will conduct a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting at the Calvert Marine Museum in the Waterfront Lounge, located at 14200 Solomons Island Rd. S., Solomons, MD 20688 on Monday, April 21, 2025, beginning at 11:00 a.m. for the purpose of discussing project updates and TAC agenda items. The agenda can be viewed at <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

This public meeting is to accept public and staff comments on the regarding items on the TAC meeting agenda. Public meetings are open to the public. Members of the press may attend.

Comments may be submitted on or before Friday, April 18, 2025, and should be addressed to the Long Range Planning Division, P.O. Box 653, Leonardtown, MD 20650 or Karly Maltby, Calvert – St. Mary's MPO Administrator, with St. Mary's County Government's Department of Land Use & Growth Management via email at Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov

This meeting can be attended virtually, the Meeting ID is 430 427 6617 and the call-in number is (301) 715-8592. Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/4304276617?omn=87286148130>

For questions or more information, please contact Karly Maltby, Calvert-St. Mary's MPO Administrator, with St. Mary's County Government's Department of Land Use & Growth Management at (301) 475-4200 ext. 1507 or via email at Karly.Maltby@stmaryscountymd.gov or visit <https://www.calvert-stmarysmpo.com/>.

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. 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.

Man Sentenced to Prison for Fentanyl

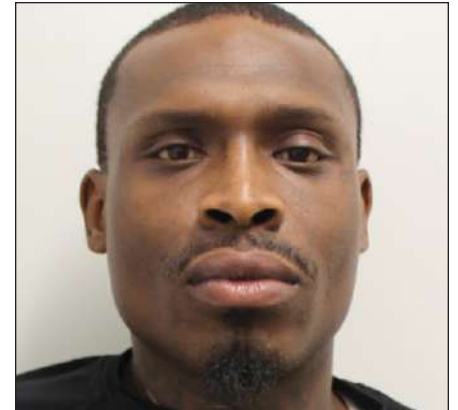
State's Attorney Jaymi Sterling announced today that Daisaun Altay Eric Culpepper, 31, of Lexington Park, Maryland, was sentenced to 27 years in prison, with 15.5 years of active incarceration for the possession of a large amount of fentanyl, destruction of evidence, and a probation violation.

On October 16, 2024, detectives from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office executed a search and seizure warrant at a residence in Lexington Park, as part of an ongoing investigation into drug trafficking activities.

Upon law enforcement arrival, Culpepper fled into a back bedroom and remained there for approximately 40 minutes before surrendering. Inside the residence, detectives uncovered approximately 685 grams of a fentanyl mixture, multiple plastic bags tied off with the drugs, digital scales with drug residue, and more than \$6,000 in cash.

Culpepper was arrested on an outstanding violation of probation warrant related to a prior fentanyl distribution conviction. Subsequently, he was charged for possessing large amounts of fentanyl and additional offenses related to the October 16, 2024 incident.

"This case underscores the deadly threat that fentanyl poses to our community," said State's Attorney Sterling. "I want to commend the members of the Vice Narcotics Unit for their diligent work in seizing over



Daisaun Altay Eric Culpepper

half of a kilo of fentanyl and preventing its distribution into our community. Our office will continue to work with our law enforcement partners and aggressively prosecute those involved with this poison."

Members of the Vice Narcotics Unit within the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office's Criminal Investigations Division successfully investigated this case.

Senior Assistant State's Attorney Lisa Ridge, Chief of the Narcotics Unit, prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of St. Mary's County.

The Honorable Joseph Stanalonis presided over the case.

Arrest Made in Series of Vehicle Burglaries

Deputies from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office arrested Donell Davonne Rothwell, 54, of no fixed address, on Saturday, April 5, 2025, in connection with a series of motor vehicle break-ins in the California and Lexington Park areas.

Following reports of thefts from unattended vehicles, deputies canvassed local businesses and residential neighborhoods. During the investigation, evidence was collected linking Rothwell to multiple incidents in which credit cards and other valuables were stolen and later used to make purchases at area stores.

Rothwell was located and taken into custody Saturday afternoon. He was charged with the following offenses:

- Four counts of rogue and vagabond
- Four counts of theft less than \$100
- Three counts of theft, \$100 to less than \$1500
- Four counts of credit card theft: stealing another's
- Four counts of credit card theft/another charge less than \$100
- Four counts of credit card theft/another charge of \$100 to less than \$1500
- One count of malicious destruction of property of less than \$1000

Rothwell also had an outstanding warrant through the Maryland State Police for failure to appear in District Court on unrelated traffic charges.

Following the arrest, Rothwell was transported to the Detention and Rehabilitation



Donell Davonne Rothwell

Center in Leonardtown.

This remains an active investigation, and additional charges are pending. Anyone with information related to these incidents is asked to contact Deputy First Class Alexander Wynnyk at 301-475-4200, ext. 8020, or by email at Alexander.Wynnyk@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.

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School Budget Outlook Improves

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The close of the latest General Assembly in Annapolis has brought some good news back to the St. Mary's County Board of Education.

Tammy McCourt, Deputy Superintendent for Finance, told board members this week that while the state's funding share for the local public schools is still less than what local leaders had originally expected, the cut in funding has been reduced.

McCourt said, in effect, that about \$1.4 million had been restored to state funding for local education.

"These are my first blush calculations," McCourt told board members at their April 9 meeting in Leonardtown, two days after Sine Die. "We are [now] expecting \$146.3 million from the state."

"Instead of the reduction of \$2.5 million, it's a reduction of \$1 million."

In January the county had expected to receive more than \$147 million from the

state, according to budget figures, but actions taken by Gov. Wes Moore in his modified budget stripped that funding down to just \$144.9 million in March.

But the passage of the state's \$67 billion budget April 7 restored some of that funding for local public schools.

Though the Commissioners of St. Mary's County have signaled earlier this week that they might be able to increase the local share of funding for schools in their fiscal 2026 budget, McCourt said her office was still relying on the latest official numbers from the county, which calls for flat funding county schools at about \$134 million, the same amount as the current fiscal year of 2025.

"We had requested a \$5.4 million increase," McCourt said. "That will definitely hurt us."

Overall, that means a reduction of \$6.4 million for this year's fiscal 2026 budget if commissioners do not restore any local funding, McCourt said.

guyleonard@countytimes.net

County Approves Creek Dredge Storage Site Funding



St. Jerome's Creek

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

This week the Commissioners of St. Mary's County voted to spend \$125,000 to maintain the use of an 11.7-acre site to continue to store dredge material removed from the critical waterway of St. Jerome's Creek in Dameron.

The county has used the site since 2004 and this week's decision allows the county to continue using the property as a convenient storage site for the next four years.

According to county planning documents the county's public works department is planning to remove dredging material from the creek for the first time in more than 20 years.

"We think this will be the last lease term," said Jim Gotsch, public works chief at the April 8 commissioners' meeting. "We're going to have to look for another site after this lease for a four-year term."

The county has had to negotiate the use of the land from a private property owner; to remove the stockpile of dredge material

already there would cost between \$1 million and \$1.5 million, Gotsch said.

But the county has plans to save money by trading the material to groups that engage in shoreline stabilization projects, which aids the county with fulfilling the requirements of the state's MS4 permit, or mandate to clean up the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

St. Jerome's Creek is an important maritime asset in St. Mary's as it provides a safe harbor for vessels seeking to avoid major storms or other weather events while out on the Chesapeake Bay, but for years it has suffered from a built up of sediment and sand that continually washes into it.

If allowed to build up too much, it would make the creek impassable for ship traffic seeking shelter.

The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers continues to work to find a solution to infiltration of sediment and other pollution into the creek, mainly in the guise of a cost effective and permanent jetty system at the creek's entrance.

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Online Auction Closes:

Monday, April 14, 2026 starting at 6 pm.
Auction Preview: Friday, April 11, 2025, 5 pm – 7 pm

Spring into Spring Lawn & Garden Auction

Saturday, May 10, 2025 at 4 pm
Westfield Farm Arena & Auction Barn
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Bedding Plants – Hanging Baskets – Combo Planters – Porch Planters – Handcrafted Quilts - Toys – Lawn/Garden Items – Many great “Mother’s Day” Items
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Special Olympics Spring Gathering Needs Volunteers



Special Olympians prepare to race.

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Every year for more than 20 years Special Olympics of Southern Maryland has hosted a spring sports gathering in St. Mary's County to give their athletes a chance to qualify in certain events such as track and field and games like bocce ball.

It also is a chance for special needs students to participate in events for Special Olympics and try

But as the event has grown over the years, so has the need for hundreds of volunteers to make the event work.

Jeff Hagen, area director for Special Olympics, said the event — which is to be held at St. Mary's Ryken High School in Leonardtown April 24 — needs at least 150 volunteers to watch over each of the individual events as well as other activities on the event grounds.

Hagen said the event will also have an guyleonard@countytimes.net

additional 130 students from area schools to act as personal attendants to the event participants.

He did not anticipate a problem having them come to the event and escort the participants, he said.

He said only about 72 of the 150 volunteers needed have signed on so far, Hagen told The County Times.

“All of these events take people to manage them,” Hagen said. “And we’ll have three awards stations, they’ll need people, too.”

The need for so many volunteers exists, Hagen said, because the organization expects to many special needs participants, either for pure recreation and enjoyment or to as a qualifier for track and field and bocce ball events.

To volunteer call Special Olympics Maryland-St. Mary's County at 301-904-1719.

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St. Mary's Celebrates 42nd Annual Easter Egg Festival



By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

This weekend the St. Mary's County Department of Recreation and Parks will host a rain-or-shine Easter Egg festival to include an egg hunt for children ranging from one-to-two years old all the way up to 11-and-12 years old; it's a spring time tradition that has lasted more than four decades.

The annual egg festival has brought hundreds out to the St. Mary's County Fairgrounds in Leonardtown each spring to enjoy arts and crafts vendors, performances, live animals, food vendors and other activities for families.

This year the start time is at 10:30 a.m., a full hour before previous festivals, and the event finishes at 3p.m.

Tickets can be purchased on-line leading up to the event or can be purchased with cash or credit the day of the event.

Recreation and parks staff will be placing hundreds of eggs out at the fairgrounds' stadium in preparation for the many children and their parents expected to descend there April 12.

Egg hunts for one-and-two-year-old children will feature 750 eggs, while each of the races for children aged three-through-10-years old will get to chase down 1,000 eggs.

Those aged 11-through-12 will get 500

eggs to hunt; each egg contains a small prize while eggs featuring stars on them can be collected for special prizes.

There will be two starred eggs per hunt, according to event organizers.

Adults are allowed to accompany children aged four-and-under on their hunts but children aged 5-through-12 years old must hunt eggs alone.

The first hunt kicks off at 11:30 a.m. and with the youngest participants; the final hunt starts at 2:30 p.m.

guyleonard@countytimes.net





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For more information: 301-769-2222 or bit.ly/FirstLandingWineFest2025




They Said Yes!

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

Cynthia Dawn Johnson, 48, Lusby, MD
Michael Allen Hickman, 50, Lusby, MD

Kay-Lea Riann Mancuso, 24, Hollywood, MD
Evan Alan Lupfer, 26, Hollywood, MD

Karl Edward Krasnesky, 34, Leonardtown, MD
Holly Marie Gardner, 35, Leonardtown, MD

Sabrena Anne St Clair, 26, Lexington Park, MD
Jesse Allen Burrows, 27, Lexington Park, MD

Diana Noschang, 44, Mechanicsville, MD
John Michael Wood, 37, Mechanicsville, MD

Laura Diane Young, 48, Hollywood, MD
Patrick Daniel Keller, 55, Hollywood, MD

Krishna Amunike O'Conner, 30, Hyattsville, MD
Shawne Annette Arnick, 46, Hyattsville, MD

Conner Matthew Herlihy, 29, Hollywood, MD
Charity Eileen Higgs, 29, Hollywood, MD

Ryan William Eglington, 40, Leonardtown, MD
Melissa Anne Quillen, 38, Leonardtown, MD

Shelby Ann Jacobs, 33, Hollywood, MD
Kevin Nathan Johnson, 34, Hollywood, MD

Richard Carl Scible, 71, Mechanicsville, MD
Letha Diane Parris, 75, Calabash, NC

Stephanie Renee Smith-Brown, 44, Lexington Park, MD
Derrick Andre Brown, Lexington Park, MD

Bailea Elizabeth Garrett, 19, Waldorf, MD
Brayden Matthew Burroughs, 20, Mechanicsville, MD

Joshua Reed Hughes, 39, Mechanicsville, MD
Alicia Marie Ortega, 40, Mechanicsville, MD

Rachna Dasharath Patel, 26, Lexington Park, MD
Pratikkumar Kamleshkumar Patel, 26, Lexington Park, MD

Riley Meaghan Rose Dollins, 22, Mechanicsville, MD
Issac Daniel Fournier, 21, Mechanicsville, MD

James Francis Berry, Jr., 23, Lexington Park, MD
Kayla Michele Showalter, 23, Mechanicsville, MD

Heather Marie Middleton, 33, Lexington Park, MD
Gary Jerome Cole, Jr., 35, Lexington Park, MD

Justin Ray Stauffer, 25, Mechanicsville, MD
Joanna Stauffer Martin, 21, Leonardtown, MD

Eric Jacob Quinn, 39, Tucson, AZ
Alisha Marie Riden, 38, Tucson, AZ

Kaylee Renee Stine, 24, Leonardtown, MD
Michael Gavan Worrey, 25, Avenue, MD

Rhonda Morzelle Holt, 50, Hollywood, MD
Kelvin Mathews Dorsey, 60, Hollywood, MD

Jerel Theodore Gaines, 26, Lothian, MD
Elizabeth Marie Timerding, 26, Lothian, MD

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Jonathan Wayne Lacey, 39, Mechanicsville, MD

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Samuel Martin Hall, 24, Clements, MD

Tyra Mackenzie Countiss, 24, California, MD
James Douglas Alexander Gaddis, 26, California, MD

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BRIDAL CATALOG



St. Mary's Bills Pass as Lawmakers Deliver Massive Tax Increase

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

St. Mary's County got most of what it wanted out of this year's General Assembly from a legislative perspective and plenty it didn't — much like many of the other jurisdictions — in increases in taxes and fees.

Overall, the General Assembly, minus many Republicans in the minority party, passed a fiscal 2026 budget of \$67 billion that balanced itself on raising an extra \$1.67 billion in new taxes and fees, despite protests from many business owners and advocacy groups.

St. Mary's County did get a share of some state money — actually \$71 million-worth in bonding authority — to allow it to go to the bond market and sell bonds to pay for critical public construction projects.

"Our last bill, the public facilities bond, passed at 6:15 p.m. [on April 7]," said Deputy County Attorney John Sterling Houser to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County at their April 8 meeting.

Another bill which increased civil penalties on alcoholic beverage license holders for violations of the beverage code also passed.

Still St. Mary's lost out in other areas; the commissioners had supported a bill that would have prohibited pan handling or otherwise soliciting donations while standing in the median strip of county roadways, but that bill did not make it through the legislature, Houser reported.

A bill similar in concept may be resurrected in future assemblies, Houser said, but the language would likely have to be adapted to prohibit only "aggressive" solicitation or panhandling that obstructed traffic or led to solicitors placing their hands on either vehicles or motorists themselves.

Commissioners had also supported legislation that would have provided a fourth judge for the local Circuit Court to assist in adjudicating an increasing case load and it appeared to be heading for a successful conclusion in the General Assembly but it ultimately foundered.

"The bill passed the House [of Delegates] but never went anywhere in the Senate," Houser said. "The word is that it came down to money."

"So, there is not going to be a fourth judge this year."

Houser explained that eventually the leg-

islature would authorize the new position and the law clerk that went with it, but the judiciary would have to find the funding itself to support the position.

"That gives some time so that the third judge to replace Judge [Michael J.] Stamm (who passed away suddenly in October) and that should give the court system a feel for whether there really is a need," said Commissioner Eric Colvin.

Deliberations among a select group appointed by Gov. Wes Moore to interview candidates for the vacant position was scheduled to begin this week.

Another bill supported by Del. Brian Crosby, which would have restricted voting for board of education candidates to those living in their own districts, also failed.

The bill mirrored a piece of legislation that Crosby submitted in Annapolis at least twice that would have changed the way the county voted for its commissioners in the same way.

Those bills also foundered in prior assemblies.

The Maryland Freedom Caucus, led by St. Mary's Delegate Matt Morgan (Dist. 29A) railed against the many taxes and fees

used to balance the budget, which Morgan said was still \$4 billion more than last year's state budget despite administration claims of cost cutting measures.

"First off, this budget includes the largest tax increase in Maryland's history," Morgan wrote in a social media post. "Remember all those pesky fees the state raised last year?"

"Brace yourself: there have been 338 fee increases in just 12 months. Talk about getting nickel-and-dimed to death!"

The Freedom Caucus stated that income tax increases are predicted to bring in an extra \$344 million in revenue, while a new sales tax on data and information technology services is set to bring in an extra \$482 million this year.

A vending machine sales tax is also expected to rake in an additional \$9 million to state coffers while increases in the certificate of title for vehicle registration is set to raise another \$104 million.

An excise tax on rented vehicles is projected to bring in an additional \$46 million as well, according to Freedom Caucus estimates.

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Commissioners Look to Their Own Budget After Sine Die

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

The Maryland General Assembly passed a \$67 billion operating budget on to Gov. Wes Moore the night of April 7; and though it is chock full of \$1.68 billion in new taxes and fees the Commissioners of St. Mary's County are at least grateful to have some certainty from the state so they can return to the county budget with some idea of what they can afford.

The commissioners voted 3-to-2 last week to send their own county operating budget to a public hearing on April 22, while at the same time promising they would have time to go back and rectify certain lapses in funding they had to leave in because they were unsure of what the impacts from the state might be this year.

Commissioner Eric Colvin was sure that there was a way now to get more funding to the county public school system.

"The good news is, it's not as bad as it could have been," Colvin said of the state. "The bad news is they still took some funding from us."

"But I believe we have sufficient funds to meet all the needs of the county."

Commissioner Scott Ostrow also held out hope.

"I think we now have a firmer grasp of what we're going to see," Ostrow said. "I'm glad we waited; we still have time for May 6 and May 13 budget sessions."

Ostrow said commissioners now would have the ability to find money to provide pay increases for county employees as well as more funding for county departments.

"Going into our April 22 public hearing, I hope people are not going to be too charged up about what they think commissioners are going to do."

Last week Commissioner Mike Hewitt challenged comments by School Superintendent Dr. J. Scott Smith that the county had a projected surplus this year of \$15 million but had chosen to flat fund the schools' budget.

"I'm looking forward to hearing from the public about that," Ostrow said.

Hewitt said last week that he was certain the school system would not be flat funded despite the current budget plan.

"I don't think that's the case," Hewitt said during the April 8 business meeting. "We could have between \$2 million and \$3 million now to redistribute."

Hewitt said he was firmly against any new hires by the county government but also wanted to provide pay increases to employees currently serving.

The current general fund is \$348,873,310 and includes the use of unassigned fund balance of \$11,475,119, according to the county's fiscal 2026 budget documents.

The proposed budget is \$18.7 million more than the current fiscal 2025 budget.

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Comcast, Verizon Make Bids for Broadband Expansion

By Guy Leonard
Staff Writer

Two major internet and broadband access providers are seeking state funds to expand their operations in St. Mary's County and the county commissioners have offered their support in helping those providers get the extra taxpayer money to expand their service reach.

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County voted unanimously April 8 at their regular business meeting to support Verizon and Comcast's bids to get access to Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

"This expansion is just a natural evolution of what the commissioners have already invested in with their broadband initiatives," said county Information Technology chief Bob Kelly. "By the end of this spring, St. Mary's County should be at 99 percent coverage for wired broadband services to all our addresses."

The broadband provider Verizon/Fios is currently being installed in Lexington Park moving down to the Ridge area, Kelly told county commissioners this week, as a final piece of the broadband service puzzle here.

This part of the overall effort is being funded by a state grant issued about a year-and-a-half ago, said Kelly.

The BEAD program starts with funding at the federal level, but it is issued through



County IT Chief Bob Kelly

the state.

The current expansion of broadband opportunities also is bringing more competition of services, something for which local and regional customers have long been clamoring.

For years Breezeline had operated in most of the county with Comcast contained to the northern section in Golden Beach but that was rapidly changing, Kelly said.

"We now have three internet service providers providing wired broadband service in the county," said Kelly. "And they're expanding."

The commissioners were pleased at the advent of more options for internet service here.

"This is an exciting update," said Commissioner Eric Colvin. "This is a big deal."

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“THIS IS AN EXCITING UPDATE. THIS IS A BIG DEAL.”

COMMISSIONER ERIC COLVIN ON TWO INTERNET PROVIDERS EXPANDING SERVICES IN ST. MARY’S



LOCAL 5
How St. Mary’s fared in the General Assembly



LOCAL 9
Special Olympics needs volunteers



ON THE COVER
St. Mary’s gears up for Easter with egg hunt festival

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, APR 10 Cloudy Hi: 57° Lo: 49°	FRI, APR 11 Rain Hi: 55° Lo: 44°	SAT, APR 12 Showers Hi: 49° Lo: 44°	SUN, APR 13 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 61° Lo: 46°
MON, APR 14 Partly Cloudy Hi: 70° Lo: 58°	TUE, APR 15 Partly Cloudy Hi: 70° Lo: 46°	WED, APR 16 Mostly Sunny Hi: 58° Lo: 41°	THU, APR 17 Sunny Hi: 61° Lo: 49°

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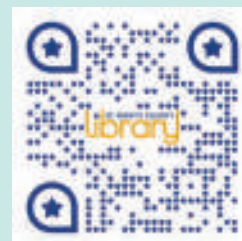
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