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**New County
Administrator Named**

**Budget Hearing
Draws Small Turnout**

**County Recognizes
Small Business**

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“AT SOME POINT YOU HAVE TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS.”

COMMISSIONER PRESIDENT BUDDY HANCE ON THE BUDGET



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LOCAL 4
Budget cuts draw little public response



LOCAL 4
Commissioners appoint new county administrator



ON THE COVER
Calvert touts water safety programs

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, MAY 8	FRI, MAY 9	SAT, MAY 10	SUN, MAY 11
 Partly Cloudy Hi: 79° Lo: 60°	 Rain Hi: 65° Lo: 50°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 73° Lo: 55°	 Partly Cloudy Hi: 78° Lo: 58°
MON, MAY 12	TUE, MAY 13	WED, MAY 14	THU, MAY 15
 Mostly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 64°	 Showers Hi: 73° Lo: 64°	 Scattered Storms Hi: 77° Lo: 65°	 AM Clouds/PM Sun Hi: 83° Lo: 68°

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Big Budget Cuts, Small Hearing Turnout

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) presented at a May 6 public hearing a proposed budget cut of more than \$17 million from the previously submitted staff recommendation. In spite of the massive cuts, only five people spoke.

Commissioner President Buddy Hance, at the beginning of the hearing, said, "Most of you who have been following this know that when the staff recommended budget was announced two months ago, we had a pretty large hole in our budget, about \$15 million at that time. We were concerned about issues at the state legislature because they were in the same situation we were in. And discussions were going on about passing down costs to counties, which is something that they've done in the past when they have tight budgets.

"So, we really weren't sure where we were going to end up. But now the session is over. I think we ended up with about \$2.2 million in passed on costs to what we have to absorb in our budget. And we have made enough cuts in our budget to take care of the over \$17 million deficit that we had in the beginning of this budget cycle."

The biggest chunk cut was almost \$7 million in Pay-Go, monies in the general fund dedicated to capital projects.

Director of Finance and Budget Bruce Miller explained what was cut in his presentation:

County Administrator's actions to balance the FY 26 Commissioners' Budget:

- Reverted budget requests to FY 24 actuals
- Used three-year average to evaluate needs
- Reduced department budgets (excluding Sheriff's and State's Attorney's Offices)

- Lowered interfund subsidies
- Reduced Board of Education funding by \$840,000 per updated State Maintenance of Effort (MOE)
- Achieved \$2.7 million in salary attrition savings
- Decreased CIP pay-go funding by \$6.8 million

Regarding FY 26 recommended expenditure changes from FY 25, Miller said, "With declining revenues, expenses reflected similar decreases. This change equals \$2,527,820, from \$387.6 million to \$385.1 million.

Expense highlights are.

- BOCC and Staff Recommended Budgets (SRB) include a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) plus a step increase for employees
- General government includes allocation of \$400,000 for the County Administrator's Contingency Account for unforeseen emergencies
- Public Safety increase of approximately \$500,000 includes new staff for 911 operators (offset by new revenue)
- Career EMS - \$1.1 million (new crew/staff)
- Health Department - \$2 million (mandated by the State)
- Agencies and commissions decreased by \$265,000, but the state added \$371,000 in SDAT assistance
- Pension and insurance - \$1.8 million for state teachers' requirement, increase in Sheriff's annual required pension contribution and \$1.5 million OPEB replenishment (offset by OPT OUT benefit credit)

Hance said, "The last couple of years, it's been tough, and we've had to use fund balance to balance the budgets. We've been working really hard with the Board of Education because they are the biggest expense we have in our budget, trying to get through this process. We made a decision at

the beginning of this process, we were not going to raise taxes and that we were not going to use fund balance. You can't sustain balancing your budget using reserves every year. It's called a structural deficit. You just can't do that. At some point you have to make adjustments."

Two of the five people asked for restoring cuts made to the Parks and Recreation budget. Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Judy Pederson asked the commissioners "for consideration of the significant impacts that delays on CIP (Capital Improvement Program) projects are going to have."

Pederson said, "Funding cutbacks of the national, state, and now local level are very impactful and it's crucial that you find a funding balance between all the essential services, keeping in mind that taxpayer funding is a limited resource as well.

"So, I propose that we become very creative. Albert Einstein wrote, 'We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used to create them.' So, with that in mind, I think it's time that we look at some realistic periodic small fee increases where they are appropriate."

She added, "I believe expansion of our volunteer workforce, for example, could improve programming and potentially lessen staff requirements. And while this would not be a fast process, I also believe that in the not-too-distant future, the creation of a Park Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to funding those things that tax dollars just simply can't pay for, would be a park system attribute."

Mark Shields, a member of the Parks Advisory Board, but speaking as an individual, said, "Our parks help preserve Calvert County's environment, heritage, and rural character by protecting green spaces and shorelines that define our identity. Strong parks support sustainable economic growth,

raising property values, attracting visitors for tournaments and festivals, and making our county a place families and businesses want to call home. Parks and Recreation is truly one of Calvert's essential departments in a community.

Jeri Mumper, speaking on behalf of Calvert Advance Life Support (CALS) Chief Chris Shannon said, "The current career EMS F-Y '26 budget request is for 4 more EMS shift supervisors. It is my belief that this would have a negative impact on the volunteer EMS in the county. At the April 9th commissioner's meeting, Chief Miller explained that he needed these positions for span of control, painting a picture of how taxed the current EMS supervisors were, and they could not cover the entire county effectively due to the size.

Mumper added, "Currently for EMS, 20 supervisors cover four stations, which is well within Chief Miller's span of control of three to five stations per supervisor. If you consult with any of the larger fire departments in the region, they will tell you that the normal is four to five stations per battalion chief. If you allot these new positions, it'll cost hundreds of thousands of dollars for a two to one ratio during difficult financial times; it seems unnecessary."

She said, "These extra supervisors will make it harder for the volunteer paramedics to run calls and will likely result in the volunteer paramedics leaving Calvert County."

The commissioner's budget is available on the county's website and books are available for viewing at all Cal County Library locations. The vote for the adoption of the FY 26 budget will be June 10 during the regular scheduled BOCC meeting. Public comment on the commissioner's budget will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on June 9.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

Turner Selected as County Administrator

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) is pleased to announce the appointment of Linda Turner as the new county administrator, effective July 1, 2025.

Turner brings more than 20 years of experience in public administration, with a strong background in local government leadership, strategic management and community engagement. She has served as Calvert County's deputy county administrator since October 2023.

"Linda has demonstrated exceptional leadership and a deep commitment to public service," said BOCC President Earl F. "Buddy" Hance. "We are confident in her ability to lead our county government with professionalism, vision and a focus on serving the needs of Calvert County residents."

"I am honored to continue serving Calvert County in this new capacity," Turner said. "I look forward to building on the strong foundation already in place and working alongside the BOCC to meet the needs of

our community while planning for a bright and sustainable future. I am committed to ensuring Calvert County remains a place where families thrive, businesses grow and employees feel supported in a positive and productive work environment."

In her new role, Turner will oversee day-to-day operations of county government, implement policies set by the BOCC and work closely with department leaders to ensure high-quality public services.

Before joining Calvert County, Turner held several senior leadership positions in Prince George's County government. Her roles included senior advisor to the deputy chief administrative officer for government operations, deputy director for policy, planning and public affairs, and program director for the county's Transforming Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI). Under her leadership, TNI earned a National Association of Counties Achievement Award in the Human Services category. This award honors effective county government

programs that enhance services for residents.

In addition, she was a member of the senior leadership team for Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission, a bi-county agency recognized as the eighth-largest combined water and wastewater utility in the U.S. by population served. Turner was widely recognized for her ability to foster collaboration and deliver results that strengthened communities.

Turner holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration from the University of Maryland Global Campus and a certificate from the Executive Education Program at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Turner, a Calvert County resident, has lived in Huntingtown for more than four decades. She is a Northern High School alumna and a strong supporter of Calvert County Public Schools, where both of her sons attended from elementary through high school. She currently serves as ex officio on the county's Student Safety and Well Being Advisory Committee and Ann's Circle,



Linda Turner

Inc., a non-profit organization that supports Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center. Her volunteer efforts have included serving on several boards, including Christmas in April and her homeowners association as well as teaching faith formation at her church.

She succeeds Mark Willis, who is retiring.

County Wide Event

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- Ms. Phillips, Parent Advocate

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County Leads State in Red Cross Swim Lessons

Elementary School Water Safety Touted

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Calvert County Director of Parks and Recreation Bob Branham said, "This is a small county, 213 square miles roughly. We have 165 miles of shoreline."

Branham made the observation during a May 6 presentation to the Calvert County Board of County Commissioners for Water Safety Month.

Branham boasted, "This small county offers the most successful Red Cross swim lessons in the state of Maryland."

He said, "This is a community that thrives where people earn their living on the water, and they choose leisure pursuits and recreational opportunities on the water. Every survey that we put out for community input talks about the importance of water access and water safety."

Branham observed, "I'm very proud to be a part of the team that is before you. The work that you do is very important. It's critical for this community."

Several of the department members involved in aquatics spoke at the meeting. Aquatic Facility Manager Zachary Brickley said, "Water safety means more than telling children to be careful when around pools and bodies of water. It teaches them how to incorporate water-related exercises and activities in their lives. These exercises are magic for people before my eyes, alleviating patients of illnesses and injuries throughout the year."

He added, "Geographically speaking, it is imperative that we continue to reach our youth population through statements like this (the proclamation) in order to prevent tragedy and enrich the lives of our community."

"Last year, the globe lost just south of a quarter million people to accidents on and/or by the water," he said, adding, "To this day, drowning is still the leading cause of death for children aged one to 14 in America. In light of this, aquatics will continue to support the native community by providing one of the largest American Red Cross Learn swim programs in the state of Maryland and hoping for an increased amount of certification courses for those interested in preventing water safety tragedy themselves."

Aquatic Division Chief Brandon Madeja said, "As the weather warms and our pools, lakes and waterfronts grow busier, we're reminded that water safety is a shared

responsibility and our team remains committed to provide high quality education, certified training, and well-maintained facilities to help prevent accidents and to save lives through swim lessons, lifeguard programs and community outreach. We aim to equip residents with of all ages with skills and knowledge that they need to stay safe in around the water."

In response to a question about at what age to start lessons, Stephanie Dalton, an instructor at the Hall Aquatics Center, said, "I have been teaching there for four years now. I teach anywhere from six months all the way up to, I've had some 85-year-olds that I teach as well."

She noted, "One of the programs that we ran a couple of months ago was a program with the Calvert County Public Schools, where we had some of our kids from Plum Point Elementary fifth grade come and have a water safety day. That was really a fantastic program that we ran."

Dalton said, "I think it's something that we really need to encourage all of our elementary schools to get them out and learn about the water."

Instructor Theresa Barth said, "I was also glad to be able to participate in the school field trip. We were able to teach the kids some safety things about not going into the water to help people, but other things that they could do to keep everybody safe."

She said the program was grant funded. "We would certainly encourage it, if there's anything that we can do to get the other schools involved, that would be great."

Swim Lesson Supervisor Gaylyn Kenick said she also trains new instructors. She said, "I have found great pleasure in seeing some kids that I've taught as children who have gone through their life and now they're young instructors and watching them grow and enjoy what they do. And I really tell everybody all the time, I have the best job ever."

Of the school program, she said, "It really is just absolutely fabulous, and we have counties all around us who are doing it, and being surrounded by water is something Calvert really needs to look into. We also have an amazing and growing home-school program, from preschool to 18, from babies to adults."

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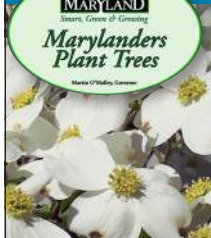
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County Shows Appreciation for Small Business

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Every year at this time is set aside to recognize the contributions of Calvert County's small businesses.

Several representatives of those businesses joined staff of the county's Department of Economic Development at the county commissioners' May 6 meeting for a proclamation in honor of National Economic Development Week.

Luke Williamson said, "On behalf of my wife and myself, we are the new owners of Lord Calvert Bowling Center. We purchased it in November of '22."

Williamson said, "Me and my wife met in high school here at Patuxent High School. She was born and raised here. We have been bowling since high school. I worked at the bowling alley. So, we are very much engaged in the community. We understand the importance of what a bowling alley means to everybody, and we're slowly but surely making progress."

Adam Tremper with Spooky Solomons Ghost Tour explained, "I am doing the fireworks in Solomons this year. I'm volunteering to orchestrate that. So if any of you are interested in helping out with any of the fireworks, please let me know."

He added, "I am the owner of Spooky Solomons Ghost Tours. We do ghost tours on Solomons Island. The purpose of it is to attract people to the island to learn about the legends and history of the island. People ask me, 'Do you believe in ghosts?' I say I'm mostly agnostic. I don't believe in them. I don't disbelieve in them. I just like telling the history of the island. And ghost stories are a great way to bring people in. And they're interested in learning that history and the legends."

Ally Harrington with The AllyCatWalk Boutique said, "Many people know me by

my groovy pink 1978 Airstream Camper. So, if you guys have seen me flying around, maybe at events. I also have an online presence and I'm super excited to be opening a 2,000-square-foot store here very soon in Solomons at the Shops at Patuxent Plaza. We have a lot of amazing businesses coming and just super, super excited for Solomons and the local community."

Maggie Chaney with Rod 'N' Reel Resort in Chesapeake Beach said, "I wanted to let you know we're finishing up the final phase of our development project that we started in 2017. We're having our first banquet event this Friday and then May 11th, the dock outside will be open for everyone. So, you'll be able to walk through our brand-new atrium, which is beautiful. I encourage all of you to come down as soon as you can to look at it. And you can walk right through there out back to our new Dock Bar and then come to a Rock the Dock concert."

Ryan Crowley, one of the owners of Cruising Tikis of Solomons Island also introduced himself.

Business Retention Specialist Kathy McAdams explained, "This week provides an opportunity to highlight the work we do each day to support and strengthen Calvert County's business community through outreach resources and one-on-one engagement. Our department helps local businesses grow, overcome challenges, and remain vital to our local economy. We work closely with the entrepreneurs, longstanding businesses, and new investors because economic development isn't just about the numbers, it's about people, partnerships, and creating opportunities."

Economic Development Director Julie Oberg praised her staff and said, "I just wanted to take a moment to recognize them and thank all the businesses here in Calvert County for choosing Calvert as home for your business."

Other members of the department in attendance were: Sheebah Smith, Nchole White, Hilary Daily, Caroline Trossbach, Grace Fadely and Rose Krell.

Commissioner Mike Hart, a small businessman, said, "You can see everybody has a story. And that's the cool thing about all that is small business is tough. Business in general is hard, but everybody has a cool story."

Hart added, "It changes all the time. And it's all business. You think you get opened up and then every year there's a new surprise. And that's where Kathy's group is great because to navigate those waters, you don't even know sometimes that these changes happened and then all of a sudden you get this letter in the mail that you owe money for this, that you didn't know anything about. Or there's a new thing you have to do payroll wise. There's just so much that goes into it and that's why a lot of times businesses fail. You're the best chef in the world, but you better be the best businessperson first."

Next week is Business Appreciation Week (BAW) in the county.

As one of the Department of Economic Development's signature events, Oberg said, "BAW provides a unique opportunity for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and staff to interact directly with business owners, learn about their challenges and concerns and develop actionable solutions to improve the county's overall economic environment. In prior years, we have organized several activities, networking, and educational opportunities. We have also developed our week's events — and our ambassador team visits — around specific themes. Past themes have highlighted newest and oldest businesses, the hospitality industry, agriculture, medical/healthcare businesses, construction, 'green' technologies, and women entrepreneurs."

This year, the theme will be "The Business of Tourism." They will visit 15

tourism businesses (three for each of the five Ambassador Teams). They also plan to organize and/or co-host the following activities throughout the week:

- Tuesday, May 6, 3 to 4 p.m. — 50th Business Anniversary Celebration for Humane Society of Calvert County, 2210 Dalrymple Rd., Sunderland
- Monday, May 12, 10:30 a.m. — Ribbon Cutting for Fresco Studios, 10379 Southern Maryland Blvd., Dunkirk Thank you letters to milestone business anniversaries
- Tuesday, May 13, Noon to 1 p.m. — Lunch will be provided by Nicks of Calvert at SpringHill Suites Prince Frederick, 85 Sherry Ln, Prince Frederick with a guest speaker from the Maryland Department of Commerce Office of Tourism; 1 to 5 p.m. — Each of the five Ambassador teams will visit three county tourism businesses
- Wednesday, May 14, 9 to 11 a.m. — Economic Development Advisory Commission will hold its regular monthly meeting at Big Kahuna Cruises, 255 Lore Rd., Solomons; 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. — Business Anniversary Visits
- Thursday, May 15, 8:30 a.m. to noon — AI, Insights and Tools for Success workshop hosted in partnership with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) 115 JW Williams Rd., Building B, Rooms PFB 104/105, Prince Frederick; 4:30 to 6 p.m. — Economic Development, Calvert Chamber of Commerce and the Calvert Minority Business Alliance come together for a business after-hours event at Mully's Brewery 141 Schooner Ln., Suite 15, Prince Frederick

dickmyers@countytimes.net

County to Participate in Housing Loan Program

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Calvert County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) has signed up for another year to participate in a state bond program that provides funding for housing assistance programs.

Department of Community Resources Director Jennifer Moreland explained, "The Internal Revenue Code limits the amount of private activity bonds that may be issued in each state. Annually, the Maryland Department of Commerce (MDC) issues its Private Activity Bond Initial Allocation, wherein it allocates the Maryland State Ceiling among counties. Any allocation not used by September 30, 2025, automatically reverts to the Secretary's Reserve on October 1, 2025, unless it is transferred to another issuer or is used to issue private activity bonds."

Moreland went on to explain, "Calvert County Government's Fiscal Year 2025,

housing bond allocation is \$4,360,083, with a non-housing bond allocation of \$1,494,855 and a Bonus Non-Housing Allocation of \$373,721. Calvert County Government has received the annual invitation to participate in the On Behalf-of-Bonds Local Governments Housing Program (OBO). Under this program, the Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD) pools participants' housing bond allocations to fund housing programs or to issue mortgage credit certificates on behalf of the local government with county-based caps removed."

Calvert County Private Activity Bond Allocation for Housing of \$4,360,083 to date in this fiscal year is up from previous years.

There are currently 42 housing loans that have been issued to Calvert residents under the MD Mortgage Program at a cost of \$14,753,229, which is down from the previous year.

At the May 6 BOCC meeting, Moreland said, "I will say, if you're asked how Calvert

County supports affordable housing, this is one way, because you're getting funding that's pooled with other counties around the state into the Maryland Mortgage Program, which gives our income eligible residents an opportunity for home ownership in Calvert County."

She said the interest rate varies but is under the FHA loan rate by about a percentage point.

Moreland said her executive administrative assistant Lorraine Joyner, who has been the long-time administrator of the county program, is retiring.

Moreland observed, "I guess the average loan is right at \$350,000," adding, "This is for your working-class folks. A lot of these home loans can go to people working for Calvert County government."

I think the average (home price) in Calvert County is \$549,000."

Commissioner Catherine Grasso said, "Those homes on the waterfront really skew the numbers, don't they?"



Community Resources Director Jennifer Moreland

Moreland noted that there are homes in the \$300,000 range still available in the county, particularly in the south.

"They are few and far between," observed Commissioner Mike Hart.

dickmyers@countytimes.net

CALVERT COUNTY POLICE BLOTTER

During the week of April 21, 2025 – April 27, 2025, Calvert County Sheriff's Office Deputies responded to 2,151 calls for service throughout the community, including, but not limited to:

- Check Welfare / Mental Health: 75
- Disorderly: 18
- Domestic: 28
- Motor Vehicle Crashes: 45
- Patrol Checks / School Checks: 838
- Suspicious Persons / Vehicles: 46
- Traffic Complaints: 83
- Traffic Stops: 473
- 911 Hang-Ups: 164
- ARRESTS: 42



James Adam Riffe

Alcohol Violation: 25-34606 On April 27, 2025, at approximately 4:15 p.m., Deputy Morgal responded to the Ward Farm Recreation and Nature Park, located at 10455 Ward Road in Dunkirk, for a welfare check. Concerned citizens reported that a referee working the soccer games was sitting under a tree and appeared to be intoxicated. Upon making contact with the individual, identified as **James Adam Riffe**, 44, of Waldorf, Deputy Morgal detected a strong odor of alcohol coming from Riffe's breath. Riffe was unable to speak coherently and was slurring his words. He voluntarily submitted to a preliminary breath test, which indicated a blood alcohol concentration nearly three times the legal limit for operating a motor vehicle. Riffe admitted to consuming alcohol prior to refereeing the soccer games. Further investigation revealed Riffe had an active warrant through Prince George's County. He was taken into custody, served with the open warrant, and charged with Intoxicated Public Disturbance.



Christian Taylor Chism

Assault: 25-34173 On April 26, 2025, DFC McCourt responded to the 7-Eleven parking lot located at 13974 H.G. Trueman Road in Solomons to assist Deputy R. Contic with a traffic stop. As DFC McCourt approached the vehicle and began speaking with the passengers, the rear driver's side passenger, identified as **Christian Taylor Chism**, 34 of Leonardtown, became confrontational. Chism questioned the deputy's line of questioning and repeatedly told him to leave. During the encounter, Chism reached through the open window, grabbed DFC McCourt's agency-issued Taser which was secured in a holster on his vest and attempted to take it. Chism was immediately placed into custody while actively resisting arrest. He was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with Second-Degree Assault, Obstructing and Hindering, and Resisting/Interfering with Arrest.

CDS Violation: 25-34220 On April 26, 2025, Deputy Hill conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for an equipment



Reginald Simmons Tyler



Walter Eugene Johnson

violation in the area of Silverwood and Fairground Lane in Prince Frederick. The occupants were identified as **Reginald Simmons Tyler**, 48, of Port Republic, and **Walter Eugene Johnson**, 38, of Prince Frederick. During the investigation, it was determined that Tyler was operating the vehicle with a suspended license. A subsequent search of the vehicle uncovered a glass smoking device containing burnt copper filters with suspected cocaine residue, four additional containers with suspected cocaine residue, small white rocks (suspected cocaine), and an empty plastic tie off. Both Tyler and Johnson were placed under arrest and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. They were each charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, while Tyler received an additional charge of CDS: Possession – Not Cannabis.



Matthew Kelland Novotny

CDS Violation: 25-33803 On April 25, 2025, DFC Shoemaker responded to the 14000 block of H.G. Trueman Road in Lusby for the report of a male slumped over the steering wheel of a silver Hyundai. Upon making contact with the driver and sole occupant, **Matthew Kelland Novotny**, 47 of La Plata, a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage was emitting from his person, and numerous open containers were observed in the passenger seat. Novotny submitted to a series of field sobriety tests, which determined he was unable to safely operate a motor vehicle. Novotny was placed into custody. A search of his person incident to arrest revealed two cut straws containing suspected cocaine residue. A search of the vehicle revealed 13 empty bottles of vodka miniatures. Novotny was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center and charged with DWI, CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia, and other traffic-related charges.



Susan Michelle Furr

CDS Violation: 25-34331 On April 26, 2025, DFC Lewis responded to the Wawa located at 305 Market Square Drive in Prince Frederick to assist Cpl. Kelly with a wanted individual. During the investigation, a passenger, identified as **Susan Michelle Furr**, 38 of Dunkirk, was found to have an active warrant through Anne Arundel County. Furr

was taken into custody without incident. During a search of her person, Furr advised that she had a "crack stem" concealed in her bra. She retrieved a napkin containing a plastic tube with burn marks and handed it over to deputies. Furr was transported to the Calvert County Detention Center, where she was served with the open warrant and charged with CDS: Possession of Paraphernalia.



Nicholas Juan-Antonio Ransom, Jr.

Disorderly Conduct: 25-34423 On April 26, 2025, deputies responded to the Tiki Bar, located at 85 Charles Street in Solomons, for a reported fight in progress. Upon arrival, deputies observed several individuals actively fighting near the entrance of the establishment. During the course of the investigation, **Nicholas Juan-Antonio Ransom, Jr.**, 24, of Lexington Park, was identified as being involved in the altercation. When contacted by deputies, Ransom refused to provide identification, became loud and argumentative, and failed to comply with deputies orders. He initially provided a false name and, due to the disturbance he was causing, was placed under arrest. Ransom was charged with Disorderly Conduct, Obstructing and Hindering, and Providing a False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer.



Jerry Lee Duvall

Theft: 24-33180 On April 22, 2025, Deputy Tunnell responded to Ross Dress for Less, located at 835 N Solomons Island Road in Prince Frederick, for a reported theft. The complainant advised that a female, later identified as **Jerry Lee Duvall**, 42 of Prince Frederick, was seen attempting to push a shopping cart filled with merchandise out of the store, bypassing all points of sale without making payment. Further investigation revealed that Duvall had also been observed inside Ulta Beauty attempting to steal several items. Video surveillance was obtained, confirming the theft attempts. The total value of the merchandise taken from Ross was \$1,316.42, while the total from Ulta amounted to \$854.55. Duvall was placed under arrest and transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. She was charged with Theft Scheme: \$1,500 to \$2,500, as well as Theft: \$100 to under \$1,500 for each store involved. Additionally, Duvall was trespassed indefinitely from both Ross Dress for Less and Ulta Beauty.

Theft: 25-33129 On April 22, 2025, DFC Lewis responded to the parking lot of 450 W Dares Beach Rd. Prince Frederick, for the report of a theft. The complainant reported sometime between 9:30 p.m. on April 21 and 5:45 a.m. on April 22, an unknown suspect(s) stole a hubcap off the victim's vehicle. The

estimated value of stolen property is \$54.

Theft: 25-33818 On April 24, 2025, DFC Dymond responded to the 1800 block of Scientists Cliffs Road in Port Republic, for the report of a theft. The complainant reported an unknown suspect(s) stole a Craftsman push mower and Honda tiller from the residence. The estimated value of stolen property is \$3,298.



Jeremiah Phillip Long

Trespassing: 25-34076 On April 25, 2025, DFC McCourt responded to the 1500 block of Flag Harbor Boulevard in St. Leonard for a reported trespassing complaint. The complainant advised that the unknown male had been asked to leave the property multiple times but continued to return. Upon arrival, deputies made contact with the individual identified as **Jeremiah Phillip Long**, 26 of St. Leonard. When ordered to leave the premises, Long refused, became agitated, and began making threats toward law enforcement and members of the community. Long was trespassed indefinitely from the property and subsequently transported to the Calvert County Detention Center. He was charged with Trespassing on Private Property, Resisting/Interfering with Arrest, and Disorderly Conduct.



Jeremiah Robert Jameson

Trespassing: 25-34629 On April 26, 2025, at approximately 11:14 p.m., DFC McCourt responded to the Tiki Bar, located at 85 Charles Street in Solomons, for a reported fight in progress. Upon arrival, the altercation had already dispersed, and the establishment was in the process of closing for the evening. Security personnel advised deputies that **Jeremiah Robert Jameson**, 18 of Avenue, had been instructed not to return to the property. DFC McCourt informed Jameson that, per the request of security, he was not permitted to re-enter the premises and would be subject to arrest if he did so. Shortly after giving Jameson notice not to return, he re-entered the Tiki Bar. Jameson was subsequently taken into custody and charged with Trespassing: Private Property.

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

Calvert Community Calendar

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

Thu, May 8

Increasing Biodiversity - One Yard at a Time

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

Wild Ones Chesapeake Bay Chapter. Presentation includes information on the Coastal Plain ecoregion; critical area; right plant, right place and suggestions for various situations (sun/shade). 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Fri, May 9

Annmarie After Hours

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
5-7 p.m.

Join us for extended hours at Annmarie to celebrate the opening of our newest exhibit Imaginary Worlds: Invented Spaces and Places.

Food Trucks on Site: Mully's Brewey and Bowl 29. Annmarie Cash Bar (wine).

Entertainment: Aldous and Emma.

Adults Only—\$5 per person, AMG Members Free.

Sat, May 10

Mother's Day Maker's Market

Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

A morning of browsing and shopping at Annmarie with a delightful selection of vendors offering products made with love. Jewelry, wearable art, home decor, small batch food and drinks, wineries & breweries, plants, and more!

Jigsaw Puzzle Swap

Calvert Library Prince Frederick
850 Costley Way
9-11a.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>.

Chesapeake Garden Club Plant Sale and Q&A

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings
9:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

Beautiful plants and arrangements just in time for spring and Mother's Day! As you buy your selections you can also have your garden questions answered by a Master Gardener (Q&A starts at 11am). 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Night Hike

American Chestnut Land Trust
676 Double Oak Rd, Prince Frederick
8 p.m.

Enjoy a night hike on the Parker's Creek Loop. Bring a headlamp and flashlight. Adults only.

Sun, May 11

Mother's Day Evening Cruise

Calvert Marine Museum
4:30 – 6 p.m.

Celebrate mom or your "special" someone aboard the *Wm. B. Tennison*! Relax together and enjoy the sights and sounds of the Solomons Harbor and Patuxent River. Heavy hors d'oeuvre and a special dessert will be served. Guests are welcome to bring their own beverages; water, tea and lemonade will be provided. Cost is \$40 for adults, \$20 for children ages 5-12, and \$15 for children 4 and under. To purchase tickets, visit calvert-marinemuseum.com/498/Special-Cruises.

Mon, May 12

Learn to Access Libby, Freegal & Kanopy

Calvert Library Fairview Branch
Rt. 4 and Chaneyville Road, Owings

3-4 p.m.

Learn how your library card can help you access free digital content like TV, movies and music. Why pay for streaming and eBooks when your library offers them for free? 410-257-2101. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Book Discussion

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

Join us this month to discuss "The Guncle" by Steven Rowley. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tue, May 13

Maryland Health Connection

Calvert Library Southern Branch
13920 H. G. Trueman Road, Solomons
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Got health coverage? SEEDCO can help you get it! Maryland Health Connection offers no cost and low-cost health insurance. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Social Security: Disability

Calvert Library Zoom
1:30-2:30 p.m.

We invite you to this virtual presentation to learn more about disability benefits, eligibility requirements, and the application process. Presentation by Diana Varela, Public Affairs Specialist for the Social Security Administration followed by Q&A.

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

Wed, May 14

Veteran Services Program

Southern Pines Senior Center
20 Appeal Lane, Lusby
9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Are you a veteran or close family member looking for assistance? The Calvert County Office on Aging is partnering with

ServingTogether to provide support twice a month, every second Wednesday and fourth Friday. Walk-ins are encouraged. No appointment is necessary. Visit servingtogetherproject.org/calvert for more information.

Job Seeker Resources – Skillbuilders

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Maryland Department of Labor, Veterans Program, Senior Community Service Employment and Job Service representatives will be in person to meet with those seeking employment or career change. Walk-ins welcome on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Resumes and Job Interviews

Calvert Library Twin Beaches Branch
4100 5th St., North Beach
10 a.m.-12 p.m.

Offered by Maryland Department of Labor, American Job Center, this is an interactive workshop for resume and job interview help. 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Tarot Study Group: Drop-In Program

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

Come learn and practice tarot as a creative tool, for self-reflection, introspection, meditation, thoughtfulness, or as a fun hobby. 410-326-5289. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

Bilingual Conversation Hour

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

Come join us for a fun hour of bilingual conversation! 30 minutes in English and 30 minutes in Spanish! 410-257-2411. <https://CalvertLibrary.info>.

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

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



County Times

P. O. Box 250 • Hollywood, MD 20636

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.

Sat, May 10

Mother's Day Bake Sale

Seventh District Rescue Squad Building
21530 Colton Point Road, Avenue
8 am until sold out

Homemade desserts, including brownies, cakes, cookies, cupcakes, pies and more.

Mother's Day Plant Sale

First Saints Community Church
First Friendship Campus
13723 Point Lookout Road, Ridge
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

Located on Rt. 5 South in Ridge across from Ridge Volunteer Fire Department. Cash or check (checks made payable to First Friendship UMW).

Plant Sale

Callaway Baptist Church
20960 Point Lookout Road, Callaway
7 a.m.-1 p.m.

Large variety of succulents, plants and other varieties available.

Plant Sale

Summerseat Farm

26655 Three Notch Rd., Mechanicsville
8 a.m.-2 p.m.

We will have a cheerful array of vibrant perennials, annuals, native plants, trees, vegetables, herbs, ornamental grasses, tropicals, and more. Cash, check, or credit card accepted. Breakfast and lunch will be available. Need fertilizer? We have "Llama Beans" for sale this year. This is a rain or shine event.

Touch a Truck & Car Show

Father Andrew White School
22850 Leonardtown
10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Join us to explore emergency vehicles, or enjoy the variety of cars old and new. Our Destination Imagination STEM teams are hosting this event as they are gearing up towards their Global Finals competition at the end of May. Door prizes and awards for car entries! contact: Cacko@fatherandrew-white.org for more information

Reggie Rice: Fool of Illusions Magic Show

King's Christian Academy Gym
20738 Point Lookout Road, Callaway
6:30 p.m.

Reggie Rice is back – for one night only. Join us for an unforgettable evening of fam-

ily-friendly comedy and jaw-dropping illusions with 3x DC Comedy Magician of the Year, Reggie Rice! Go to: www.foolofillusions.com or www.kcaeagles.org

Questions? Call us at 301-994-3080

SMTMD Contra Dance

Christ Episcopal Church Parish Hall
37497 Zach Fowler Rd, Chaptico
7 p.m.

2nd Saturday of the month. The evening starts 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 p.m. Admission: \$8 for members; \$12 for non-SMTMD members; children 17 and under (when accompanied by a paying adult) and band members are free.

Sun, May 11

Mother's Day Brunch

St. Mary's County Elks Lodge #2092
22649 FDR Blvd. California
9 a.m.-12 p.m.

All you can eat brunch buffet. Menu includes, made to order omeletes, scrambled eggs, waffles, corned beef hash, cream chipped beef, biscuits & gravy, sausage, bacon, fried

potatoes, fruit, juice, and coffee. \$15 per person (12yrs and up), \$10 for 5-11 years old, and under 5 free with paying adult.

All You Can Eat Home-Style Breakfast

2nd District VFD & RS Social Hall
45245 Drayden Rd, Valley Lee
8-11 a.m.

Celebrate the Moms. Menu: scrambled eggs, home fried potatoes, pancakes, french toast, sausage links, ham, bacon, creamed chipped beef, sausage gravy, spiced apple-sauce, grits & biscuits, assorted juices, milk and coffee. Adults \$14.00; children 6 to 12 \$7.00; children 5 & under are free. For more information call: 240-925-2512 (c)

Mon, May 12

Red Cross Blood Drive

2nd District Social Hall VFD & RS
45245 Drayden Road, Valley Lee
1:30-6 p.m.

For more information, or to schedule your life saving donation, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or visit www.redcrossblood.org/ to download the blood donor app.

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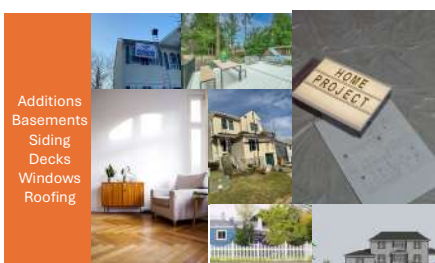
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In Remembrance

He will also be remembered for his enthusiasm and dedication to the "Super Bowl bound" Washington Redskins.

In Steve's memory, please consider making a donation to your local Fire/Rescue Department or Animal Adoption Agency.

Family will receive friends on Thursday, May 8, 2025 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. at St. John Francis Regis Catholic Church, 43950 Saint Johns Road, Hollywood, MD 20636. A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated by Father Raymond Schmidt at 10:00 a.m. Burial will follow the Mass in the Church cemetery.

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Shannan Troiano, 52



Shannan Elane Troiano, 52, of Valley Lee, MD passed away April 27, 2025 at her home.

Born December 20, 1972 in Frankfort, KY, she is the daughter of

Barry and Barbara (nee: Grider) Stacy.

After graduating high school in Frankfort, KY, Shannan relocated to Ladson, SC where she worked in the hospitality industry. In September 1996, while out with a friend, she met the love of her life, Joseph Ronald Troiano; and on May 10, 1997, the two married. Together they celebrated almost 28 years of marriage. Shortly after they married, Joey relocated back to St. Mary's County, where he was born and raised and brought his new bride with him. She began her career in finance working for various contractors that supported the Department of Defense at Patuxent River Naval Air Station. Later she switched employment working for the Department of Defense, where she has worked for the past 15 years as a Budget Financial Manager.

Shannan was a fan of country music and line dancing, a delicious cook, a beach-loving sand-in-your-toes girl. She was artistically inclined, designing and creating many gorgeously decorated cakes for family and friends. There was no limited to her ability, if you could think it, she could create it. She especially loved her Camaro "Bella." Bella was quite the diva, always in pristine condition, she was white with dual pink strips and added sparkle from pink Swarovski crystals. She took immense pride in her car, as did her husband, and the two participated in many car shows where she won numerous trophies and awards, including Best in Show, and many first-place awards. She was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, and friend to many. She never met a stranger and was always willing to help others. She loved being the best Nana she could to her grandchildren.

In addition to her parents and beloved husband, she is also survived by her son, Cory Justin Ryder of Pittsburg, TX, daughters, Ashlie Nichole Payton of Mechanicsville, MD and Jacquelin Desiree Troiano (Harvey Carter, Jr.) of Valley Lee, MD; five siblings-

Brother - Rusty Wayne Stacy (Teresa Gail) - Kentucky, Brother - Danny Lynn Stacy (Patricia) - Kentucky, Brother - Jeremy Rain Stacy - Virginia, Sister - Sunny Renee Stacy (Andy Reid), Brother - C. Randall Stacy; Uncle, Charles David Grider; father-in-law, Dominick Anthony Troiano of Sarasota, FL; mother-in-law, Vivian Troiano of Callaway, MD; paternal aunt, Jackie Dyson; 12 grandchildren; and many extended family and friends. Preceded by grandparents, Maternal Grandfather Hollis Grider, Maternal Grandmother Jane Grider, Paternal Grandmother Hettie Stacy.

Family will receive friends for Shannan's Life Celebration on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. On Wednesday, May 7, 2025 a Funeral Service will be celebrated by Pastor Arthur Shepherd at 11:00 a.m. at Brinsfield Funeral Home. Interment will follow the Service at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD.

Serving as pallbearers will be Joseph Troiano, Ashlie Payton, Jacquelin Troiano, Wayne Stacy, Michael Troiano, Dominick Troiano, Harvey Carter, Jr. and Tommy Lorence.

Memorial contributions in Shannan's name may be made to Valley Lee Volunteer Fire & Rescue Squad, P.O. Box 1, Valley Lee, MD 20692; Lupus Foundation of America - Greater Washington Chapter, 2000 L St., NW Suite 410, Washington, D.C.; Susan G. Koman for the Cure, P.O. Box 801889, Dallas, TX 75380; and Autism Speaks- P.O. Box 37148 Boone, Iowa 50037-0148.

Condolences may be made at www.brinsfieldfuneral.com.

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Dr. Garner "Butch" Morgan, 76



Dr. Garner "Butch" Morgan passed away on May 2, 2025 after a lifetime of love for his family, unwavering devotion to the Lord, and service to the community. He was 76.

In 1971, Butch married the love of his life, Mary "Pinky" Morgan, after a fateful meeting in a jewelry store where he confidently declared, "That is my wife." Their love story spanned more than 54 years and served as a shining example of loyalty, partnership, and deep affection. Together, they raised two sons, Luke (Lindsay) and Adam (Jaime), and welcomed four grandchildren—Julia, Anna, Jackson, and Avery—who were the absolute pride and joy of his life.

Born and raised in St. Mary's County, Maryland, Butch was a proud member of the first graduating class of Chopticon High School in 1966. After High School we went to work for W.R. Blair in Lexington Park, Maryland, where he was a jeweler. He attended New York University where he received his certificates in Horology and Gemology. He worked for Mr. Blair from

1966 - 1978. He went on to attend St. Mary's College where he played basketball, graduating in 1976, and later earned his dental degree from the University of Maryland School of Dentistry in 1980.

Butch built a successful dental practice that continues to serve the county, having started it in 1980. In 2009 he was proud to transition the practice to his son, Luke. He was deeply involved in the Maryland State Dental Association, where he served in leadership, including a term as President, always advocating for excellence in patient care and the dental profession. He was a strong advocate of the Mission of Mercy movement, bringing the program to Southern Maryland in 2010 where it has provided free healthcare to thousands of patients in the region. In addition to dentistry, Butch had an entrepreneurial spirit that led him into real estate, various business ventures, and, later in life, back to his original love—jewelry making.

Butch is survived by his beloved Pinky; his sons and their families; sisters Judy (Richard) and Debbie (Karl); brother Gene (Joan); sister-in-law Carolyn; and many nieces and nephews whom he loved dearly. He was predeceased by his parents, Mary Lilian and Eugene Morgan.

Butch lived a life rich with passions. He loved golf, boating, and fishing—especially with his grandson, Jackson. He never missed a chance to cheer on his grandchildren at their sports games and concerts, always showing up with pride and encouragement.

He cherished a good joke, a glass of red wine with his sons or friends, and his regular poker games. Gardening and working with his hands brought him peace and joy. He was also deeply involved in his church community Sacred Heart Catholic Church, in Bushwood, Maryland, where he found spiritual connection and gave back generously.

Above all, Butch knew what mattered most: family and love. His legacy lives on in the laughter of his grandchildren, the values he instilled in his sons, and the deep love he shared with Pinky.

A life well lived. A man well loved.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, May 15, 2025 from 9:30am to 11:30am, in Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Bushwood, MD. A funeral mass will be held immediately following at 11:30am. Interment will be private.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to the Southern Maryland Mission of Mercy, in honor of Butch's lifelong commitment to helping others and strengthening his community.

Checks can be sent to: Southern Maryland Mission of Mercy c/o Dylan Schneider ~ 44008 W Leola Court, Hollywood, MD 22036. Please refer to the SMMOM website to give electronically.

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

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



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In Remembrance

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

Kenny Smythers, 38



With deep sorrow, we announce the passing of Kenneth Michael Smythers, better known as "Buck" or "Kenny", 38, of Lexington Park, Maryland, who departed this

life on April 25, 2025.

Born on June 22, 1986, in Calvert County, MD, to Sharon Johnson and Kenneth Smythers, Kenny spent many of his childhood days hunting, fishing, and following his parents around while they managed a successful drywall business.

Kenny became a father in 2013, to Lilley Kay-Lynn Smythers. From the moment Lilley was born, Kenny changed everything about his life and routine to provide the most stable and consistent life for her. He took her everywhere with him. Kenny loved his daughter more than anything in this world and chose and protected her above all else. For a man with so many accomplishments, she is by far his greatest.

A hardworking and self-made man, Kenny built a legacy through his successful construction company, MD Custom Construction, which he founded in 2015. Kenny's dedication to quality craftsmanship and honest work earned him the respect and trust of countless clients throughout the Tri-

County area.

He is survived by his beautiful daughter, Lilley Smythers; his mother, Sharon Johnson, (husband and loving stepfather Bill Johnson); many aunts, uncles, and cousins, and many best friends that became family. Kenny is preceded in death by his father, Kenny L. Smythers, and his grandparents.

Kenny was the kind of person who made life better for everyone around him—kind-hearted, one of a kind, always ready to help without hesitation. His love for hunting, the outdoors, his friends, and his family were at the heart of who he was. He shared his love for these hobbies with any of his friends and family who showed interest and spent many treasured moments on hunting trips, concerts, casinos, charter boats, and football games (Go Ravens!). We hold these memories close to our heart as we look back and remember all the fun times we had.

The family will receive friends on Wednesday, May 7, 2025, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM at the Mattingley-Gardiner Funeral Home, Leonardtown, MD, where a funeral service will be held on Thursday, May 8, 2025, at 10:00 AM in the funeral home chapel with Chaplain Chris Whetlor officiating. Interment will follow at Charles Memorial Gardens, Leonardtown, MD.

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

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

Don House, 88



Donald Edwin "Don" House, 88, formerly of Leonardtown, MD passed away on Thursday, May 1, 2025 at Discovery Commons with his loving family at his side.

Born April 28, 1937 in Bath, ME to the late Edgebert Patton House and Miriam Wallingford (nee: Place) House.

Don was born and raised in Maine. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maine in 1959. After graduation he began working as an aerospace engineer at Patuxent River Naval Air Test Center. There he met and married his wife, Pauline Abernathy House in Belmont, N.C. on February 18, 1962 and celebrated over 57 wonderful years of marriage before his wife's passing in August 2019.

Don was a graduate of the US Naval Test Pilot School in 1962 as a member of Class 31.

During his 47-year career at Pax River he was a flight test engineer for the OV-10 Bronco, A-4 Skyhawk, A7 Corsair, and the AV8B Harrier flight test programs.

Don was very family-oriented and enjoyed vacations with family in Maine, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia. He enjoyed attending sporting events with his son and traveling with his daughter.

He was a sports enthusiast, with his favorite team being the Boston Red Sox. He was an umpire for over 40 years for local softball teams in Southern Maryland. He also enjoyed a good game of golf. He spent many hours working on his extensive stamp collection and was an avid reader of non-fiction.

Don was a member of St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Lusby, MD, BPO Elks Lodge 2092; and a past member of the Lions Club and attended St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church.

Donald is survived by his children: Donald James House (Donna) of Solomons, MD and Robbie-Lea H. McKillip (Alan) of Georgia; and his sister Marilyn Piland of Florida. He is also survived by four grandchildren Erin Beyer (Chris), Brandon House, Shannon McKillip, Brian McKillip and 2 great grand-

children Kayla Beyer and Andrew Beyer.

The family will receive friends on May 8, 2025 from 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., with a Service at 8:30 p.m., by the BPO Elks Lodge 2092, at Brinsfield Funeral Home, 22955 Hollywood Road, Leonardtown, MD 20650. A Funeral Service will be celebrated by Pastor Myungha Baek on Friday, May 9, 2025 at 2:00 p.m., at Brinsfield Funeral Home. The Graveside Service will be private, as he is laid to rest next to his wife at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions in Don's name may be made to: Patuxent River Naval Air Museum in Lexington Park, Maryland. (paxmuseum.com)

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

Arrangements by the Brinsfield Funeral Home, P.A.

Steve Aud, 64



Stephen Edward Aud, 64, of Warrenton, VA passed away unexpectedly on April 27, 2025. He was born on August 3, 1960 to Jack and Margaret Aud of California, Maryland.

Steve graduated from Ryken High School in 1978 and then attended the Spartan College of Aeronautics and Technology in Tulsa, OK. After returning from Oklahoma, he started Aud Communications in Northern Virginia which he ran until his retirement at age 62.

Steve is survived by his parents; children, Shannon Wellens (Matt), Christopher Aud, and Kevin Aud (Elizabeth); grandchild Jesse Wellens; his siblings, Janet Rue (Gary), Rebecca Aud (Joe Williams), Nancy Raley (Christian), Michele Hampton (Stanford), Mark Aud (Beatrice), and Robbie Aud (Tricia); his best friend Kelly Ferguson and her daughter Anna; and countless other relatives and friends.

Steve will be remembered for his kind spirit, the quiet moments of generosity he shared, and the strong relationships he fostered with those he loved. While his passing leaves a profound void, his memory will live on in the hearts of those who knew him.

In Memory of
Mary Catherine Kane
Sept. 18, 1924 – Nov. 22, 2019

Mama, you were always there for us. Even when we wanted to give up, you gave us the strength and love to carry on. One day isn't nearly enough time to celebrate you, so we celebrate you every day just like you are still here with us. We know from Heaven you still watch over us.

Happy Mother's Day, Mama.
Love,
Ellen and Larry

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

Words cannot say
We miss you everyday
Through the month of May
We remember your Birthday

Wanderings of an Aimless Mind



Jim Cryer: A Local Legend, a Life of Character

By Shelby Opperman
Contributing Writer

On the day you are reading this, Leonardtown and later at Cryer's Back Road Inn in Compton will be taken over by a wonderful Life Celebration for the late Jim Cryer. The life celebration will begin down at the Leonardtown Wharf at 9 am with a New Orleans Brass Band leading off a processional parade from the Wharf up to St. Aloysius Cemetery and then back down to the Wharf again. After that everyone will head to Back Road Inn in Compton to toast the great man that Jim was. Jim had a strength of character that was an example to all around him. I'm sure there are a lot of young ball players who would meet Jim and think I want to have that strength and focus in my life.

But besides being a legend in softball and the owner of many successful bars, Jim was also a character, if all the stories and adventures about him are true. I don't know if it's true, but I heard that a fight broke out many years ago, and Jim shot off a gun in the air to stop it. If it is true, I could see Jim doing it. Maybe some of you reading this will have stories with Jim that you keep tucked in your heart. When my husband played softball for the teams Jim sponsored over the years, I got to see the wicked, dry humor from Jim and the grin that would accompany his humor. I also saw all the love and admiration from all who knew him.

I always felt like Jim was inviting people into his "living room" at Back Road Inn and even asked him once if it felt like the bar was an extension of his home. He made everyone feel welcome and if you weren't paying attention he was buying your drinks. I do have my own story with Jim. I was partnered with a really good shuffleboard player one night, (you know who you are) and it seems we were really doing good and winning even with me being his partner. Jim was sitting on the edge of the pool table watching this impromptu shuffleboard tournament. Every time my partner and I would win a game, Jim would buy me a drink. I believe I was drinking my Bourbon Sweet and Sours with a splash of orange back then. You know how this ends I bet. I have no idea what happened or if I won after a certain point, but I can still remember Jim smiling on the edge of the pool table. My husband was probably egging him on.

If you were a friend of Jim's, you know of his love for his beloved dog Bacchus who seemed more like a person than a dog. I was so shocked one time when I walked into Back Road and there was not only Bacchus sitting at the bar, but so was another doggie friend of his. Jim loved Bacchus and traveled with him in his golf cart from Back Road to the ball field, and I am sure many other places. A while after Bacchus' passing, Jim was given Trouble, another dog he grew to love.

And you also know he loved his time in New Orleans for Mardi Gras each year. I definitely heard how much fun those were from some who went along with him to watch the parades off of his balcony. Since Jim went to the actual Mardi Gras each year, he would host a high summer Mardi Gras party at Back Road. We tried hard to never miss those, especially with Jim's son Ken cooking a true Mardi Gras feast for all. The tables of food would be lined up in the garage/meeting room behind the pavilion. Back Road Inn, including the Mardi Gras tree in between the pavilion and garage would be dripping with shiny, colorful beads. The entire bar was frequently refreshed with the Mardi Gras colors of gold, green, and purple. (I will probably wear some purple and green tomorrow and bring some beads just in case.) Yes, summer Mardi Gras at Back Road was quite a party with live music, a happy Jim, and lots of happy people. How could you not be happy there? Just like I mentioned above, Back Road Inn was an extension of Jim Cryer's home and his hospitality.

So, we will raise a toast to a true St. Mary's County legend tomorrow who, I feel, lived life to the fullest and the way he wanted. And who gave of his time and generosity to so many people and charities. I know the Clements Cuties are forever grateful. Here's to you Jim!

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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Garvey
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1:45 p.m.

Loffler
June 10
9:30 a.m.

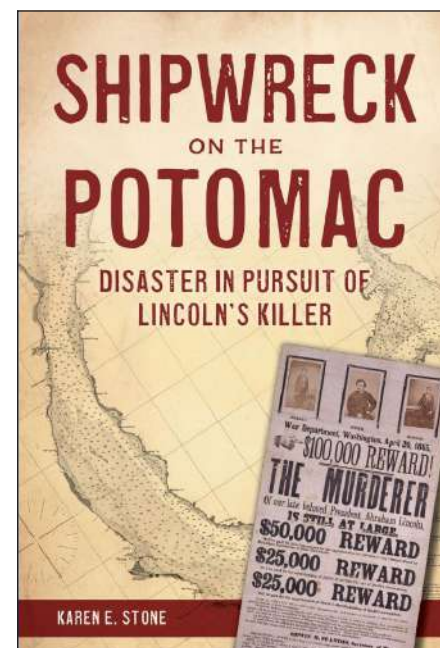
Registration Begins: April 20, 2025 at 8:00 a.m.
How to Register: Visit www.stmaryscountymd.gov/aging/
Or Call the reservation request line at 301-475-4200 with Extension:
#3115 Northern #1660 Loffler #1075 Garvey

Funding for the program instruction is provided by the Maryland Department of Aging Long-Term Care/Dementia Care Navigation Program.

Museum Manager Authors Book on Black Diamond Disaster



Karen Stone



St. Mary's County government announces that Karen Stone, manager of the Museum Division within the Department of Recreation & Parks, unveiled her newly published book, *Shipwreck on the Potomac: Disaster in Pursuit of Lincoln's Killer*, at the 160th anniversary commemoration of the Black Diamond disaster at St. Clement's Island Museum. This is the first-ever book about the Black Diamond Disaster, a "forgotten" tragedy that occurred on the Potomac River near St. Clement's Island during the American Civil War, during the hunt for presidential assassin, John Wilkes Booth.

The synopsis unveils a tale that few, even within the local community, are aware of: "It was a calm, moonless night in late April 1865. Robert E. Lee had surrendered. Abraham Lincoln was dead. Assassin John Wilkes Booth and accomplice David Herold, previously hiding in the swamps of Southern Maryland, had crossed the Potomac River to safety. The barge, *Black Diamond*, was anchored with the Potomac Flotilla near Blackstone Lighthouse, hoping to prevent that crossing and catch the perpetrators. All onboard were unaware that they were too late. The steamer *Massachusetts* was running downriver carrying U.S. soldiers back to their regiments. By dawn, the *Black Diamond* was on the bottom of the river, the *Massachusetts* was crippled, and 87 men were dead. Author Karen E. Stone reveals the story of a heroic pursuit that turned tragic."

Published by *The History Press*, an imprint of Arcadia Publishing, the book officially went on sale April 29. Advanced copies were signed by the author at the Black Diamond Disaster event. The book is available online at Arcadia and Amazon, or in the museum stores at St. Clement's Island Museum, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and the Old Jail Museum in Leonardtown, as well as other local bookstores and sellers.

Reflecting on her journey, Stone remarked, "Writing something like this, which tells a true story about real people, is a very scary venture, but I have had massive amounts of support along the way and have been inspired by so many different individuals to just write it, get it published, and not worry about having all the answers to all of the questions — and so I did."

She continues: "There are still more questions to answer and more names to be added to the list of men lost. But now the story is being told, and I hope others read it and appreciate what these men went through and recognize that not all history is great glory, huge battles, and medals. Some of them are small and simply tragic. But it is all important!"

In 2019, Stone authored "Peril on the Potomac: The Sinking of Black Diamond," for *America's Civil War Magazine* and found that there was much more to uncover about this forgotten tragedy. Stone's resulting, and ongoing research, has identified over 20 previously unknown souls lost in the incident. "I haven't yet identified all 87 men, but I haven't given up, and won't until they are all found," asserted Stone.

Karen Stone has been the museum division manager for St. Mary's County since 2017. She did her undergraduate work at Gettysburg College and obtained her master's degree from Penn State University; she has been working in the museum field ever since. She has been a Lincoln fan and student of his assassination since childhood, so she was fascinated when she first heard this story with its connection to Lincoln and John Wilkes Booth. And she was surprised to find that it had been overlooked by history.

In her spare time, Karen sings with the Chamber Chorale of Fredericksburg and at as many Fredericksburg Nationals baseball games as she can.

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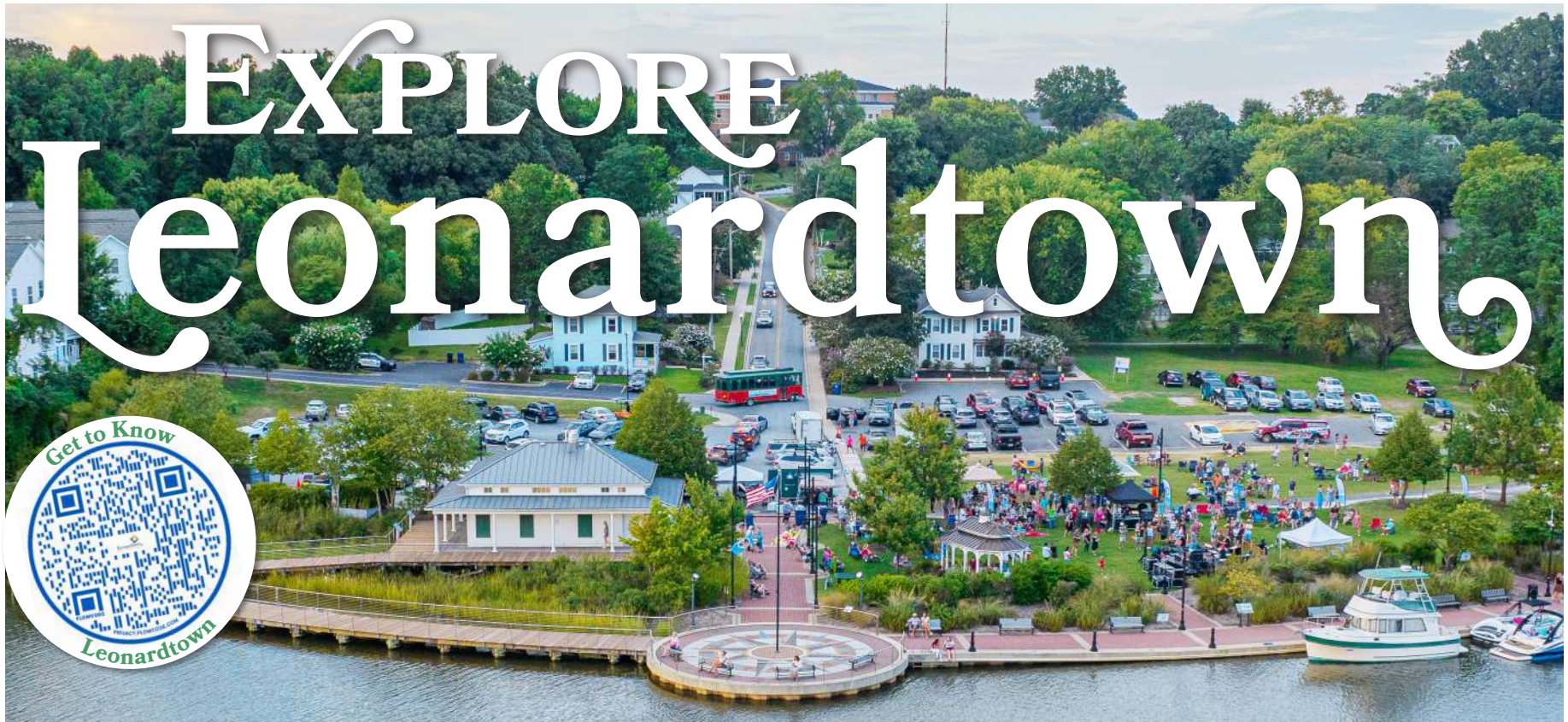
Upcoming Special Events

May 18 Spring Open Market (rescheduled due to weather)	June 7 Hometown Heroes—How to Train Your Hero
June 1 Cars & Coffee Car Show	June 15 Cars & Coffee Car Show
June 7 First Saturday of the Month Market Series	June 29 Cars & Coffee Car Show

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LEONARDTOWN
Spring Calendar

	WHARF	SQUARE	LTOWN ALLEY	BUSINESS/OTHER
MAY 10	Coastal Arts Market at the Wharf 10 am - 3 pm			
MAY 16-18	Leonardtown Photo Scavenger Hunt All Weekend - Downtown Leonardtown			
MAY 18	Spring Fling Class Car Show (Rescheduled) 8am - 4pm			
MAY 23	Summer Splash - Silent Disco at the Wharf 5 pm - 10 pm			
MAY 24	Life's Good in LG 5K - Leonard's Grant 7am - 11am			
MAY 24-25	RenFest SOMD - Brudergarten 10 am - 8 pm			

Leonardtown is blooming with events -
For all events & activities, visit:
www.VisitLeonardtownMD.com/EventsCalendar

Youth & Adult Category

Prizes & Awards

Photo Scavenger Hunt!

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May 16-18

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Historic Sotterley Experiences a Year of Change



Nancy Easterling (left) and Gwendoline Banks. Photo by Ceandra Scott

2025 is a significant year of change for Historic Sotterley. Gwendoline Banks, former vice president of the Board of Trustees, has stepped forward to lead the organization as president.

Banks will be the first person in the State of Maryland who was descended from those enslaved at a historic site to step into this leadership role.

This year Sotterley also announces the retirement of Executive Director Nancy Easterling, "after two decades of dedicated service and exemplary leadership," according to a press release.

Banks first came on the site at the age of 10 at the request of her cousin, Agnes Kane Callum, the first person whose ancestors were enslaved at Historic Sotterley to serve on its Board of Trustees. The course of her journey with her own history and with Sotterley lead her to join the Board of Trustee in 2019, serving as the chair of its Preservation, Restoration, and Interpretation Committee, and the chair of its descendant-lead Day of Unity and Healing.

The release said, "Her unwavering dedication to transparently telling all aspects of our shared history is matched only by her incredible heart and her strong desire to foster connections and healing in our community."

Easterling joined Historic Sotterley's staff in July 2005 and became the executive director in February 2009. The release said, "Her leadership has significantly transformed our organization. Notably, during her tenure, Sotterley successfully launched two impactful programs: the Descendants' Project in 2017 and the Common Ground initiative in 2018, which brought together descendants of plantation owners, those who

were enslaved at Sotterley, and post emancipation laborers to foster discussions about our shared history and its legacy and avenues for understanding and healing within the local community. Nancy also helped to secure critical grants to preserve the site's structures and landscapes, and to better tell its stories.

"Additionally, Nancy advocated for bringing Sotterley's farm back to life in a sustainable and environmentally conscious way, which has been an incredible teaching tool and a support for the community."

According to Easterling, "Education is integral to all endeavors at Historic Sotterley, and I have cherished the opportunity to contribute to the learning opportunities and experiences of the many students and visitors of all ages who have visited the site. I am deeply grateful for my time here and am particularly honored to witness the appointment of our new President of the Board, Ms. Gwendoline Banks, who is the first descendant of the enslaved to step into this leadership role. This is a truly significant moment in time for Historic Sotterley, and what a privilege it has been to be here when it happened. I am certain great things will happen under Gwen's tenure, and I will steadfastly remain her biggest champion now and in the future."

The Board of Trustees is conducting a thorough review of the organization's structure and has formed a search committee to identify Easterling's permanent successor.

According to Sotterley, "Demonstrating her unwavering commitment, Nancy will continue working with Ms. Banks and the rest of the Sotterley Board role to facilitate a smooth leadership transition."

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Meet Jaxx the 2 year old American Pitbull Terrier. Jaxx is a very sweet boy, who does well with most other dogs. He sure does love to play and is a great couch buddy! Are you interested in giving Jaxx his Furever home? Fill out an application at www.animalrelieffund.org. Call 301-866-0303 or stop by during our adoption days at the Well Pet Clinic Saturdays 11am-2pm!



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE MOBILE HOME

In accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Commercial Law Article Section 16-207, notice is hereby given that a public sale of a mobile home will be held by the Lord Calvert Manufactured Home Park (the "Park"), to sell the mobile home currently situated at 21167 Winding Way, Lexington Park, Maryland 20653, as follows:

Date: Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Location: 21167 Winding Way, Lexington Park, Maryland 20653

Description: 2000 Skyline Mobile Home VIN#14100251MAB (the "Home")

Terms:

- Successful Bidder; Minimum Bid.** The Home shall be sold to the bidder making the highest bid during the sale, who also satisfies all of the Terms contained herein. The successful bidder is referred to herein as the "Bidder". Bidding shall start at \$10,000.00 and the Home will not be sold for less than \$10,000.
- Home must be removed from the Park or Bidder must qualify as Park Tenant.** The Home shall be removed from the Park, by a licensed and bonded mobile home transport contractor, at the Bidder's expense, within ten (10) days after the sale; OR if the Home is to remain in the Park, the sale shall be contingent upon the Bidder's application and approval as a Tenant in the Park (to include background and credit verifications). If the Bidder does not qualify to become a Tenant in the Park, and does not remove the Home from the Park as required, the Home shall be offered to the next highest bidder, in order of bid (high to low) upon the same terms set forth in this paragraph.
- Home must be owner-occupied.** The Home must be occupied by the Bidder as Bidder's primary residence. The Home may not be rented or sub-let to any other person(s).
- Lease; Rent.** If the Home is intended to remain in the Park, Bidder, subject to the provisions of Paragraph 1, above, shall execute a Lease with the Park, prior to occupying the Home. At the time the Lease is signed, Bidder must pay a security deposit of one month's rent and pay the first month's rent. Lot rent in the Park is currently \$808/month and includes water, sewer and trash service. Park rent is scheduled to increase to \$858/month on July 1, 2025.
- Payment.** The Bidder shall pay a deposit of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) at the time of sale and the balance of the purchase price shall be paid in certified funds by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday May 22, 2025. Payment shall be delivered to 21027 Great Mills Road, Lexington Park, Maryland 20653.
- Bidder Identification.** All parties intending to bid on the Home shall provide their name, address, phone number, e-mail address and valid State or federal photo ID, prior to the commencement of bidding.

Two Suspects Arrested in Great Mills Shooting



Cameron David Louis Curtis



Peyton James Robert Curtis

Detectives from the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Division arrested two individuals on Tuesday, May 6 following an extensive investigation into a shooting that occurred in Great Mills over the weekend.

In the early morning hours of Saturday, May 3 deputies conducting proactive patrols in the area of Chancellors Run Road and Pegg Road heard gunfire and responded immediately. At the scene, deputies located a vehicle with four male occupants. Three of the individuals had sustained gunshot wounds—two were flown to an area hospital for treatment, while the third declined medical care. The fourth occupant was unharmed.

Through investigative efforts, detectives determined the shooting stemmed from an altercation that had occurred the previous evening. The suspects were identified as Cameron David Louis Curtis, 22, of Valley Lee, and Peyton James Robert Curtis, 20, of Callaway.

An arrest warrant was issued for Cameron Curtis, who was taken into custody at approximately 9:40 a.m. Tuesday. He is charged with:

- Four counts of attempted first-degree murder
- Four counts of attempted second-degree murder

- Four counts of first-degree assault
- Four counts of second-degree assault
- Firearm use in a felony crime of violence
- Handgun in vehicle
- Loaded handgun in vehicle

At approximately 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, Peyton Curtis was arrested following an interview with detectives. He is charged with:

- Four counts of attempted first-degree murder
- Four counts of attempted second-degree murder
- Four counts of first-degree assault
- Four counts of second-degree assault
- Firearm use in a felony crime of violence
- Two counts of carrying a loaded handgun on person
- Two counts of a loaded handgun in a vehicle

Both suspects were transported to the St. Mary's County Detention and Rehabilitation Center in Leonardtown, where they await bond hearings.

This case remains under active investigation. Anyone with information is urged to contact Detective Warren Forinash at 301-475-4200, ext. 8072, or via email at Warren.Forinash@stmaryscountymd.gov.

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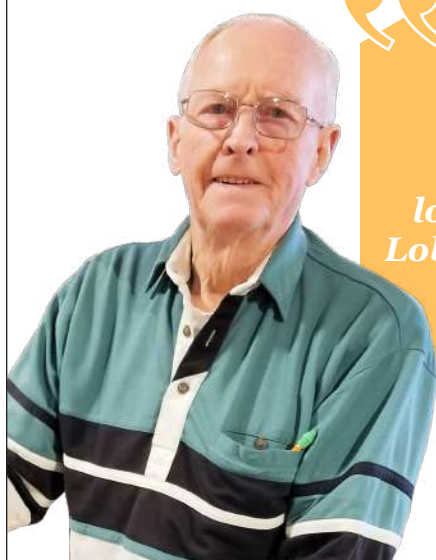
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Community Pushback Grows Over Proposed Crisis Center

By The County Times Staff

Residents in Charlotte Hall are sounding alarms over a proposed behavioral health facility that some say threatens to upend the fabric of their neighborhood. The facility, a crisis stabilization center planned by Pascal Crisis Services, Inc., is slated to be built on Mount Wolf Road — a quiet, largely residential stretch just off Route 5.

Proponents argue the center is vital to fill a growing regional mental health gap. Opponents say the location is wrong, the roll-out was mishandled, and the public deserves a louder voice in the decision-making process.

The facility is part of a statewide effort to expand access to urgent behavioral health care. Designed to offer 24/7 walk-in services for those in mental health crisis, the center would provide immediate psychiatric evaluations, short-term stays, and case management for patients — many of whom could be diverted from emergency rooms or jails.

Pascal Crisis Services operates similar centers across Maryland and received state support for the Charlotte Hall proposal. The company says the goal is to serve Southern Maryland residents with dignity, speed, and compassion.

But the site selection — a former residential property nestled among single-family homes — has sparked strong opposition from neighbors.

"We're not against mental health care," said a resident of Mount Wolf Road who spoke during a recent public comment period. "But why here? This is a family neighborhood, not a place for a high-volume treatment facility that could be bringing in people from all over the region."

Other residents echoed concerns about increased traffic, 24/7 operations, security risks, and property value impacts.

The backlash has spread quickly across social media and into community forums, prompting Delegate Matt Morgan (R-St. Mary's) to issue a public statement opposing the project.

"The placement of this facility — and the lack of transparency in how it came to be — is unacceptable," Morgan said. "The residents of Charlotte Hall deserve a real voice in decisions that affect their safety, their property, and their community identity."

In response to the mounting criticism, St. Mary's County Government issued a statement clarifying that it is not funding the project and that the Board of Commissioners has not approved the land acquisition or facility development.

"The County is not the applicant, sponsor, nor a party to any agreements related to this project," the statement read. "We understand the community's concerns and are committed to making sure public engagement remains at the forefront of this conversation."

Still, the County's role — or perceived role — remains under scrutiny, especially as community members demand to know how the plan reached this stage without their input.

Crisis stabilization centers are short-

term, voluntary facilities where individuals experiencing psychiatric distress can be stabilized and linked to follow-up services. Unlike long-term treatment centers or hospitals, these facilities typically operate on a walk-in basis, often accepting law enforcement referrals to divert individuals from jail.

Pascal's proposed site would serve as a regional hub — likely attracting individuals from across Charles, Calvert, and St. Mary's counties. That regional scope is another concern for some residents, who worry that their neighborhood is being tasked with absorbing challenges from neighboring jurisdictions.

"Are we really expected to carry the burden for the whole region?" asked homeowner, who attended a recent town hall meeting. "We're not trying to be cruel. But no one ever asked us if this was the right location — it just appeared."

Advocates for mental health services have urged the public to reconsider its stance and avoid falling into stigma.

"This is exactly why crisis centers are hard to place," said one representative from a Southern Maryland nonprofit. "We want better mental health services, but we don't want them anywhere near us. That contradiction is exactly what keeps people from getting help."

She pointed out that patients at crisis centers are typically in need of stabilization and often arrive accompanied by family or law enforcement. "They're not dangerous — they're in crisis," she added.

Still, even some advocates agree that the process — not just the project — needs fixing.

"You have to talk to the community before the rumors start flying," said the same representative. "You can't just drop a project like this on people and expect a warm welcome."

A public information meeting has been scheduled for May 22 at 6:30 PM at the Chesapeake Building in Leonardtown, where residents can voice concerns directly to officials and Pascal representatives.

That meeting will be key. If opposition remains high, the proposal may face delays or be forced into reconsideration.

Delegate Morgan has vowed to push for legislation that would require local government approval before such facilities are sited in any residential area.

"This isn't just about Charlotte Hall," Morgan said. "It's about every community in Maryland. If we let one project sneak through without public review, it sets a dangerous precedent."

For now, local organizing continues. A group calling itself "Protect Mount Wolf" has begun collecting signatures for a petition and says it may pursue legal action if the project advances without meaningful local involvement.

In a county where people pride themselves on neighborliness and transparency, the debate is becoming a case study in how — and how not — to introduce major health infrastructure projects into established communities.

As one resident put it: "This isn't just about buildings or blueprints. It's about trust."

Christmas in April: A Well-Oiled Machine

Future Remains Uncertain



Members of the Mattingly and Berry families stand on the new ramp built by family members and donated by the Mattingly family.

By Florence Ballengee
Contributing Writer

It's common knowledge that a well-oiled machine works better and longer than one without proper attention. Christmas in April is and has been a well-oiled machine for 35 years.

For 20 of those years, Jini Mattingly Beavers and Dal Beavers have been house captains. This year they were in charge of the repairs of one of the houses where work was performed. The couple's project house this year was the home of Mary Berry in the King and Kennedy neighborhood.

This year, the house for which they served as house captains took on special meaning. The costs were a donation from the Mattingly family in honor and memory of Billy Mattingly. Billy Mattingly passed a year ago at 101 years of age. She and her husband, the late Joseph A. Mattingly, Sr., were the parents of 12 children. Joseph Mattingly was a former circuit judge in this county.

This year, there were 12 houses chosen for work to be done. About 700 willing workers fanned out throughout the county to go about transforming the homes of those in need of help. There is no cost to the homeowner. Materials and labor are all donated. The house that was the Mattingly's project house was improved with the following repairs and improvements: a handicapped ramp, 24 feet on the side of the house; railings and improvements to make the front steps safer; facelift to the utility room including paint; installation of a dryer vent; pressure wash the house; scrape and paint the foundation; clean out the shed and dispose of the excess, and create and plant a

flower bed. The flower bed was a donation of the Berry family.

Lunches are brought to each work site and are donated by individuals, organizations and businesses. At the end of the day workers are treated to dinner, which is donated by a corporation, individual or organization. The Lundeberg School has been a major supporter.

The original idea of Christmas in April began in Midland, Texas and was brought to St. Mary's by John Parlett, Jr. (Johnny K). The Executive Director for Christmas in April for the past 19 years has been Darene Kleinsorgen. She has been involved in the program since it began 35 years ago. Howard Thompson has also been involved 35 years and has been president for 19 of those years. Kleinsorgen spends a lot of time writing grants. Money for projects is getting harder to come by. Years ago, according to Kleinsorgen, 24 to 26 houses were done. This year there were 12.

Not only are materials getting more expensive, but volunteerism is down. In addition to volunteering time, labor and money, the group has a number of fundraisers done by the volunteers and there are several events put on to benefit "CIA" as their members call it. 84 Lumber sponsors a golf tournament, there are a power parade, spaghetti dinner, auctions, raffles and whatever the volunteers can do to fund the improvements to the homes of the homeowners who are disabled or unable to maintain their homes.

Christmas in April has a website and a Facebook page. While there is some talk of a group continuing with CIA, its future at present is uncertain.



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Fitzgerald Celebrates 50 Years in Real Estate

By Tim Flaherty
Contributing Writer

Billy Fitzgerald grew up in Chaptico, the eldest of 12 children. He's been a liquor salesman, a tavern and packaged goods store owner, a political candidate and party Central Committee member, philanthropist and civic booster, a motorcycle rider, and organizer of countless community functions. But as he embarks on his sixth decade of working as a real estate agent or broker, Fitzgerald is known to most Southern Marylanders by the promotional moniker of "Mister Lister." He first entered the real estate industry in January of 1975.

Speaking in his office at Fitzgerald Realty and Auctioneers in Charlotte Hall, Fitzgerald said, "It's been a wonderful business. I knew I was going to be a salesman, so I decided if I was going to sell something I might as well sell something where I could make some money. I didn't know if it would be airplanes or big, fancy boats, but I decided to pick real estate, and it's been good for me."

"I was a whiskey salesman in the early 70's," he continued. "At one of my client's liquor stores, there was a fellow there who was selling real estate part time at a place called 91 Realty. He said, 'Billy, you ought to see about coming to work for my company.' So, I went to work for their company, was there for a while, and I ended up working for five different companies before I

opened up my own shop. It's amazing none of those companies are still in business. I look around and I remember when Jack Rue had Tidewater Realty, Lester Kraft had Kraft Realty, Maxine Nye, Bill Durkin; there's not many of the home-grown people left anymore. The franchises have sort of taken over. It's tough for the small man to do unless you have got your little niche market."

Fitzgerald opened Fitzgerald Realty and Auctioneers in 1994 and has stuck with it because he loves what he is doing. "I like real estate. I like dealing with the people. It's good when you can deal with generation after generation. Our motto is that a successful transaction is not luck. It's the result of sincere effort and personal service, and that's what we have done all these years."

Many of the changes in real estate have been the result of changes in technology that have occurred across all aspects of life. There were no computer databases shared among real estate operators in the 1970's. "When I got in the business, we had carbon paper," Fitzgerald explained. "We had mimeograph machines, and we had no computers. If somebody called and wanted to look for a house in Breton Bay, I'd have to pull out the Enterprise and look and see if Tommy Waring Real Estate had something. See if Betty Drury of B&B had something. See if Jack Rue had something. Then you'd have to go to pick up the keys from each one of these places and leave them a five-dollar bill or a credit card to make sure you

brought the key back. You'd have to spend time picking up the keys, showing the three properties, then bring the keys back. It was a whole afternoon or morning ordeal just to get that done."

"But things have changed, and a lot of it has been good. But the personal aspect is not in it anymore. Everybody is online, and sometimes people know more about the house before you even show it to them. But mostly the new technology has been good, and the business has been good to me."

Fitzgerald became interested in auctioneering in the 1980's as a result of his friendship with former county commissioner Dick Arnold, who, along with Herb Tice, had an established auction business in St. Mary's. "I, along with Rodney Thompson, used to help them. Rodney and I both went out on our own. We both had the gift of gab." Fitzgerald became certified as an auctioneer and added "auctioneers" to his business card.

Just before entering the real estate field, Fitzgerald bought the old Jackpot House Tavern on Three Notch Road in Mechanicsville and renamed it Fitzgerald's Tavern and Cut-Rate Liquors. He ran that business, too, until the early 80's when decided to focus only on real estate and auctions.

"If you mention two things about me in this article," Fitzgerald told the County Times, "mention my Catholic faith and my children, who are the things I'm most proud of. Victoria is 33, and she is a third-generation registered nurse at St. Mary's



Billy Fitzgerald looking over a scrapbook of memorabilia of his more than 50 years in the St. Mary's County business world

Hospital. Will is 31 and has his own business, Fitzgerald Detailing, and he has four kids. My youngest, John Garrett, is 29. He has Fitzgerald Home Improvements."

After 50 years, is Billy Fitzgerald ready to retire and sail off into the sunset? "I'm going to do this until I can't do it anymore. With all the modern technology, I could be down in Florida playing golf, and if I need something I can call Wanda (his assistant) and say, 'can you do this or that?'"

"My definition of retiring is working because I want to, not because I have to. I'm getting ready, and I'm going to see about smelling the roses."

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Monies Added for Schools' Negotiated Agreements

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County have tentatively agreed to add \$3.1 million to the amount to be budgeted for the schools. The budget presented at the April 22 hearing proposed flat funding for the schools. The extra money was added during a May 6 budget work session.

It will be paid from the commissioners' fund balance and reserve fund.

School Superintendent Scott Smith said "Our go/no-go number is \$3.1 million. And if we can't get there, in good conscience I have to go back to the board and say the money is not on the table to meet the negotiated agreement."

Smith said the \$3.1 million was a whittled down number. He said with the school system's and county's finance departments, "We have been working back and forth. We've been going through everything we possibly can to get a workable number for you to consider. We started at \$5.5 (million). We've worked back and forth. We got to \$4.5 (million); we were like maybe \$4 (million). We got all the way down and the go/no-go number for our negotiated agreement for next year is \$3.1 million."

The county will find that in part by cutting the commissioners' reserve fund of \$500,000 by more than half.

Commissioner Eric Colvin, who advocated for tapping the fund, said, "If we were to reduce the commissioner's reserve to \$250,000, that gets us there and we're still sitting on millions of dollars in fund balance for an emergency and it makes it work, it makes the numbers work."

Commissioner Mike Hewitt argued against that. "I still say this to you, Dr. Smith, we're talking about giving you \$137,209,622 and you're saying you can't find \$260,000. And I'm asking the question why? Because we have falling enrollment. We have four schools with under 300 kids. We have to do some kind of reduction. We have to do some kind of belt tightening."

Smith said of his request, "That's for 2,200 employees for the school system that serves 17,000 students. \$3.1 million of the \$15.5 million worth of additional revenue that's anticipated coming in. That is the number."

He added, "Now if you can make a ratio-



School Superintendent Scott Smith

nal case that there's no other money on the table and that you need to hold a reserve of unallocated money, then I've got to go back and make a long-term plan for the school system. And this is the largest thing that's really facing public schools in Maryland. The federal government is turning away from its historical funding agreements with states and by proxy school systems.

"The state, for the first time ever under a Democratic governor, had a budget shortfall and said...I'm going to go after school systems," adding, "We begged him, just don't go after foundation (funding) because that's how we pay our teachers. That's exactly what they did. And (School Board Chair) Mrs. (Karin) Bailey and I went up to Annapolis and we've burned a lot of capital, but we've bought a one-year reprieve on that. Next year they are cutting foundation (funding). And the year after that, and the year after that."

Smith said, "You know, I'm not trying to buy a car here. I'm talking about the lives of 17,000 kids, 35,000 parents, guardians, and 2,200 employees."

Although no vote was taken, Commissioner President Randy Guy joined Commissioners Colvin and Anderson in indicating support for the \$3.1 million funding.

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School Board Tackles 'The R Word'

Redistricting Could Begin in 2026-27 School Year

By Dick Myers
Staff Writer

Redistricting! Known as the "R word," in a not-so-lovingly way. "That word gets everybody in this county on edge," said veteran St. Mary's County Board of Education member Mary Washington at the April 23 board meeting as they appear to be embarking on the process.

Director of the Department of Capital Planning Kimberly Howe and Chief Operating Officer Michael Watson made the staff presentation to the board. A revised redistricting policy was expected to be presented to the board on May 7 that will set in motion a year-long process looking for the redistricting to kick in for the 2026-27 school year.

Howe said, "Post Covid, enrollment is declining in public school systems."

She said staff would come forward "with a recommendation to start analyzing our school utilization. We've looked and we'll continue to look at elementary, middle, and high. In particular, looking at smaller schools, we have four elementary schools that are below 300 in capacity. When you have schools that have 11 to 12 classrooms, you don't even have enough for two per grade. They (have) operational and equity issues in terms of programs and offerings that we can provide. So, it is our recommendation to move forward with the plan for looking at a redistricting option."

Considerations, she said, include: "consolidation of facilities to include some closures potentially of smaller schools; what this would do to increase class sizes; changes to school-based academies and program offerings, and where we offer those; a potential for reduction in administrative staff, principals and assistant principals; reduction in teaching staff for classroom specialists and counselors; reduction in support services staff for food service, custodial and secretarial. And then looking at our operating expenses, utilities, maintenance operations, such as wax, cleaning supplies, trash services, snow removal, reduction in capital projects, to look at any projects we would have coming forward. Those schools that are of smaller nature are some of our older schools that would be needing to come up on capital improvements, as well as looking at consolidating our bus routes to optimize transportation."

Watson noted, "Some of the things that we will try to do throughout this process is really take a look at our feeder school programs."

He observed that "a small portion of those kids from Evergreen Elementary School actually go to Leonardtown Middle School and then carry on to Leonardtown High School, whereas some of that split of Evergreen Elementary School goes to Esperanza Middle School, then those kids get split and go to Great Mills and Leonardtown High School."

Watson said, "What we would do in the redistricting process is trying to minimize as much as possible those islands, those splits, because when you have kids that go

to school together from pre-K through fifth grade, those kids make connections. Those kids split off to different middle schools, and maybe they reconnect in high school and maybe they don't."

Regarding that Evergreen situation, he observed, "Leonardtown Middle School is one of our highest populated middle schools. So we can do this redistricting process if all of Evergreen Elementary School were potentially to go to Esperanza Middle School, that would increase their population, but decrease Leonardtown Middle School's population, giving them a more equal population."

He added, "We would try to do that with high schools as well, with the middle school splits to those high schools. Obviously, Leonardtown, they're at 2,200 kids," adding, "The other high schools are at 1,500 and 1,600, give or take."

He gave Benjamin Bannecker Elementary as another example in which some students go to Leonardtown Middle School and others to Margaret Brent Middle School.

Howe said, "We're always going to have more elementaries than middle, but there can be ways in which we can streamline this, moving forward."

Superintendent of Schools Scott Smith said, "We've never done a large redistricting of St. Mary's County. What we've done is we have construction projects that increase capacity for a particular site, and then we go and we redistrict to accommodate that new site, neighborhood to neighborhood."

The last major effort was in the late 1990's, school board Vice Chair Cathy Allen noted.

Allen said, "I was the one who chaired the elementary group. We could have moved students around, however, because there are waves, because there are bubbles of population going up and down, different housing developments coming on, the upheaval it would have caused, the committee chose not to create that upheaval, because the parents, even if their kids were in a crowded school, they wanted their kids to stay in that school."

Smith observed, "Keep in mind that at that time and through the late nineties and early two thousands, the county was growing rapidly, a real good clip, and developments were coming in. And now it would appear that we're slowing."

Smith added, "If we are going to cut 90 positions out of the school system (see separate budget story), we aren't going to do it haphazardly. It has to be done in a thoughtful, methodical, well-informed way so that everybody has the opportunity to provide their input and ultimately for staff to make decisions about what's next for them as well."

Watson said he and Howe, with their combined 60 years in education, "We couldn't find one (system) that went through a whole countywide potential redistricting process. So, this is a tremendous undertaking that we are about to dive into."

Watson said, "Some other things that we need to consider throughout this process is providing a socioeconomic balance where possible, pre-kindergarten at each school,

which we're very close to that right now... (and) school start time changes."

Regarding the timeline, Howe said, "We need to complete a detailed analysis of functional space and all facilities. We're going to be looking at state standards for what class size is for each individual room. We're going to examine the facility utilization options that maximize services and efficiencies and provide equitable opportunities for student success. We're going to examine the fiscal and operational impacts of all recommendations that are made and find the suggested processes and procedures necessary to implement all of the recommendations, to effectively have this ready for the FY '27 school year."

After firming up the policy, a consultant would be hired to build on what's already been done, at a cost of about \$300,000, Howe said. A committee would be formed, and a public hearing would be held early next year for a decision in time to give parents an opportunity to plan for the next school year.

Smith said of the process, "This is where we reengage all of the school's PTAs so they can really spend a great deal of time understanding what makes their school special and how they want to make sure that this is not a small thing. This is not something that we're going to get together and hire a

consultant and they're going to go off and do the work and come back and we're going to come before the board and say, here's three plans.

"It doesn't work like that. Especially when we consider all of the things that need to go into those decisions.

"And they're being driven by the fact that we can't count on future funding being what we've had at the federal level, at the state level or at the county level."

School Board member Dorothy Andrews said, "I think we should stay positive because we're always so negative about everything. Just saying, 'Hey, it's going to be great right off the get go,' instead of thinking that there's something to be worrying about and be overwhelmed and concerned."

But Washington, who said she is normally an optimist, noted, "Redistricting — that is a dirty word to most community members," adding, "It is the most stressful, disruptive, and agonizing time for families, students, and the entire county. The entire county will be impacted by redistricting."

"It is going to be an emotional, tough year for the entire county, because this is not an easy process," Washington said.

dickmyers@countytimes.net



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“OUR GO/NO-GO NUMBER IS \$3.1 MILLION.”

SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT SCOTT SMITH ON WHAT'S NEEDED TO FUND NEGOTIATED AGREEMENTS



LOCAL 5
School board considers redistricting



LOCAL 11
Christmas in April helps families in need



ON THE COVER
Fitzgerald celebrates 50 years in real estate

WEEKLY FORECAST

THU, MAY 8	FRI, MAY 9	SAT, MAY 10	SUN, MAY 11
Partly Cloudy Hi: 79° Lo: 61°	Rain Hi: 65° Lo: 50°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 73° Lo: 54°	Partly Cloudy Hi: 78° Lo: 58°
MON, MAY 12	TUE, MAY 13	WED, MAY 14	THU, MAY 15
Mostly Cloudy Hi: 75° Lo: 64°	Rain Hi: 73° Lo: 64°	Scattered Storms Hi: 77° Lo: 65°	AM Clouds/PM Sun Hi: 83° Lo: 68°

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– Baking Pans – Trash Bags – Tool Holsters – Flag Holders
& Other Misc. New Items – Lawn/Garden Items – Concrete
Items – Food/Snacks – Camping Items – Fire Pit and More.

- Loads of Locally-Grown/Produced Flowers & Other Items expected from the Russell Brothers', Stauffer's, Green Acres, Zimmerman's and Others.
- Baked Goods expected from the Brubacher Family & Others
- Craft Items from R. Chesser & Others
- Handcrafted Quilts (special mention – Quilt by Mary Stauffer)
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**Redistricting Possible for
2026-27 School Year**

**Schools Request
Additional \$3.1M**

**Proposed Crisis Center
Draws Controversy**



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